

CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH ASSESSMENT FOR USAID/KYRGYZ REPUBLIC FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

August 23, 2019 V2

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USAID's YouthPower Learning generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) and cross-sectoral approaches in international youth development. We are leading research, evaluations, and events designed to build the evidence base and inform the global community about how to transition young people successfully 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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Abstract

To effectively make strategic adjustments in supporting a democratic, well-governed, and prosperous Kyrgyz Republic, and to better reflect youth priorities in the design of upcoming activities, USAID/Kyrgyz Republic commissioned YouthPower Learning to conduct a cross-sectoral youth assessment. Using a positive youth development (PYD) lens, the assessment sought to better understand the status and aspirations of Kyrgyz youth ages 14-28 in their journey from adolescence to adulthood. The assessment included a desk review and field work with 32 peer group discussions with 317 male and female youth ages 18-28 and 52 key informant interviews with stakeholders.

The assessment identified opportunities to optimally support youth and guide USAID/Kyrgyz Republic toward a more strategic process of engagement with youth. These findings add the context of youth in the Kyrgyz Republic who will directly benefit from the refinement of the current country development cooperation strategy (CDCS), with emphasis in the areas of human trafficking and human rights, civic participation and civil society, local governance, tuberculosis, HIV, and other health services, education, and enterprise development.

Acknowledgements

This assessment was led by Paul Bell, who developed the data collection instruments, designed the sampling strategy, oversaw the data collection process, facilitated the majority of stakeholder interviews, and served as the principal author. Dr. Christy Olenik developed youth data collection instruments, collaborated on development of the sampling strategy, trained youth researchers, and supported data collection and report writing. Dr. Audrey Marie-Moore, Josh Alldredge, and Elena Moroz of Mathematica Policy Research conducted the qualitative data analysis. Caitlin O'Donnell coordinated assessment operations and contributed to the desk review. Cassandra Jessee provided assessment design, technical input, and oversight.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|--|
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| AIDS | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| BGI | Business Growth Initiative Program |
| CAMI | Community and Municipal Governance Initiative |
| CDCS | Country Cooperation and Development Strategy |
| CEPPS | Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening Program |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DAR | Dignity and Rights Program |
| DO | Development Objective |
| EAEU | Eurasian Economic Union |
| EDS | Educational Development Strategy |
| GOKR | Government of the Kyrgyz Republic |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology |
| KII | Key Information Interview |
| LGBT | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender |
| LSA | Local State Administration |
| LSG | Local Self Government |
| MDR-TB | Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis |
| MFI | Microfinance Institution |
| MLSD | Ministry of Labor and Social Development |
| OMOA | Ministry of Agriculture |
| MOES | Ministry of Education and Science |
| MOH | Ministry of Health |
| MSM | Men Who Have Sex with Men |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PISA | Program for International Student Assessment |
| PWID | People Who Inject Drugs |
| PYD | Positive Youth Development |
| SAYPCS | State Agency for Youth, Physical Culture, and Sports |
| SMS | State Migration Service |
| SOW | Scope of Work |
| SVS | Secondary Vocational School |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Training |
| TB | Tuberculosis |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNHCR | United High Commission for Refugees |
| UNICEF | United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WB | World Bank |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

I. Summary

Kyrgyz youth played a major role in the protests of the 2005 Tulip Revolution, as well as in the 2010 Revolution. The spark was lit by unemployed youth whose discontent had reached a tipping point. The drivers of their discontent still pertain to and lie in youth's disillusion with the way the Kyrgyz democratic system operates and their deep conviction of it having been hijacked by a corrupt political, economic, and social elite. This leads many young people to believe that despite their best efforts — working hard at school and college, being dutiful sons and daughters — they cannot get ahead. This causes them to invest little trust in politicians, the judiciary, and wider economic and social elites, and to place trust only in themselves and their families.

Although the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (GOKR) appeared to learn the lessons of these upheavals and included extensive consultations with youth in the formulation of its 2016-2020 Youth Strategy, it has yet to identify funding sources for its comprehensive implementation. Political parties are also falling short of their electoral system mandates whereby 15 percent of candidates should be youth. Youth voices need more influence with respect to their rights, especially within the courts where no special procedures are employed or specified for the investigation of rape, child abuse, domestic violence, or other cases of child or gender-based violence. Youth believe their rights are violated by heavy-handed policing.

Gender inequality continues to manifest in many forms despite the Kyrgyz Republic signing several international human rights treaties relevant to gender that generated progressive gender legislation and policies. Female youth agency is severely constrained by their families and society. These constraints affect all aspects of female youths' lives — reproductive health, education, employment, and civil rights — and are more acute for rural female youth. In fact, gender-based violence is of particular concern, with many forms of violence perpetrated against women including domestic and sexual violence, bride kidnapping, child marriage, sex trafficking and abuse, neglect, and violence at school. Few crosscutting administrative or policy implementation frameworks have been created for implementing the National Strategy on Gender Equality, which lacks resources. Legal guarantees in relation to political access are not being applied. Rigid gender stereotyping is a crosscutting fact of life, to which both females and males are expected to adhere.

Although nearly all Kyrgyz youth are functionally literate and most have completed a basic education, they perceive that the Kyrgyz education system does not adequately prepare them for work and other adult responsibilities. This causes many to dream of attending a foreign university rather than a domestic one and building career- and life-enhancing skills from whatever sources they can access. Many youth interviewed for this youth situational analysis believe the whole education system needs to be overhauled and that outdated curricula and teaching methods should be abandoned in favor of more modern ones that integrate soft skills development and quality language lessons in Russian and English. Some suggested that increasing teacher salaries would increase teacher motivation and decrease corruption.

Health education is one of the key factors affecting youth health outcomes. USAID has not only played a leading role within the international donor and development community coalition in providing significant direct clinical support to combat HIV and tuberculosis (TB), but also sponsored activities to train teachers and disseminate information in schools on contraception, the benefits of healthier lifestyles, and HIV/AIDS.

However, research sources as well as interviews with youth and health service professionals conducted for this youth situational analysis confirmed that many youth health awareness gaps still exist, especially regarding their understanding of TB and general health risk factors such as tobacco use, poor nutrition, early marriage and childbearing, and limited physical activity. Youth are also consistently underserved in many health practice areas, including mental health and disability, as well as reproductive health and family planning services for young men and women. Lack of access to quality, youth-friendly services is a big barrier, especially for migrants and young women.

Youth economic aspirations are primarily centered on attaining a well-paid, stable job that will sustain a stable family life. There are stirrings of start-up culture in Bishkek and Osh; however, outside of youth engaged in agriculture, very few have ambitions to start their own businesses. They perceive almost insurmountable obstacles or barriers to their success; the main ones being the specific difficulties youth face in accessing finance and the need to have important, influential connections. Although youth have been eager to attend entry-level youth entrepreneurship trainings, the trainings have been of low quality, are implemented by youth civil society organizations (CSOs) with little experience or qualifications, and have little impact on the growth of youth businesses. Consequently, youth-focused components of USAID economic development programs primarily focus on businesses that have already achieved significant market traction and sustainability and enable them to grow from small- to medium-sized businesses as opposed to a focus on new business and entrepreneurship.

Given the lack of economic opportunities at home, many youth — particularly southern rural youth — see migration as the key to achieving their economic ambitions. Many accept migration as a fact of life, a necessary phase they must endure to provide more income and financial security for themselves and their families. As a consequence, all youth interviewed for this youth situational analysis were united in their desire for services that mitigate the risks and hardships of migration and programs that might lessen migration levels. Rural communities believe the key to decreasing youth migration levels is economic growth programs that exclusively focus on raising youth agricultural income levels and creating space for them to test and develop their agri-entrepreneurial capacities.

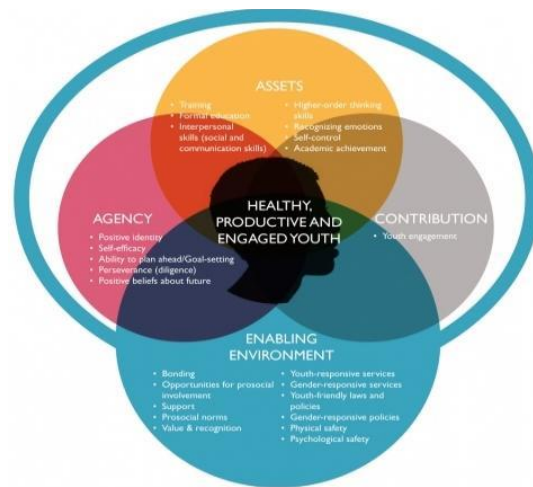
Kyrgyz youth are generally practical in their preferences of activities. They primarily prefer activities that will positively impact their earning potential, such as economic assistance programs, business and information and communication technology (ICT) trainings, or volunteering, internship and scholarship program opportunities that can add value to their employment and career prospects. USAID programs should be mindful that Kyrgyz youth's social and out-of-school activity involvement does not extend far beyond their family, study, and work commitments; consequently, they have very little free time. What little free time they do have is often constrained by a variety of economic, political, or internal stress factors. Social, cultural, and religious norms further constrain female involvement in out-of-school or out-of-family activities, particularly in rural areas. It is also important that USAID programs incorporate implementation access/touch points with relevant key personnel within the GOKR's Youth Agency and use local youth council and committee youth networks, as well as those of their youth CSO partners. The creation of such touch points would bolster the nascent Youth Agency structure, while providing opportunities for USAID programs to broaden the scope and reach of their youth-related activities.

II. Introduction

USAID, as articulated in its Country Development and Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), supports a democratic, well-governed, and prosperous Kyrgyz Republic. USAID supports efforts in the Kyrgyz Republic to consolidate its encouraging progress toward accountable, inclusive governance and to reap significant development outcomes such as increased economic opportunities and increased resilience to shocks. USAID's theory of change is based on the hypothesis that if the relationship between government institutions and the citizenry is characterized by increasing accountability and inclusiveness, then its main deliverables — service delivery and policy — will improve across all socioeconomic development sectors, thus increasing the legitimacy and stability of the Kyrgyz Republic's nascent democracy.

USAID/Kyrgyz Republic commissioned YouthPower Learning to conduct the assessment using a positive youth development (PYD) lens to: 1) investigate the contextual landscape, needs, and assets of Kyrgyz youth in relation to the programmatic areas outlined in the Mission's CDCS; and 2) collect specific insights on challenges, preferences, and opportunities for youth engagement in programmatic areas where USAID activities are recently completed or nearing completion (see Annex A and B). PYD is both a philosophy and an approach to youth development that “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.”¹ This approach has a proven positive impact across an array of outcomes and sectors in the United States and other high-income countries. Donors, governments, practitioners, and policymakers are increasingly looking to this approach to provide more holistic support for youth in low- and middle-income countries (see Annex C).

FIGURE I: PYD FRAMEWORK



The report provides strategic guidance to USAID/Kyrgyz Republic on their future priorities and activities as they pertain to youth. The assessment took place in two phases. Phase one was a desk review of the existing literature and was completed in January 2019. Phase two included field-based data collection in March-April 2019.

Findings from the assessment are organized by topics of interest agreed upon by YouthPower Learning and USAID. Each section includes a background based on the desk review, findings presented as themes, and recommendations that focus on activities USAID can take on in both the near term that are applicable to existing programming and long term over the next two or more years. Recommendations are linked to one or more of the PYD domains. The PYD framework (Figure I) offers four domains through which

¹ L. Hinson, C. Kapungu, C. Jessee, M. Skinner, M. Bardini & T. Evans-Whipp. *Measuring Positive Youth Development Toolkit: A Guide for Implementers of Youth Programs*, (Washington, DC: YouthPower Learning, Making Cents International, 2016).

the vision of healthy, productive, and engaged youth can be achieved: assets, agency, contribution, and enabling environment.² In addition, a gender lens was used across the assessment and as a result, gender-focused recommendations are also highlighted and noted with a ♀♂ gender symbol.

III. Methodology

Desk Review

The desk review included gathering data from resources on the general background and context; GOKR statistics, strategic plans, and priorities; evaluations and progress reports from existing USAID and other donor-funded projects; and relevant material related to Kyrgyz youth's experience as it relates to economic opportunity, education, skills, health, conflict, and civic participation. The data gathered from the desk review helped the assessment team frame key questions for further exploration during the fieldwork (see Annex B).

Fieldwork

A fieldwork team, including a Team Lead, Deputy Team Lead, and pool of 11 youth researchers, spent three weeks collecting data in Bishkek, Naryn, and Osh (see Annexes D-G). The fieldwork data collection included peer group discussions (PGDs) with young people; as well as focus group discussions (FGDs); and key informant interviews (KIIs) with key stakeholders, which resulted in:

- **11 virtual KIIs** with USAID Chiefs of Party
- **32 PGDs** (317 youth) of male and female youth ages 18-23 and 24-28 (see detailed demographic data in Annex I)
- **42 KIIs/FGDs** with various local stakeholders including government officials, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), CBOs, USAID, other donors

Limitations

There were some limitations to the assessment that affect the interpretation of findings, including:

- 1) A geographical focus on only three locations (Bishkek, Naryn, and Osh), which limits extrapolation of findings to other locations in the Kyrgyz Republic, particularly with regard the viewpoints of youth;
- 2) As most of the data used was qualitative in nature, it largely relied on self-report and opinion; and
- 3) Since translation of KIIs and FGDs was done by multiple staff, there could be some fluctuations in understanding of concepts and key points.

IV. Youth Demographic

The following represents a summary snapshot of Kyrgyz youth drawn from primary (field) and secondary (desktop) research and data sources. For this youth situational analysis, the GOKR's definition of youth demographic — young people and adults aged between 14–28 years — is used. The GOKR's Youth Strategy for 2016-2020 defines the youth demographic as 14–28 years of age. Population figures for 2018 show that out of the Kyrgyz Republic's total population of more than 6.25 million, 27.6 percent are aged

² For more information, see <https://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development>

14 to 29.³ The median age of the population is at the higher end of the youth demographic at 26 years of age. The age of criminal responsibility is 14 and marriageable ages are 16 with parental consent and 18 without it.

Youth Beliefs and Values

Traditional values for Kyrgyz youth are that they are fundamentally hard working, well behaved, and responsible young people whose beliefs and values are conservative and centered on family and community values of duty and acceptance. These traditional values are more evident amongst rural than urban youth, but both are united in their desire for a good education and well-paid work that will enable them to meet the material and social expectations of themselves and their families. Kyrgyz youth view family support, personal ability, and perseverance as key to achieving their goals.

Despite the fact that Kyrgyz youth interviewed for this youth situational analysis held strong opinions about the way the country is being governed, they paradoxically described themselves as disinterested in joining political parties or becoming actively involved in politics. Youth perceptions appeared to confirm the findings of a 2015 study, which concluded that youth disinterest is driven by their perception of the difference between the promotion of the Kyrgyz Republic as an inclusive democracy and their negative experiences of the way political parties and the political system works in practice.⁴ Kyrgyz youth believe the political system is corrupt and the political class is self-interested and distinct from the general citizenry. They consider corruption and injustice as omnipresent and as infecting all areas of life, including political and economic decision-making, civil rights, gender equality, educational opportunities, and restricting social and economic mobility. This view leads Kyrgyz youth to put little trust in politicians, the judiciary, and wider economic and social elites, and to place trust only in themselves and their families.

Most Kyrgyz youth interviewed believe in Allah/God and view faith as an important part of their everyday lives. This view is more pronounced amongst Muslim youth from rural areas where Islam is inextricably linked to notions of community and resonates with youthful need for community and acceptance. At the same time, most youth see religion as a matter of personal belief and only a few mention Islamic law as something to which they strictly adhere.

Kyrgyz youth interviewed for this youth situational analysis expressed different levels of satisfaction with their lives; most (approximately 60 percent of males and females of all ages) reported being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Male and female youth who reported being satisfied attributed their feelings to being part of a happy and supportive family. Youth who reported being dissatisfied (even depressed) attributed their feelings to the fact that they lacked agency to change anything, particularly their economic prospects. Many attributed their unhappiness to having no goals or direction in life. This evidences the fact that Kyrgyz youth are placed under strong pressure from a very early age to lead goal-driven lives. In the absence of goals or an inability to realize them, they often become disoriented and this deeply impacts their self-esteem and happiness.

³ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. n.d. National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. Accessed May 2019. <http://www.stat.kg/en/>.

⁴ Möller-Slawinski, Heide and Dr. Marc Calmbach. 2015. Youth in Kyrgyzstan: Bridging Tradition and Modernity. Bonn and Eschborn, Germany: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

Age, Ethnic, and Geographic Differences

Age

Kyrgyz youth interviewed for this youth situational analysis were relatively homogenous in their outlook on life and displayed very few discernible differences in terms of outlook and behaviors that could be attributed to their various age bandwidths. In particular, and unlike many of their youth counterparts in other countries, they did not exhibit “teenage rebellion” phases whereby they challenged the authority of their parents or societal norms, nor did they exhibit or express an attraction or affiliation to sub- or counter-cultures.

Geographic Differences

The main geographic differences between youth are strongly related to “industrial north” and “agricultural south” divides. Youth in the north and in cities are more “modern” and young women often get to choose their own life partner. Southern youths are often involved in arranged marriages because of parental, economic, or household priorities. There are more economic opportunities and job options for youth in the north, particularly in Bishkek and Chui oblast, where youth are less likely to be unemployed or under pressure to migrate. Approximately 50 percent of youth in the south are unemployed, more than 70 percent of them are female, and their economic choices are often limited to agricultural work for low or no wages or migration.⁵ The quality of education and health care is also much poorer in the south than in the north. These north-south economic opportunity and service distinctions, border conflicts and ongoing competition over access to resources, such as arable and drinking water, in the south, have generated a heightened sense of injustice amongst southern youth.

Ethnic Differences

The ethnic composition of the population is 71 percent Kyrgyz, 14 percent Uzbek, 8 percent Russian, 1 percent Dungan, and 6 percent Uyghur, Tajik, Turk, Kazakh, Tatar, Ukrainian, Korean, or German. The religious composition is 78 percent Muslim, 17 percent Russian Orthodox, and 5 percent other religions.⁶

Evidence shows that youths’ attitudes toward ethnicity depend on context.⁷ With respect to personal and community relationships, ethnicity does not appear to be particularly divisive on the surface. However, when it comes to underlying political, language, and resource allocation issues, ethnic bias amongst youth becomes much more evident and drives a variety of issues. Uzbek and Tajik minorities in and around the Fergana Valley and in the “novostroyki” outside of Bishkek claim they have been subjected to neglect and discrimination by the GOKR.

The 2010 ethnic violence in the south continues to profoundly affect the attitudes of Uzbek youth who bore the brunt of the violence and whose trust in local and national institutions was undermined. Past researchers have found that animosity or distrust is also evident in areas of the south, particularly rural

⁵ Tilekeyev, Kanat, Bakytbek Tokubek uulu, Dilbara Kirbasheva, Baimat Niiazaliev, and Nazgul Abdrazakova. 2018. *Analysis of youth labor market trends in Kyrgyzstan and an assessment of youth labor market opportunities in selected project locations*. Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic: Institute of Public Policy and Administration (IPPA) at University of Central Asia (UCA).

⁶ *World Population Review: Kyrgyzstan Population 2019*. <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/kyrgyzstan-population/> (accessed May 2019).

⁷ Bagdasarova, Nina. 2014. *Youth of the Kyrgyz Republic: Values, social moods, and conflict behavior*. Central Asian Resources Center for Diversity Management Agency for Technical Co-operation and Development (ACTED).

areas, where there is greater physical and social separation of ethnic Uzbek and Kyrgyz youth. This research suggested that some Kyrgyz youth tended to associate, a priori, the more conservative religious appearance and behavior of some Uzbek youth, with extremism, and that this bias tended to deepen social divides.⁸ Tensions between Kyrgyz and Uzbek populations living in the cross-border enclaves are also allegedly driven by resentment of Uzbeks engaged in the more profitable trade and service sectors as opposed to the less profitable agriculture sector, which is typically the domain of the Kyrgyz.⁹

Gender Differences

Gender inequality continues to manifest in many forms despite the Kyrgyz Republic signing several international gender-related human rights treaties, which generated a plethora of progressive gender legislation and policies. There is an absence of mechanisms for implementing the National Strategy on Gender Equality, which has not been prioritized or resourced. Legal guarantees in relation to political access are not being applied. Female representation at local Kenesh levels in 2017 was estimated at 10 percent. Nationwide, there were no female governors, no female akims, and no female city mayors.¹⁰

Rigid gender stereotyping is a fact of life to which both females and males are expected to adhere. Female agency is severely constrained by their families and society. These constraints impact all aspects of their lives — reproductive health, education, employment, and civil rights — and are acute issues for rural women. Gender-based violence is widespread and rarely reported or punished, including bride kidnapping, one of its worst manifestations which, despite being illegal and carrying heavy penalties, continues to endure. Arranged and early-age marriages are commonplace, and polygamy is still practiced in rural areas.

Despite the Kyrgyz Republic achieving gender parity within primary and lower-secondary education, according to a 2017 study on youth professional and marriage choices, a “patriarchal logic” prevails that has enormous negative consequences for young women who face inevitable dilemmas in relation to their career and educational ambitions. The average age of marriage for females is 20.6 years, as opposed to 24.5 years for males. The vast majority of female youths, once married may have little choice other than engage in unpaid agricultural, domestic and caring work at home, at least during the first years of their children’s lives.¹¹ Neither male nor female youth subscribe to the idea of a symmetrical division of labor within professional or domestic spheres. Where youth deviate from such traditional perceptions, it is likely a result of geography. For example, in urban areas of the north, the idea of having two main breadwinners — once the children are old enough — has gained some traction.¹²

Women’s participation in the labor force in 2017 was 56 percent, compared to 80 percent for men. Many legal barriers still exist for women in relation to their workforce participation, including a list of 400

⁸ Möller-Slawinski, Heide and Dr. Marc Calmbach. 2015. *Youth in Kyrgyzstan: Bridging Tradition and Modernity*. Bonn and Eschborn, Germany: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). 2011. *Kyrgyzstan Situation - 2011 Supplementary Budget Requirements*. UNHCR.

¹⁰ Dubok, Helen and Dilbar Turakhanova. 2018. *Kyrgyzstan Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia*. EuroPlus Consulting & Management for Particip GmbH.

¹¹ Schroeder, Philipp. 2017. *Professional and Marriage Choices of Youth in Kyrgyzstan*. UN Women Kyrgyz Republic Country Office.

¹² Möller-Slawinski, Heide and Dr. Marc Calmbach. 2015. *Youth in Kyrgyzstan: Bridging Tradition and Modernity*. Bonn and Eschborn, Germany: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

occupations from which women are banned.¹³ These “protective provisions” can be categorized as (i) measures intended to shield women from physically strenuous or dangerous jobs like operating heavy machinery or laying concrete and (ii) measures intended to give women flexibility to balance their work and family commitments like giving pregnant women and women with young or disabled children the option to refuse night work.¹⁴

Female youth also earn one-third less than their male counterparts and, despite the fact that they form a high proportion of vocational education graduates, they are still extremely underrepresented in higher-skilled labor or senior leadership positions. Women engaged in unpaid, productive work and women outside the labor force account for 72 percent of the total working-age population living below the poverty line. Structural barriers to women’s participation in the labor force include the burden of unpaid domestic and caregiving work; women spend an average of 2.8 times more time on these activities than men. In addition, structural barriers impede women from establishing their own businesses and transitioning from the informal to the formal sector job market.¹⁵ Young women are at a significant disadvantage in the Kyrgyz Republic’s gender-imbalanced labor market and the situation points to the need for policy actions that support an increase in women’s labor market opportunities.

Youth Engagement with USAID Activities

In relation to youth engaging with youth service providers and benefiting from their youth-related activities there are five main barriers worldwide:¹⁶

1. Laws, policies, and regulations restrict adolescents and youth access to services;
2. Social, cultural, and religious norms impede adolescent and youth access to information and services related to sexual and reproductive health;
3. Economic, political, environmental, or internal (government/conflict/other) stress factors directly or indirectly restrict the scope of youth programming;
4. Historical or current social, economic, and ethnic discrimination of specific populations limits access of marginalized or vulnerable youth and leads them to practice self-exclusion from activities;
5. Social, cultural, or religious restrictions on youth (especially girls) limit their meaningful engagement in out-of-school or out-of-home activities.

Kyrgyz youth’s social and out-of-school activity involvement does not extend far beyond their family, school, study, and work commitments. Consequently, youth have very little free time. They tend to be practical in their preferences of activities; primarily choosing training or volunteering opportunities that can add value to their employment and career prospects, or sports.

¹³ Dubok, Helen and Dilbar Turakhanova. 2018. *Kyrgyzstan Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia*. EuroPlus Consulting & Management for Particip GmbH.

¹⁴ Mansfield, Deborah, Anara Niyazova, and Stephan Klasen. 2015. *Legal barriers to women's participation in the economy in the Kyrgyz Republic*. European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

¹⁵ United Nations Development Group. 2017. *United Nations Development Assistance Framework Guidance*. United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office.

¹⁶ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 2016. *Millions of lives transformed*. Annual Report, New York, New York: UNFPA.

V. Youth Policy

Background

In 2009, a National Youth Policy was adopted by the GOKR with minimal civil society and youth input and, as a result, was generally perceived by key stakeholders interviewed for this youth situational analysis as lacking strategic vision.¹⁷ A new Youth Strategy was formulated for 2016–2020, which took a much more multi-sectoral, evidence-based approach. It included wide consultations with GOKR, youth, civil society stakeholders, and assessment inputs, including one that assessed the current status of youth at the time. It also included an assessment of how well GOKR policies were working in respect of Global Youth Index indicators.¹⁸ The main goal of the current Youth Policy is to “create a new generation of citizens who are responsibly participating in the sustainable development of the country and competitive in the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres.”¹⁹

Responsibility for youth services were delegated to the State Agency for Youth, Physical Culture, and Sports (SAYPCS) operating under the general oversight of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development (MLSD). The SAYPCS is responsible for guiding the actions of all stakeholders — including those of international donors — in accordance with the strategy, as well as the development of a Youth Policy management system that accords with the GOKR’s decentralized system and its 2008 Law on Local Self Government (LSG) and State Administration. The law lists 23 core functions of LSG, two of which relate to the work of the SAYPCS: organizing activities with children and youth; and ensuring conditions for developing physical culture and sports.²⁰

FIGURE 2: YOUTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

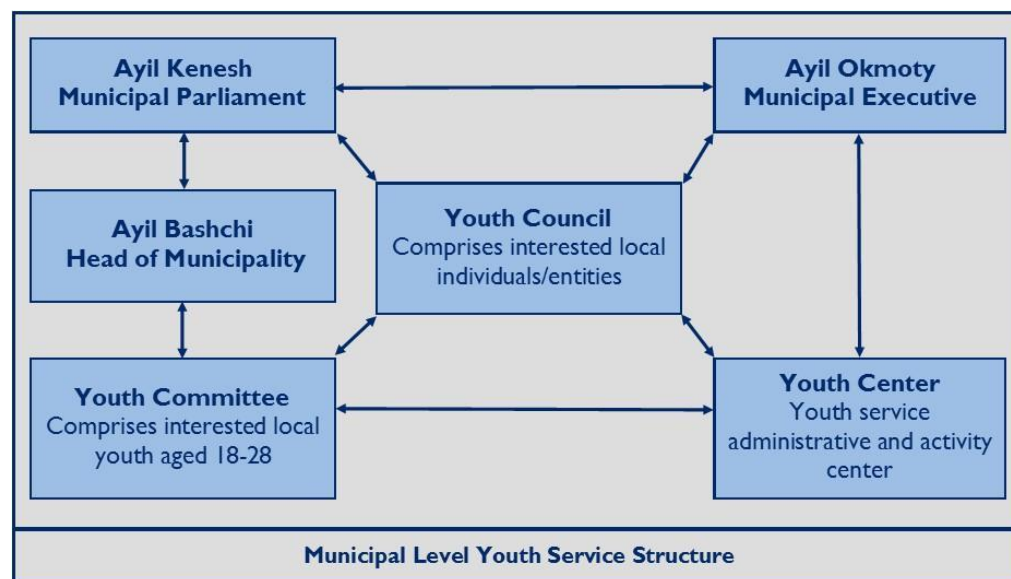


¹⁷ Beg, Ghulam Amin. 2017. *Youth Needs Assessment Report - In Selected Districts in the Corridor of Impact along the CASA 1000 Transmission Line in Osh, Jalalabad and Batken (Southern Regions of Kyrgyz Republic)*. Needs Assessment, The World Bank.

¹⁸ Kyrgyz Republic was ranked 64 out of 194 countries assessed in the Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016.

¹⁹ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2016. *Youth Strategy 2016-2020*. Bishkek: Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

²⁰ International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC). 2011. "Decentralisation in Kyrgyzstan."

FIGURE 3: YOUTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AT MUNICIPAL LEVEL

The SAYPCS is creating an administration to implement the policy. Figure 2 illustrates how the SAYPCS structure fits into the GOKR's three-tier central government, Local State Administration (LSA), and LSG structure. Key to its proper functioning are the 40 youth specialists (one per Rayon) responsible for training the 459 LSG entities in local-level implementation of the Youth Strategy and advising and monitoring their development of youth, physical culture, and sports services. Figure 3 illustrates how the implementation structure works at the municipal level where the key entities are the youth councils (composed of elected and appointed local officials, interested individuals, and entities) and youth committees (composed of interested local youth aged 18-28 years) whose function is to provide input to local Municipal Parliament decision-making and resource allocation in relation to youth provision. The youth councils and committees also support the work of local youth centers that are supposed to function as youth service administrative centers as well as activity centers. Youth council and committee members can also be delegated to attend and represent municipal interests on youth councils and committees at Rayon and Oblast levels and at the annual two-day national Republican Congress of Youth, whose November 12 opening date coincides with the Kyrgyz Republic's National Day of Youth.

Findings

"Well, our problems all begin with money. There [is] not any funding for youth activities." – FGD with Kochkor Youth Organizations

The Youth Policy management system that has emerged from the strategy is logical and consistent with the Kyrgyz Republic's decentralized system of government, but the GOKR has not demonstrated the political will to provide the necessary resources for its implementation. The USD \$150,000 per annum allocated within the GOKR's budget to fund the strategy seems inadequate to many stakeholders. Yearly budgets average approximately USD \$2,800 at Oblast levels and USD \$860-1,000 at Rayon levels.²¹ Municipalities have been left to their own devices to find money to fund youth services, which means they inevitably lose out to higher-priority municipal service considerations like drinking water, sanitation, and

²¹ Beg, Ghulam Amin. 2017. *Youth Needs Assessment Report - In Selected Districts in the Corridor of Impact along the CASA 1000 Transmission Line in Osh, Jalalabad and Batken (Southern Regions of Kyrgyz Republic)*. Needs Assessment, The World Bank.

road maintenance.

The Youth Policy is largely not implemented.

Years of central government, LSA, and LSG neglect have deteriorated youth services. Many Youth Councils and Youth Committees are still non-functioning and very few youth centers are operable. Service delivery issues are compounded by the fact that the youth councils and committees continue to function as ad hoc entities. They do not have charters or official protocols that define their responsibilities or membership. As a consequence, their representative and advocacy potential is susceptible to being undermined by dominant local interests.

The GOKR's commitment is limited by its capacity to fund the Youth Policy.

The Youth Policy is highly dependent upon the buy-in of local authorities. However, even when municipal authorities want to support youth activities, their limited financial resources and decentralized funding mechanisms create barriers. For example, budget codes do not include line items for youth activities and often prevent local governments from acting on youth priorities. International donors, including the UNDP, UNICEF, and GIZ, have supported the renovation and equipping of a number of youth centers and USAID has supported a range of youth consultation initiatives. In the absence of central or local government resources to establish the system, the GOKR is relying upon the international donor community to provide the necessary funds and, in particular, fund their two top priorities, which are:

- i) Office and equipment resources for the SAYPCS's 40 youth specialists; and
- ii) A rolling renovation program of redundant buildings owned by the LSAs and LSGs, plus provision of equipment, to produce a national network of youth centers.

Some young people have taken the initiative to self-organize.

Youth in Bishkek and Osh are supporting environmental causes (such as organizing clean-up campaigns or advocating for better municipal waste policies) and providing material and social support to orphanages, nursing homes, and other facilities. In rural Otuz-Adyr, youth used remittances from friends in Russia to develop a small fitness and sports center. The Tendik Youth Organization in Kochkor organized a sponsored run in which entrants donated a day's wages to establish a sports club. University students have been the most active subgroup in these initiatives, especially when they have acted as access points for international donor programs implementing activities like leadership or entrepreneurship trainings. However, though it appears such self-help projects are not uncommon, it also appears that neither are they the norm, nor do they often extend beyond cities and towns to the villages. Some of these self-organized activities are the result of the Youth in Action activity developed by USAID's Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening Program (CEPPS), whereby youth canvass the community and identify local problems, such as a rundown park. Youth then self-organize and volunteer their time and skills to address the problem. These efforts help overcome the traditional views held by parents and elders that youth voices, not possessing sufficient maturity, should carry little weight within the community.

Rural youth committees and councils display a gender imbalance.

According to the Women's Support Center, youth committees and councils in rural areas consist almost entirely of boys and young men who typically prioritize traditionally male activities, such as sports. This creates an initial disenfranchisement of young women that may persist and further devolve over their lifetimes and stunt their long-term community engagement or participation.

Recommendations

Although the GOKR's process in relation to the formulation of the 2016-2020 Youth Strategy and the framework for its implementation has received praise from stakeholders interviewed for this youth situational analysis, the amounts allocated to fund it have generated criticism. In relation to annual budget allocations, it is hard to disagree with the conclusions of a youth needs assessment conducted on the south in 2017: "It seems youth have been left to international donors and partners to support."²²

Near Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. USAID programs should create program implementation access/touch points with relevant key personnel within the SAYPCS structure and, wherever feasible, engage them in any youth-related activities. The creation of such touch points would bolster the work of the SAYPCS, especially with youth councils and committees at LSA and LSG levels, while at the same time provide opportunities for USAID programs to broaden the scope and reach of their youth-related activities. In creating such access/touch points, USAID programs should focus on improving the gender composition and sensitivities of the youth councils and committees.

PYD Domain: Encouraging Agency and Contribution

2. Youth councils and committees currently operate as ad hoc entities and urgently need governing charters and protocols to be constructed, agreed upon, and adopted by local authorities that define their composition and responsibilities. The Community and Municipal Governance Initiative (CAMI) is well placed and suitable to task for incorporating considerations of constructing and establishing charters for youth councils and committees into its LSG Visible Improvement Strategy meetings as a first step in their realization and in defining and agreeing on their responsibilities and membership selection protocols. CAMI should consider engaging the Institute of Youth Development as a potential partner for this process and working with UN Women on integrating more young women into youth councils and committees.
3. The evidence-based Youth in Action model developed under CEPPS should be benchmarked as an example of good youth engagement practice and one that could be used to inform and increase the effectiveness of a wide range of youth-focused activities.



Longer Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. USAID should explore the possibility of setting up a multi-donor fund that would work in coordination with the SAYPCS. Such a fund should reference SAYPCS's top priorities of providing operational resources for its youth specialists and a rolling program of building renovations and equipment provision dedicated to establishing a functioning network of youth centers.

²² Beg, Ghulam Amin. 2017. *Youth Needs Assessment Report - In Selected Districts in the Corridor of Impact along the CASA 1000 Transmission Line in Osh, Jalalabad and Batken (Southern Regions of Kyrgyz Republic)*. Needs Assessment, The World Bank.

Findings

Youth CSOs

Youth have generally favorable impressions of youth CSOs and their activities.

Youth and youth CSO representatives interviewed for this youth situational analysis said youth CSO training or voluntary activities that add value to youth employment or career prospects are their most useful and effective activities. Youth express a particular interest in skills training and entrepreneurship courses because of the confidence, knowledge, and networks they build. Youth who attended the Jashtyk summer camp shared that they found it extremely motivating and, in many instances, “life changing.” Youth CSO activities that incorporate volunteerism are universally popular amongst youth; the perception is that volunteerism builds skills, experience, and a sense of social responsibility.

Youth CSOs rely on traditional word-of-mouth and social media approaches to spread information about their activities.

Youth CSOs rely upon the local and professional community networks from which they have originated or work within to virally communicate information about their activities. They combine this word-of-mouth communication with limited use of social media channels. The main social media channel used is WhatsApp, primarily its group function, which coheres members/activists and participants in their activities. Other social media channels include the Russian application Telegram. Very few youth CSOs in our assessment have (or have the capacity to) set up active or functioning websites. Consequently, most use Facebook or Instagram as landing pages to advertise their existence or activities, but their informational content is more often than not limited and out of date.

Urban areas provide more opportunities for engagement with youth CSOs than rural areas.

In Bishkek and Osh, youth frequently cited opportunities to get involved in CSO activities. However, in rural areas, such as Kochkor, youth complain their local administrations were not doing enough to publicize information about youth CSO activities, especially in relation to their failing to use up-to-date social media channels as more efficient means of communication. Youth CSOs also expressed frustration with the state of youth engagement, citing a lack of funds to produce engaging programs, poor facilities, and dissociation from local government.

Youth CSOs have major informational and skills deficits.

Youth CSOs have little understanding of the role or function that CSOs play in society or in relation to the process of government. Their business models are primarily focused on winning grant awards as opposed to building multi-income stream, broad-based sustainable organizations. Their main skills deficits are in relation to compliance, financial and contractual (grants) management, monitoring and evaluation, proposal development, and report writing. Consequently, there are very few youth CSOs capable of acting as reliable program or service delivery partners. Concepts of civic duty and public service are key motivational drivers of successful organizations that believe the donor community needs to focus its efforts on long-term training and mentoring that they can subsequently use, and independently progress, to raise the capacity of the whole youth CSO sector.

The absence of an officially recognized National Youth Association is negatively impacting advocacy of youth interests.

There is a general consensus amongst youth CSOs that their interests need to be promoted by an officially recognized National Youth Association, according to interviews for this situational analysis. They believe

the most appropriate organization to assume this collective advocacy role is the Association of Youth Organizations, run by the Institute for Youth Development, with which most major youth CSOs are already affiliated.

Youth and Political Parties

“Young people want change in politics, but they are stopped. Youth cannot develop and grow. People in politics create barriers for them.” Focus Group Discussion, Bishkek females 24-28

Youth are disillusioned with and disinterested in joining political parties that remain resistant to youth inclusion.

Both male and female youth interviewed for this youth situational analysis expressed an equal and deep desire for political change but don't see political parties as a vehicle for change. Instead, they view political parties primarily as vehicles for a corrupt political, economic, and social elite to promote their own self-interest. Youth do not believe elites are interested in youth inclusivity, evidenced by, according to the interviewees, political parties subverting their electoral system mandate that a minimum of 15 percent of electoral candidates be youth by removing young people from their candidate lists after registering them with the central election authorities. Many youth also report that political parties undermine their electoral rights and effectiveness through attempts to offer financial incentives and buy youth votes during elections. Many youth would like to see an E-government accountability initiative established, whereby youth can register grievances, make suggestions, and report corruption. Although youth participants have enthusiastically received the creative electoral and democratic process activities of USAID's Kyrgyz Republic Political Process Program, thus far it is hard to discern the impact they have had on the behavior, practices, and policies of political parties in relation to youth.

Youth increasingly believe religion, as opposed to politics, is a force for producing positive change in their lives.

Although it is difficult to discern whether it is a result of increased religiosity or decreased trust in the promises of democracy, many youth — especially male youth — see Islam and its promotion of moral and spiritual lifestyles as key to producing positive change in their lives and those of their communities. Youth often turn to local religious figures for advice and support rather than local government officials or secular community leaders.

Youth and Public Administration

Youth believe government at all levels is characterized by a lack of efficacy.

State efficacy was a top concern of both male and female youth aged 24-28 interviewed for this youth situational analysis, who cited the issue more than twice as often as their younger (18-23) peers. However, all were equally concerned about the government's apparent inability to meet its service delivery responsibilities and believe this is visibly illustrated by their lack of attention to infrastructural issues. In urban communities, youth cited public transportation and waste management as major issues. In rural communities, water access was a primary concern. Youth suggested that CSOs were more effective than the government in providing services that address social issues.

Leadership

“Sometimes you need idols. You can see idols and try to repeat what they do. In our country you cannot find a lot of idols. This is also problem and barrier. When you have examples and idols it’s much easier for you to improve.” Bishkek males 24-28

Youth cite a lack of positive leadership or role models.

Although they may aspire to achieving wealth and status, youth lack positive role models in achieving these goals and many complain that the political, economic, and social elite of the country are corrupt and do not function as appropriate role models. At the same time, they find it hard to identify any role models within their peer groups or any cultural or sporting icons to whom they look up to or whose behaviors they admire.

Youth are quick to recognize their complicity in corruption.

Many of the same youth interviewed for this youth situational analysis who bemoaned the prevalence of corruption also accepted that paying and accepting bribes was an everyday fact of their lives. A youth working in government administration in Naryn expressed a common view that low government salaries were to blame for youth complicity in administrative system corruption:

“Youth who work in governmental institutions are all involved in corruption. Government is also to blame for this kind of situation, because they cannot provide good salaries. What do youth do then? They seek positions where they can get additional income from bribes.”

A young female in Bishkek (18-23) expressed the concern of many of her peers that, as she got older, her behavior would inevitably come to resemble the corrupt behavior of the older generation that she so abhors:

“There are no role models from [the] older generation. You try hard to develop; learn new skills but seeing what older generation, your professors do, makes you disappointed, demotivated. It is scary. I think that I will become like them when I get old, that the environment will change me and make me like them.”

Many leadership training programs for youth lack clear objectives and relevant content.

In primarily focusing on things like setting goals, delegation, and time and staff management, most leadership training programs for youth are more akin to organizational management, entrepreneurship, or soft skills trainings. They rarely focus on key contemporary leadership training concepts and content like leadership modalities and styles, ethical leadership and doing the right thing, key differences between managers and leaders, team building, motivation and inspiration, how to promote perseverance, or how to identify and coach talent.

Recommendations

USAID’s past and present civic participation programming has identified key issues and trends in youth civic participation. USAID has developed a multifaceted, comprehensive, and sophisticated portfolio of programs to track, address, and make a concerted, coordinated effort to get ahead of youth participation issues. New programs have positively built upon previous ones and their activities are evenly geographically distributed. They have contributed to the sustainable growth of youth CSOs, reactivated many redundant youth service, inclusion, and dialogue structures, and created many new ones that have greatly increased youth agency and advocacy. However, until political parties in the Kyrgyz Republic develop distinctive, youth-inclusive political visions, the impacts of USAID’s efforts will continue to be limited.

Near Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. USAID programs implementing youth-related activities need to commit to providing youth CSOs with extensive training and support that will allow them to effectively meet their partnering obligations. As a prerequisite, in-depth organizational capacity assessments should be completed on potential/actual youth CSO partners to ascertain their main informational and skills deficits and USAID's Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) frameworks for constructing comprehensive strategies for addressing them. A new tool specifically developed for youth-serving organizations is being finalized and should be posted soon to YouthPower.org.
2. CSO training needs to include successful engagement methodologies and use of recruitment plans that include more targeted rhetoric, appropriate technologies, and creative programs like those used by CEPES – IFES, which have been conducting media labs with partners, bloggers, and even singers, to understand the best media outlets, communication tools, and methodologies to engage youth.
3. CSO training should also include methodologies and practices for developing youth volunteerism including establishing and maintaining volunteer management structures.
4. USAID programs with youth CSO partners that are not currently affiliated with the Association of Youth Organizations of Kyrgyzstan should actively promote the idea of affiliation.

PYD Domain: Building Assets

5. In addition to the Civic Education Course offered by IFES at its Democracy Camps, USAID should adapt already existing youth leadership training material, specifically tailoring it to the Kyrgyz Republic and drawing upon contemporary leadership training concepts and content, for use by all its programs implementing youth-centered activities. Course construction should include the development of training manuals and training kits to support comprehensive Training of Trainers (TOT) courses.

Long Term

PYD Domain: Encouraging Agency and Contribution

1. USAID should work with the GOKR, other international donors, and the Institute of Youth Development to provide coordinated support for the continuance of Jashtar Camp and its accompanying Jashtyk summer camp.

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

2. The elective courses at universities on nonprofit management and CSOs established under the Collaborative Governance Program for youth opinion leaders to better understand the how and why of civil society activities should continue to be supported.
3. USAID's regional Partnership for Innovation (P4I) program should be used to further youth CSO growth trajectories through its support for the SAYPCS's implementation of the Law on State Procurement and advocacy for youth CSO involvement in the delivery of youth services.

VII. Youth and Human Rights

Background

Within the context of human rights are many issues related to gender, including gender-based violence, bride kidnapping, and LGBT rights, as well as child labor and youth with disabilities.

Gender-Based Violence

Women, especially female youth, are victims of many forms of violence in the Kyrgyz Republic, including domestic and sexual violence, bride kidnapping, child marriage, sex trafficking and abuse, neglect, and violence at school perpetrated by other children and staff. Domestic violence is particularly widespread, affecting nearly one-third of women and girls aged 15 to 49.²³ In fact, 2.7 percent of women and girls reported violence perpetrated by a partner or husband during the previous year. More than 62 percent of women and girls reported not having sought help or reporting the violence. According to secondary data sources, sexual violence shows little urban-rural variation and is highest in Batken and Talas regions, where 8 percent and 6 percent of women and girls aged 15-49, respectively, report being victims of sexual violence.²⁴ A 2012 GOKR study reported that 6.3 percent of adolescent girls aged 15-19 experienced physical violence from the age of 15, and 3.9 percent of the same age group reported physical violence during the previous year.²⁵

Bride Kidnapping

Bride kidnapping (*ala-kachuu*) is still a prevalent practice in some parts of the Kyrgyz Republic despite prohibition in the criminal code. Research conducted between 1999 and 2004 showed that, despite being made illegal in 1994, bride kidnapping rates increased from 33 percent of all women married against their will in 1999 to 45 percent in 2004.²⁶ Official statistics do not exist; however, an estimated 11,800 women and girls are bride-kidnapped each year, and more than 2,000 of them reported being raped.²⁷ According to the Center on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, “bride kidnapping [in the Kyrgyz Republic] appears to be socially legitimized and surrounded by a culture of silence and impunity, and cases of bride kidnapping remain under-reported.” Agreeing with gender and rights experts, the GOKR is working to increase awareness of the issue and uphold laws against it.²⁸

²³ Dubok, Helen and Dilbar Turakhanova. 2018. *Kyrgyzstan Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia*. EuroPlus Consulting & Management for Particip GmbH.

²⁴ National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic (NSC), Ministry of Health [Kyrgyz Republic], and ICF International. 2013. *Kyrgyz Republic Demographic and Health Survey 2012*. Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, and Calverton, Maryland, USA: NSC, MOH, and ICF International.

²⁵ Lehtimäki, Susanna. 2016. *Adolescent Health in Kyrgyzstan*. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan.

²⁶ Ibraeva, Gulnara, Anara Moldosheva, Anara Niyazova. 2011. *Kyrgyz Country Case Study*. Case Study, The World Bank.

²⁷ Chung, Christine. 2016. “Slow Progress in Ending Kyrgyzstan’s Bride Kidnapping Culture.” News Deeply. September 5. <https://www.newsdeeply.com/womenandgirls/articles/2016/09/05/slow-progress-in-ending-kyrgyzstans-bride-kidnapping-culture>.

²⁸ Human Rights Watch. 2019. “Kyrgyzstan: Pressure builds to Protect Women and Girls.” Human Rights Watch. May 28. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/05/28/kyrgyzstan-pressure-builds-protect-women-and-girls>

LGBT Rights

Antidiscrimination laws covering Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) rights are guaranteed within the Constitution and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. However, in reality, LGBT rights are not adequately protected. In 2014, the GOKR began to pass legal reforms and implement a more conservative agenda concerning gender expression and sexuality. In 2017, legislation that would ban “propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations” was introduced to parliament for a second reading. Youth who deviate from the heterosexual norm are generally rejected by their peers who view LGBT people as “unnatural” and a threat to the all-important concept of family. Consequently, LGBT youth struggle to find safe places to meet and often face extreme violence from their peers in retaliation for violating accepted notions of gender. LGBT individuals often conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity to protect themselves from harassment, limited economic opportunity, and violence. Consequently, transgender Kyrgyz often choose to migrate to Russia, where larger urban spaces offer a higher level of anonymity.²⁹

Child Labor

In 2018, an estimated 27 percent of 5- to 17-year-olds were engaged in child labor and 12 percent of them worked under hazardous conditions that were likely to harm their health, safety, or morals.^{30 31} Thirty-four percent of male children are likely to be involved in child labor, compared to 19 percent of female children; rural areas have almost three times higher child labor percentages than urban areas.³² The highest regional rates of child labor are in Naryn (40 percent), Talas (35 percent), and Osh (33 percent). Child labor is defined differently by age group, but in general it includes economic work (such as a family farm or business), unpaid household chores, and hazardous work. In the Kyrgyz Republic, a majority of 5- to 11-year-olds engaged in child labor are participating in economic work; while 12-to 17-year-olds are engaged in hazardous work.

Disability

The Kyrgyz Republic has yet to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and lacks the regulatory framework, guidelines, protocols, and standards that enable quality services and programs for families with children with disabilities. Specific disability statistics for the youth demographic are unavailable; however, according to MLSD data, in 2014 there were 156,000 people with disabilities, including 27,000 children under 18 years of age. According to these statistics, people with disabilities make up 3 percent of the total population in the Kyrgyz Republic. These numbers/percentages significantly deviate from World Health Organization global countrywide averages of 10–15 percent.³³ It is safe to

²⁹ Arnold, Katie. 2018. “Transgender Kyrgyz Seek Unlikely Refuge in Russia.” BBC News. April 10. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41437866>.

³⁰ National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF. 2019. *2018 Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Snapshot of Key Findings*. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF.

³¹ International Labour Organization (ILO). n.d. *Hazardous child labour*. Accessed May 2019. <https://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/WorstFormsofChildLabour/Hazardouschildlabour/lang--en/index.htm>.

³² Dubok, Helen and Dilbar Turakhanova. 2018. *Kyrgyzstan Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia*. EuroPlus Consulting & Management for Particip GmbH.

³³ Disabled World. 2018. *Disability Statistics*. October 2. Accessed May 2019. <https://www.disabled-world.com/disability/statistics/>.

assume that not only are the MLSD's assessment, classification, and registration processes for those with disabilities inadequate, but disability carries widespread stigma, which obscures the real number of people with disabilities. In 2012, almost 30 percent of children in residential care had a disability.³⁴

Findings

Gender-based violence is universal in private and public spaces.

Violence committed by men against their partners was a resounding concern among young women across data collection sites; however, young men in PGDs did not express the same level of concern. PGD participants stated that sexual assault occurs universally across public and private spaces in the Kyrgyz Republic. In the home, girls and women endure rape and assault by fathers and husbands; in public, girls and women are at risk of assault by strangers.

Female youths are dependent on abusive spouses or family members who have physical and economic power.

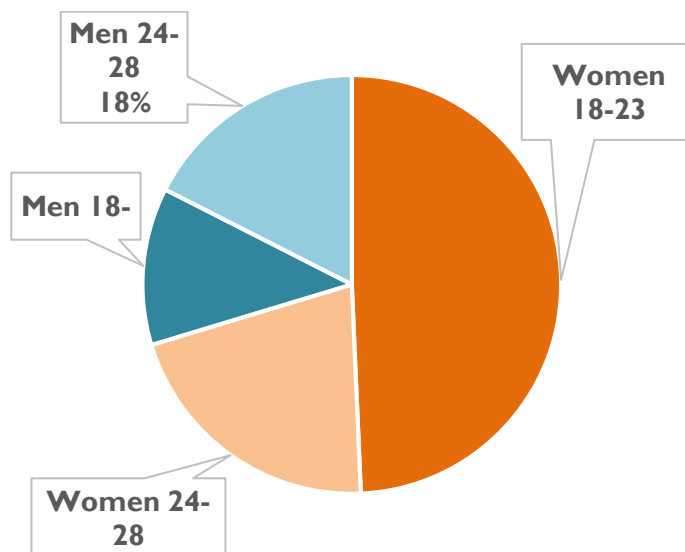
As one woman in a PGD for women ages 24-28 in Osh stated, “Husbands beat wives, we have many such families. Women cannot work or go somewhere because they are totally controlled.” These female youth mentioned that husbands become aggressive over minor issues — food not being ready or the gate being locked when they come home from work. These forms of control and coercion reflect larger power imbalances between partners. As the Director of the Tendesh Crisis Center pointed out, the subsequent economic disempowerment means that women who are victims of domestic violence depend on their abusive husbands' incomes for survival, particularly in rural villages.

Violence perpetrated by parents, siblings, and in-laws against female youths are linked to the control exerted over women by elder family members and husbands and are often invisible outside the home. Female youth in Osh noted, “We have a lot of family violence. It is always kept in secret. People try to solve these issues privately. Society puts on pressure on women in such situations.”

Bride kidnapping — a type of human trafficking — is socially accepted.

According to the Center on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, “bride kidnapping [in the Kyrgyz Republic] appears to be socially legitimized and surrounded by a culture of silence and impunity, and cases of bride kidnapping remain under-reported” despite criminalization and toughened legislation. Except for male youths aged 18-23 in Otuz-Adyr who cited the traditional aspect of bride kidnapping, all other youths in the PGDs said the negative practice should cease. State Migration Service representatives

FIGURE 4: MENTIONS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PGD DEMOGRAPHICS



³⁴ UNICEF Kyrgyzstan. 2018. *Children with disabilities*. Accessed May 2019. <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/children-disabilities>.

noted that bride kidnapping is trafficking because of the transactional element: parents are usually given a monetary sum from the groom's family (this payment is common in non-kidnapping marriages as well). Most PGD participants said the practice of bride kidnapping has declined in frequency across the Kyrgyz Republic (even though some secondary data shows it increasing), but that it still occurs in rural areas. The Tendesh Crisis Center staff attributed this decline to the awareness-raising efforts of NGOs.

An urban-rural divide is apparent in measuring tolerance toward LGBT community.

LGBT rights are improving, but intolerance is still common. Interviewees from the Reproductive Health Alliance note that Kyrgyz society has become more tolerant toward the LGBT community in the past few decades, which is partially the result of organizations mobilizing to increase tolerance. However, many politicians and members of parliament are becoming more conservative on the issue and some youth mirror those attitudes. For example, male youth aged 18-23 in Kochkor expressed strong prejudice toward the LGBT community and a distrust of the organizations working to advance LGBT rights. These attitudes were expressed in tandem with support for additional mosques in rural Kochkor and a desire for more spiritual development among youth. In the more urban Osh City, young men did not express the same prejudice, instead complaining of homophobia and the need for greater tolerance and acceptance of diversity. PGDs with female youth did not garner any specific data on their perspectives of LGBT rights.

Child labor appears to be most common among rural and agrarian communities.

At the Tendesh Crisis Center, the director explained, *“Children of migrant[s] are mostly left to their grandparents. Their grandparents do not look after them well. Those children are forced into work during seasonal employment or make them to look after cattle instead of going to school.”* However, child labor is a daily experience for many girls, whose parents require them to cook and clean as preparation for living with and working under in-laws. While some household chores are normal, extended hours of chores that prevent young girls from going to school can become child labor. In fact, during a key informant interview, the Dignity and Rights Program indicated that rates of child labor in the country are increasing as parents focus on their immediate need for income over the ambiguous long-term benefits of education.

People with disabilities face discrimination, but also lack access to infrastructure, transit.

“There are people with disabilities. We do not see them. They cannot leave their rooms. Would be good if there were specialties, training for them. They are unemployed, they do not feel needed to others and the country. They are remembered once a year. Sometimes they motivate us, but we do not do anything for them.” – Young women, 18-23, Bishkek

According to PGD participants, several of whom are blind or nearly blind, people with disabilities face specific challenges including access to appropriate infrastructure and public transit, as well as discrimination and humiliation. Young people also indicated that NGOs and USAID support children with disabilities and their families, and that youth committees host events to benefit those with disabilities. One young woman mentioned that caregivers who looked after children with disabilities receive a monthly allowance from the government, but other youth argued that the state does not do enough to support the disabled community.

Recommendations

USAID should develop a strategy that engages youth in working on a variety of issues such as GBV, bride kidnapping, LGBT rights, and advocating for people with disabilities. Youth show interest in advocating for

people with disabilities and considered volunteering as a way to support the population. Overall, attention must be paid to women's rights if the country expects to advance; young women will not be able to reach their full potential unless cultural norms are changed.

Near Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. Through its HIV/AIDS and reproductive health work, USAID should support partners to increase access to age-appropriate crisis hotlines and other services for young women to report issues of gender-based violence (especially sexual and domestic violence) and bride kidnapping.
2. Within all projects, USAID should ensure that young people with disabilities are identified and that they have access to services, events, and resources.



PYD Domain: Encouraging Youth Agency and Contribution

3. As part of USAID's CEPPS and DAR programs, engage youth in volunteering, advocacy, or service-learning activities dedicated to issues such as gender-based violence, LGBT rights, the rights of people with disabilities, and victims of trafficking. It is important to take a "do no harm" approach, as many of these issues are very controversial.
4. The Mission should work with male and female youth to promote positive gender practices. This could be done by integrating gender awareness messages into various activities, including health education or school-based events. Educating males and females separately could be especially helpful to offer each group an opportunity to discuss their perspectives and concerns and explain to male youths how to prevent gender-based violence. Other ideas can be found in USAID's report on working with men and boys to end gender-based violence.³⁵



PYD Domain: Increasing Assets

5. Through its HIV/AIDS and reproductive health work, USAID should support partners to integrate awareness education on LGBT rights.

Long Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. USAID needs a long-term strategy for gender equality issues, especially with young people. Without real changes to build more equity and inclusion, the Kyrgyz Republic will continue to lag on human rights and economic development. All democracy and governance projects should promote gender equality and female empowerment through community awareness and a behavior change campaign. Projects should also train youth-led and youth-serving organizations to hold the government accountable to laws protecting women's rights, which are not properly implemented.
2. USAID should expand its health initiatives to interface with other youth-facing community partners, such as law enforcement and state security agencies. Together, they can address gender-based violence issues adjacent to HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.



³⁵ Alemu, Beza Seyoum, Ph.D. 2015. *Working with Men and Boys to End Violence Against Women and Girls: Approaches, Challenges, and Lessons*. United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

VIII. Youth and Migration and Human Trafficking

Background

Approximately 50,000 Kyrgyz citizens emigrate every year to work abroad, mainly to Russia, and, to a lesser extent, Kazakhstan, Turkey, and the Gulf States. Estimates vary, but between 650,000 to 1 million of the country's total population of 6.25 million are labor migrants. The majority is aged between 20 and 30 years old and have completed a general or specialized secondary education. In 2016, an estimated 40 percent of Kyrgyz emigrants in Russia were women and 18 percent of documented emigrants were estimated to be children.³⁶ However, more recently, the number of female migrants is at parity with males. Rural areas of Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Chui oblasts are the main sources of labor migration.³⁷ Youth FGD participants cited unemployment and low-income levels as the root cause of migration; many feel intense pressure to emigrate to improve their and their families' economic situation. Given that emigrant remittances account for approximately 40 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), the GOKR sees emigration as an economic necessity that it should support until the Kyrgyz economy significantly improves.



More than 90 percent of all human trafficking cases relate to labor exploitation and just under 10 percent of those to sexual exploitation in the Kyrgyz Republic. Approximately 60 percent of Kyrgyz emigrants do not have all the required documents that enable them to comply with the immigration rules of their destination countries. Since the accession of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), processes and procedures for immigrants and their families to stay and work in Russia and the Central Asian region have been simplified, and access to health care and education for children in these states has improved. However, given that the majority of Kyrgyz emigrants have gaps in their documentation or are undocumented, many cannot get employment contracts and cannot access such services. Labor emigrants, even those possessing relevant documentation, may be subjected to restricted access to health care, education, and justice. According to a study on emigrant vulnerabilities conducted in 2016, female labor emigrants, isolated from their communities and families, are more vulnerable to abuse from their partners and other male Kyrgyz labor emigrants. Child emigrants, whether alone or accompanied by their family, are twice as vulnerable.³⁸

³⁶ Laurent, Rosalie, Maroussia Ferry, and Sergei Mikheev. 2016. *Women and children from Kyrgyzstan affected by migration: An exacerbated vulnerability*. Paris, France: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

³⁷ UNDP Human Development Reports. 2010. *Kyrgyzstan: Successful Youth - Successful Country*. UNDP Kyrgyzstan.

³⁸ Laurent, Rosalie, Maroussia Ferry, and Sergei Mikheev. 2016. *Women and children from Kyrgyzstan affected by migration: An exacerbated vulnerability*. Paris, France: International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

Labor migration changes the patriarchal family model, as women left at home become heads of households during the men's absence. Women are more vulnerable to discrimination, forced labor, or abuse at home by their husbands' parents. Divorced women are often denied property rights or custody of their children under some interpretations of Islamic law. Children of Kyrgyz emigrants left at home with grandparents or other relatives are vulnerable to risks associated with restricted access to health care and education, forced labor, and physical and sexual violence. Migration is also negatively associated with bride kidnapping, polygamy, and unregistered religious marriage practices.³⁹

Findings

"We cannot realize our dreams in our country... Even if you want to stay, the country does not need you." Bishkek females 18-28

The pursuit of economic opportunities is the main driver of emigration.

The primary cause of migration among youth is the pursuit of economic opportunity and skill building. The pursuit of high-quality and affordable education is the second major driver of migration and a third, more minor driver, is the desire to leave the subordinated position youth feel they occupy within their families and communities. Most youth interviewed for this situational analysis who cite employment issues as a trigger for migration do not argue that jobs do not exist for them in the Kyrgyz Republic, but rather that existing jobs do not offer a livable wage. Youth in the PGDs considered migration within the Kyrgyz Republic is less stressful than emigration to another country. However, some youth suggested that even internal migration can produce challenges for rural youth when adapting to life in big cities.

The unpreparedness of migrants exposes them to a variety of vulnerabilities and risks.

All youth interviewed in FGDs for this situational analysis expressed concern about the unpreparedness of young emigrants for the issues they face working abroad. Many youths cited language barriers that militated against self-advocacy and produced ongoing challenges to interacting with foreign employers and bureaucracies. Others cited issues with navigating their way around hostile city environments, police, and even criminal organizations. The Dignity and Rights program (DAR) stressed that such difficulties can increase the likelihood of labor exploitation and trafficking. DAR estimates that approximately 60,000 Kyrgyz emigrants are at risk of being trafficked; 90 percent are at risk of being subjected to forced labor and 10 percent at risk of sexual exploitation. Though some emigrants enjoy safe and lucrative stays abroad, most experience significant challenges. Youth in Otuz-Adyr mentioned during the FGDs that *"migrants work in harsh and difficult conditions abroad. I think only 10 percent get better jobs and are satisfied with their life."* Other youth described emigrants working 12-14 hours per day, six days per week in Russia, often in hazardous environments. After experiencing such physical and psychological stress, it comes as no surprise that most youth said emigrants return home with a variety of health problems, including HIV and tuberculosis.

Migration creates reproductive age gaps and a brain drain.

The State Migration Service (SMS) cited two major negative social implications of youth migration. The age gap created by the absence of youth in reproductive phase will likely negatively affect future demographics of the country. And, a brain drain, where the protracted loss of high- and low-skilled labor,

³⁹ Ferrell, William B. 2016. *Vulnerable to Manipulation: Interviews with Migrant Youth and Youth Remittance-Recipients in the Kyrgyz Republic*. Mercy Corps.

often for a decade or more, causes Kyrgyz communities to lose key engines of economic growth and social development. All stakeholders consulted for this youth situational analysis expressed concern that children who are left behind with relatives are more at risk of anti-social behavior, labor exploitation, or sexual abuse. They are also at risk from the long-lasting cognitive and non-cognitive effects that result from long absences of parental care.

Migration also produces positive community impacts.

In community-minded Islamic villages, the substantial remittances that youth send to their families and communities are used as public investments to fill gaps in government funding and can help build schools, hospitals, and kindergartens. The valuable skills that youth acquire when working abroad could support the development of the Kyrgyz Republic upon their return. Migration also offers a means for youth to learn about other cultures and adopt positive social and cultural practices they valued while abroad. These practices are especially valued by youth who view traditional Kyrgyz norms as inhibiting or problematic.

Migrant services need to be tailored to different migration phases.

Before migration: Although many CSOs, embassies, and private labor agencies provide services to help prepare youth to work or study abroad, youth interviewed for this situational analysis would like to see more services developed including language training, cultural preparation, technical skills courses, and links to employers. Other important awareness and training topics include trafficking and abuse prevention. While many would like the GOKR to take the lead, SMS capacity is severely constrained by a lack of resources: *“We are forced to work with NGOs and international organizations. There are more than 1 million people in migration.... and only 44 SMS staff.”* SMS is focusing its efforts on reducing trafficking, sexual abuse, and labor exploitation by providing information on emigrant’s rights under the Kyrgyz Republic, host country laws, and international treaties. To achieve this, SMS uses social media to disseminate information and is partnering with the International Organization for Migration to produce the Migrant Handbook mobile application, which contains information on migration processes.

During migration: Numerous crisis and resource centers provide services to migrants, their children, and victims of trafficking. These organizations — including Sezim, Arysh, Aikol, Nurjobia, Ulybka, Blagodat, Aymira and Dia — provide social and psychological assistance, shelters, counter-trafficking hotlines, and advocacy services. DAR also supports a crisis hotline to help victims of trafficking. To help support the children of emigrants, who are at high risk at home and abroad, SMS is working with the MLSD to set a formal legal definition for the children of emigrants and the legal empowerment of a temporary guardianship process.

After migrants return: Returning emigrants have various needs and challenges, and service providers, including SMS, are also focusing efforts to support the reintegration of those who are returning permanently: *“Our priority is to prepare conditions for the returning citizens who had been successfully working abroad, to become potential investors or as a good bridge for attracting investment.”* Service options include home financing packages, investment matching schemes, and other initiatives designed to support a decrease in migrant spending on (primarily imported) consumer items. GIZ has also designed a labor market reintegration program, wherein a council of job providers has developed an examination to measure skills demanded in the labor market. Youth who score well on the exam receive a certificate confirming their skills that adds to their job market value.

Recommendations

Youth see migration as a fact of life, one to which they are resigned and accept with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Most do not see it as a permanent solution to their economic problems, but rather as a necessary phase they must endure to provide a better income and future financial security for themselves and their families. As a consequence, youth are united in their desire for services that diminish risks and hardships associated with migration.

Near Term

PYD Domain: Building Assets

1. Support the development of language (especially Russian) and cultural preparation programs for would-be youth migrants.
2. Support employment preparation for youth via skills training programs and links to employers in commonly migrated-to countries.
3. Build youth awareness of and provide tools and resources to prevent human trafficking and abuse while migrating, particularly for young women.

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

4. Support expansion of SMS data capabilities so it can better track and serve the Kyrgyz diaspora by remaining in communication, both to assure their safety abroad and prepare for their reintegration when they return.

Long Term

PYD Domain: Building Assets

5. To stem the tide of migration, USAID should consider long term investments in education and economic growth programming that build youth skills for employment and self-employment.

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. Track research on the intersection of gender and migration to better understand how to reduce the specific vulnerabilities and pressures experienced by girls and women and identify any gaps for further research as necessary.
2. Track research on the health issues of returning youth migrants to better serve those returning with chronic illnesses and acquired diseases and identify gaps for further research as necessary.



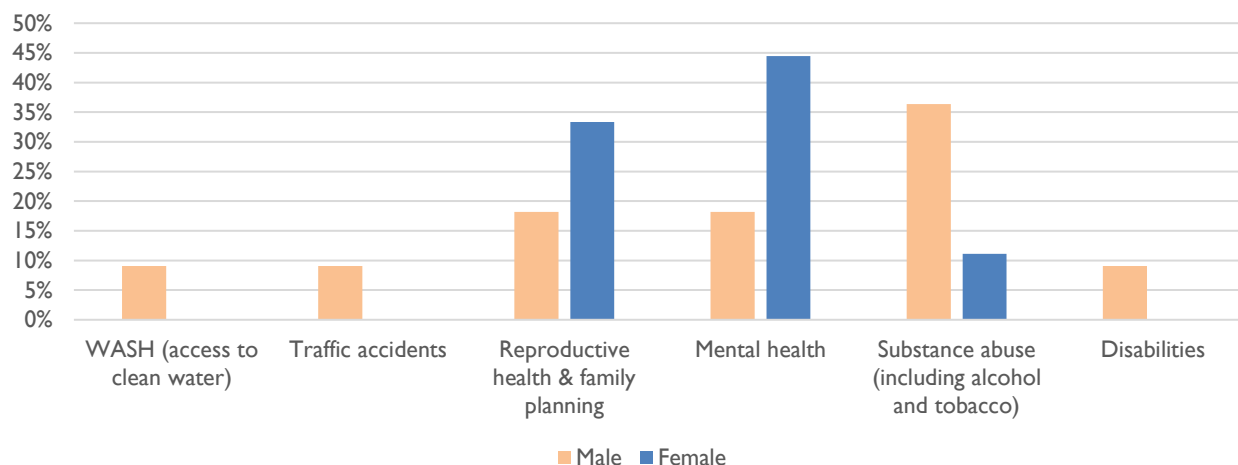
IX. Youth and Health

Background

Despite the GOKR significantly improving its health service delivery, many health areas continue to be a matter of concern. Maternal mortality, neonatal mortality, and family planning remain major challenges, and the reproductive rights of women appear to be under threat, especially among rural populations and female youth. Adolescent health has not been prioritized in national programs because of the GOKR's focus on decreasing child mortality rates. UNICEF advocates that, with improvements in child mortality rates, the GOKR should start concentrating on youth health and mental health issues. In particular, health

and safety issues related to increased road accidents, early and forced marriages, increased incidence of adolescent mental health cases and suicides, as well as general health and wellness issues, should become

FIGURE 5. MOST COMMONLY REPORTED HEALTH CONCERNS IN PGDs, BY GENDER



priorities.⁴⁰ Linked closely to these topics are the most commonly reported health concerns mentioned by youth during PGDs, listed in Figure 5.

Tuberculosis (TB)

The Kyrgyz Republic is one of 30 countries worldwide laboring under a high burden of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB). It is estimated that every year there are on average 1,400 new cases of TB in the country. Until comparatively recently, the Ministry of Health (MOH) was struggling with the serious challenges associated with combating MDR-TB, which included long treatment periods plus the need for efficient supply management and a full range of effective treatment options. USAID funded the MOH to develop and implement an action plan to improve TB care that resulted in a significant restructuring of the MOH's TB hospital network to provide more efficient services, expand outpatient treatment, and optimize laboratory services. As a result, the number of TB beds in hospitals is expected to decrease by 40 percent by 2020, and by an additional 20 percent by 2026, which will translate to a 10 percent annual reduction in unnecessary hospitalizations and an estimated cost savings of \$2.3 million.⁴¹

HIV/AIDS

The HIV epidemic in the Kyrgyz Republic is transitioning from an early concentrated epidemic among people who inject drugs (PWID) into an advanced concentrated HIV epidemic with increased levels of sexual transmission to female partners of PWID and among men who have sex with men (MSM). Highest at-risk groups are PWID, MSM, transgender individuals, and sex workers. One important reason for the concentration of HIV in the country and among those groups is the Kyrgyz Republic's location on one of

⁴⁰ Lehtimäki, Susanna. 2016. *Adolescent Health in Kyrgyzstan*. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan.

⁴¹ United States Agency for International Development (USAID). 2018. *Committed to Ending TB: Tuberculosis Report to Congress*. USAID.

the main drug trafficking routes.⁴² The GOKR has created a supportive policy environment for HIV that includes engaging in strong partnerships with donors and a willingness to work with CSOs to combat the disease. The Republican AIDS Center and the MOH's National TB Plan Team collaborate with USAID and other donors on training and systems-building to support the GOKR in delivering a coordinated, effective, evidence-based HIV response.

Adolescent Pregnancy and Contraception

Adolescent fertility rates in the Kyrgyz Republic are the second highest in the Central Europe/Asia region at 42 per 1,000 live births for women under 20 years of age. The rates increased by 25 percent from 2000 to 2012. More than 4,700 young girls aged 15-19 gave birth in 2013, and of them, almost 300 gave birth to a second child. Adolescent birth rates are highest in Talas, Batken, and Jalal-Abad oblasts, and among girls from rural areas, the lowest wealth quintile, and minority families with Uzbek background.⁴³ According to GOKR data, these differences are not related to lack of access to maternal health services, since there are clinics available to adolescents and older women across the country.

Substance Abuse

In Central Asian countries, alcohol and tobacco are easily available and affordable. Many adolescents report that they start smoking or using alcohol or drugs from the age of 11 or younger, as they have access to substances at home, from friends, or from shops or street vendors.⁴⁴ Opiate use continues to be a major concern. The majority of opiate abusers are older youth and adults along the major drug trafficking routes that run through Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Chui, and opiate abuse is lowest among youth in isolated regions like Naryn and Issyk-Kul.⁴⁵

Mental Health

From 2004 to 2012, the suicide rate for male youth aged 15-29 increased from 15 to 16.3 per 100,000. Among girls the same age, the rate has more than doubled over the same period, from 3 to 6.6.⁴⁶ However, because of the stigma involved, families might not report the deaths as suicides and figures are assumed to be much higher. Mental health issues are a significant cause of morbidity among youth of all ages. The GOKR has recognized that mental health is an issue for the citizenry and in 2017 adopted a new program focused on the issue.⁴⁷ Its goal was to “strengthen mental well-being, prevent mental disorders, provide affordable medical care, accelerate recovery, respect human rights, and reduce the mortality, morbidity, and disability of people with mental disorders.”

⁴² Gzirishvili, Dr. David, Consulting Group Curatio Ltd. 2015. *A study in the area of HIV in the Kyrgyz Republic*. USAID and Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic.

⁴³ Lehtimäki, Susanna. 2016. *Adolescent Health in Kyrgyzstan*. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan.

⁴⁴ Somani, Salima, and Shaista Meghani. 2016. *Substance Abuse among Youth: A Harsh Reality*. Los Angeles: Emerg Med.

⁴⁵ Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC). 2015. *Kyrgyzstan 2015 Crime and Safety Report*. Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic: OSAC.

⁴⁶ Lehtimäki, Susanna. 2016. *Adolescent Health in Kyrgyzstan*. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan.

⁴⁷ Bengard, Anastasia. 2017. "Kyrgyzstan to adopt new program for mental health care." 24. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, September 28. https://24.kg/english/63913_Kyrgyzstan_to_adopt_new_program_for_mental_health_care/.

Findings

“Migrant men are far away from their wives, however sexual needs do not go away; therefore, they use services or have “one-night stands,” which leads to increase of sexually transmitted infections among migrants. There is a high risk of sexually transmitted infections among migrants.” – Osh males 18-23

“Women have no possibilities to go with their problems such as STDs to the hospitals, they try to hide it.” – Osh females 24-28

TB and HIV/AIDS are the two biggest health concerns in Kyrgyz Republic. Leaders of youth committees said during interviews that the incidence of both diseases has increased over the past five years. Youth in Kochkor, Naryn, and Osh expressed strong concern about the HIV/AIDS epidemic in their regions and young men in Bishkek were aware of the high incidence of TB. Assessment participants also raised concerns about reproductive health, mental health, and substance abuse.

Youth lack TB awareness, scientific knowledge, and access to treatment.

Awareness of TB transmission, disease progression, incidence, and treatment is mixed among youth. Respondents in both rural and urban communities recognized that TB incidence is high in the Kyrgyz Republic. Additionally, TB experts believe youth lack scientific knowledge about the disease, particularly about the transmission and treatment of MDR-TB.

Undocumented individuals reported lack of access to information, testing, and treatment for TB, rendering them more vulnerable to infection or treatment drop-out. The leader of a youth organization in Bishkek explained that *“tuberculosis is checked in schools and hospitals but if the person is registered nowhere, if he is living in bazaars, he is not checked. The population is not informed enough.”* Additionally, experts say there is no difference in risk between young women and men, or different age groups. Individuals with TB report experiencing stigma, and many forgo testing out of fear that their status will be recorded and hurt their chances of future employment and migration. Migration also prevents youth from adhering to treatment. Additionally, experts believe that TB treatment is too long and inflexible for youth.

Experts agree that Kyrgyz youth still lack proper awareness on HIV-related issues, in particular at-risk youth.

During KIIs, the HIV Flagship program and Republican AIDS Center stated that they believe sexual transmissions accounts for a majority (about 80 percent) of new HIV infections in the Kyrgyz Republic. This shift is attributed to the increasing popularity of non-injectable drug use (such as Methylenedioxy methamphetamine or MDMA) among the youth, which increases the incidence of unsafe sexual activity. Male and female youth from all regions and age groups who participated in the PGDs for this situational analysis consistently reported that their sources of information about HIV/AIDS are schools, medical centers, the internet, and some seminars from organizations such as the National Society of the Red



Crescent or the MOH. Female youth in Osh said they do not have access to information on the virus and a few PGD respondents in Otuz-Adyr (men aged 24-28) admitted they have never heard about HIV/AIDS before. Experts explain that while youth start learning about HIV/AIDS in schools at the age of 16, youth younger than that lack information about the subject but are sometimes sexually active. The combination of these factors renders this age group particularly vulnerable. Some teachers tried to teach this population about HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention, but were stopped by parents and religious leaders who prohibited the topic.

Obstacles to HIV treatment and prevention stem from stigma, as well as a lack of information and resources.

Although some of the PGD respondents were aware of HIV and how to prevent infection, experts and some youth claim that there is still a lack of information. Stigma prevents many from seeking testing and treatment, as individuals fear that their communities and employers will find out about their status and they will be ostracized. Providing HIV testing and treatment to youth is also difficult because of a lack of access to free testing and the migration patterns of infected individuals who need treatment.

Alcohol and tobacco use are the main substance abuse issues.

Young men in rural regions were the demographic most concerned with substance abuse — namely alcohol and cigarettes. PGD respondents believed that marijuana and other drug use was either not a common phenomenon, or that this behavior was not harmful. Young men in Kochkor are worried about car accidents that result from driving under the influence of alcohol. Youth as young as 12 years old are smoking cigarettes according to some accounts. Youth in Osh, Kochkor, and Otuz-Adyr equally blame the root causes of tobacco smoking and alcohol drinking among youth on the lack of education and job opportunities. Unemployed rural youth, with little else to do in their free time, engage in substance abuse out of boredom.

Depression and suicide are of concern, as well as limited access to mental health services.

The next most discussed health topic after substance abuse was mental health and the need for psychological services. Respondents in rural and urban communities were equally concerned with the incidence of depression. Although depression and suicide are reported, access to psychological services is rare. Both young women and men mentioned depression and the need for psychologists; female youth were more likely to be concerned with this issue than men.

Early pregnancy is common, and female youths are typically not aware of their reproductive rights or family planning methods.

During a KII, a representative of the Reproductive Health Alliance suggested that cultural and religious barriers prevent the free flow of information to young women. In addition, a representative from the HIV Flagship program stated that, *“Around 7-8 years ago an instruction manual for teachers of sexual and reproductive health was published and distributed among teachers. Teachers started conducting sessions, but some parents and religious leaders were against it and the sessions were cancelled and prohibited.”* While some schools provide sexual education, the information is highly controlled. There is a clear lack of access to quality reproductive health services. In addition, some PGD participants’ perception was that women’s health in the Kyrgyz Republic has declined since the end of the Soviet Union because the quality of products supplied from China are worse than products that were available from the USSR. While describing an HIV/AIDS seminar they attended, young men in Osh discussed their lack of comfort with the topic of reproductive

health saying: “During this training, the speakers covered the methods of contraception and half of the audience just started laughing.”

Recommendations

USAID’s past and present programming has played a leading role within the international donor and development community coalition in providing the resources and technical assistance required to help the GOKR more effectively combat TB and HIV/AIDS. School attendance is one of the key factors affecting improved youth health outcomes.⁴⁸ USAID-sponsored activities in relation to training teachers and disseminating information in schools about the benefits of pursuing healthier lifestyles and on HIV/AIDS and contraception has helped increase youth awareness on all these issues. However, there are still significant awareness gaps related to youth understanding of both diseases and combating the stigma that surrounds them. Access to quality services is a significant barrier, especially for migrants and young women. For young women, this issue extends further to a lack of reproductive health and family planning services as well. While youth-friendly services have been part of the discussion at some NGOs providing reproductive health services to women, it is a new concept and could use some support.

While substance abuse seems to be less of a concern right now for most Kyrgyz youth, mental health, particularly depression, is an area worth further investigating for possibilities where USAID could provide support.

Near Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. Work with health clinic partners to offer free testing and treatment, particularly treatment options adapted to suit the needs of youth and migrant lifestyles.
2. Adapt existing USAID training and technical assistance for GOKR and other partners on health issues to include how to work with youth mental health (particularly depression) and substance abuse.

PYD Domain: Increasing Assets

3. Work with partners to target undocumented youth and other at-risk populations with TB education. Consider social media or other communication campaigns focused on youth that gives correct information about the disease.
4. Work with partners to adapt existing HIV/AIDS curricula to be more interactive and engaging so youth are more likely to learn the information. Consider focusing on providing broader awareness to more youth that includes educational messages that reduce stigma so youth will seek services.
5. Collaborate with the Kyrgyz Republic’s SMS to include HIV/AIDS and TB information in their welcome handbook for new migrants.

⁴⁸ Lehtimäki, Susanna. 2016. *Adolescent Health in Kyrgyzstan*. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan.

Long Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

1. Educate partner organizations providing health services to youth on the concept of youth-friendly services and train them on standards of care. Consider the possibility of offering school-based health services that could give parents and youth easier access.

PYD Domain: Increasing Assets

2. Work with GOKR, parents, and communities to make reproductive health information available to younger adolescents. Consider incorporating early pregnancy prevention awareness education for young women and men.



X. Youth and Education

Background

In 2014, a total of 1,072,000 pupils were enrolled in primary and secondary education; 38 percent of them were enrolled in primary education. In 2009, the GOKR calculated that 29,000 (or 3 percent) of school age children (7-15 years old) were out of school. For the same year, UNESCO calculated the number at 66,418 (more than 6 percent). The primary cause cited was family issues (54 percent), followed by issues at school (31 percent) and health issues (15 percent).⁴⁹ In most cases, family issues related to poverty and the need to help improve the economic situation of the family.

The Kyrgyz Republic was ranked 35th out of 65 countries worldwide by its last Program for International Student Assessment (PISA).⁵⁰ The GOKR's Educational Development Strategy (EDS 2020) attempts to address what it sees as four key problems of the education system:

- Teaching staff quality and quantity
- Poor management and funding
- Outdated curricula
- Limitations imposed by current educational infrastructure.

EDS 2020 prioritizes the development and introduction of a new competency-based curriculum and teaching and learning materials. The Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) is currently developing the next iteration of the EDS, known as EDS 2020+.

The most recent data available indicates an almost 100 percent rate of transition from primary school to lower-secondary school. However, only 78 percent of eligible students are enrolled in upper-secondary education, and only 56 percent of all students complete a secondary or post-secondary education.⁵¹ In urban areas, 85 percent of youth of secondary school age attend school, compared to 86 percent in rural areas. Female attendance slightly exceeds male attendance in rural areas, and genders are represented equally in urban areas. Secondary net attendance is highest in the Naryn oblast (92 percent); attendance

⁴⁹ Mambetaliev, Askar and Frank van Cappelle. 2012. *All Children in School by 2015 Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children. Kyrgyzstan Case Study*. UNICEF.

⁵⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2009. *PISA 2009 Results: Executive Summary*. OECD.

⁵¹ FHI 360. 2013. *Youth Education and Employment Profile: Kyrgyzstan*. FHI 360.

is lowest in the Osh region (81 percent). Gender disparity is highest in the Chui region and lowest in the Issyk-Kul region.⁵²

The MOES and other ministries and agencies manage 119 secondary vocational schools, which offer one- to three-year training programs (grades 10–12) combining secondary and vocational education components. Post-secondary, tertiary-level vocational trainings are also offered as part of secondary-level professional education provided by technicums (technical schools). The statement from the EDS 2020 indicates a lack of positive vocational education outcomes: *“Vocational education results do not meet labor market demands. The existing qualification requirements are out of date; therefore, graduates do not have the skills and knowledge demanded in the labor market. The poor quality of vocational education programs is due to a lack of systematic interaction between vocational institutions and the private sector and the labor market. Vocational education curricula are focused on theory rather than practical competence.”*

Higher-level professional education is the responsibility of higher education institutions and includes bachelor, specialist, and master studies dedicated to extending secondary professional education level studies. In 2013-14, there were 214,410 students in higher education. Of those, 188,794 were studying within the Kyrgyz Republic’s 34 public universities and 25,616 studying within its 19 private universities.⁵³

Private educational institutions also provide professional and technical training courses within the framework of non-formal education. They include CSOs, professional training companies, professional institutes, and specialist vocational training providers. Most of the non-formal education programs are dedicated to developing skills required by different sectors of the economy.⁵⁴

Findings

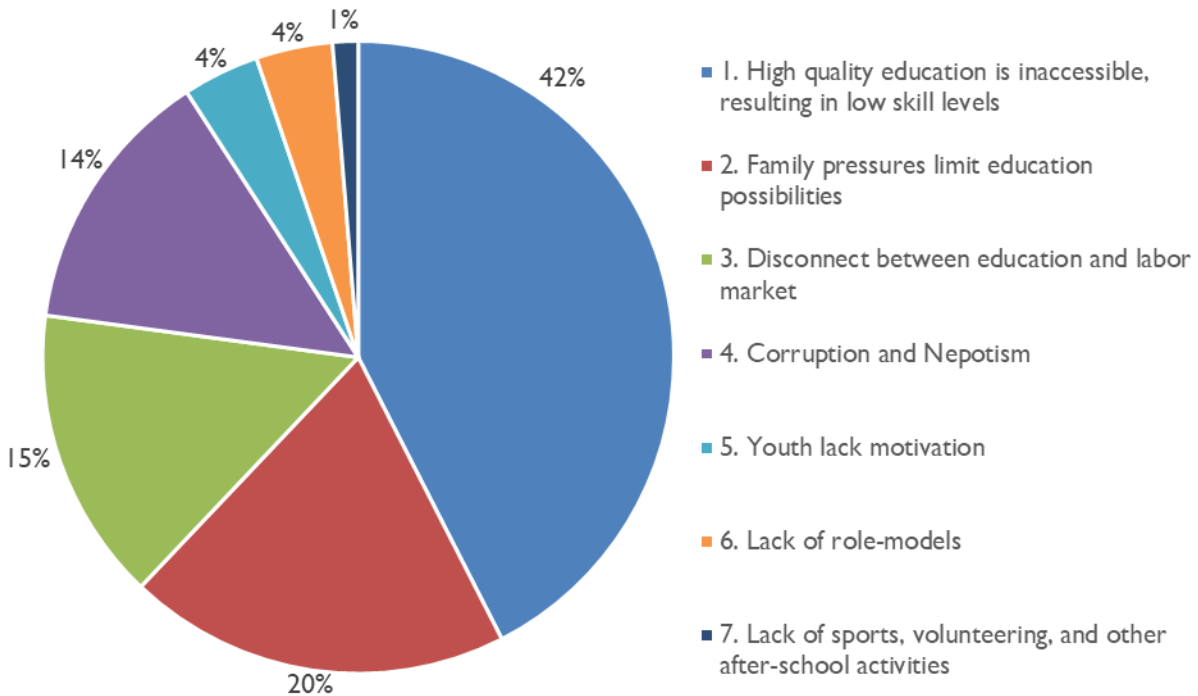
“Yes, education is important. In order to grow tolerance, have wide mental outlook and to be intelligent you should be educated in the first place. Without education a person can think only one way... the level of his conciseness is a little low.” - Osh Males, 18-23

Male and female youth expressed a strong desire to pursue higher education opportunities. Although most respondents see the education sector as the top priority for investing in youth, a variety of significant challenges were identified regarding education in the Kyrgyz Republic, as shown in Figure 6.

⁵² Oliver, Daniel, and Karin Akins. 2010. *Youth Assessment: Kyrgyz Republic*. International Youth Foundation (IYF) and USAID.

⁵³ Chokusheva, Gulnara, and Svetlana Sirmbard. 2017. *Overview of the Higher Education System: Kyrgyzstan*. Brussels, Belgium: European Union.

⁵⁴ UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and. 2013. *World TVET Database: Kyrgyzstan*. Bonn, Germany: UNESCO-UNEVOC.

FIGURE 6: MOST COMMONLY REPORTED CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION

High-quality education is inaccessible, resulting in low skill levels.

Rural and urban youth equally reported that the quality of education at all levels, from kindergarten to vocational and tertiary, is poor. Youth interviewed as part of the PGDs for this situational analysis claimed that teaching materials in schools and libraries are often outdated or unavailable and lesson plans and teaching techniques have not been updated from the Soviet times. The most commonly used term to describe educators was “Soviet.” Overall, lesson plans do not include technology, interactive activities, or critical thinking and other soft skills.

Family pressures limit education possibilities.

Family pressures and traditions challenge female youth’s education, according to other PGDs. Girls in rural regions in particular reported that their families pressure them to marry early, stay at home, and take care of family and household chores rather than pursue education. The female youth respondents generally do not agree with their parents’ and in-laws’ more conservative approaches and wish to continue their education. Young men were affected by this challenge as well, although much less than young women. Some young men mentioned that they were pressured into marrying early and cannot attend school because they need to work to support their families. In addition to pressure to pursue family life early rather than education, families also were reported to pressure their children to not attend university because of lack of funds or willingness to devote funding for education, particularly for girls.

The education system does not prepare youths for the labor market.

Many respondents (both male and female) feel that education institutions in the Kyrgyz Republic (including secondary, vocational, and tertiary) do not train youth in the skills needed for the jobs currently available in the country. The leader of a vocational training organization in Bishkek believes that too many Kyrgyz youth are pursuing university degrees, while there are not enough jobs at that skill level. Others do not agree, claiming that vocational trainings available in the Kyrgyz Republic are poor quality, often uncertified, and may not help improve the employability of youth. Regardless of the type of educational institution, a large number of respondents reported that current available training does not produce graduates with skills that employers need, resulting in unemployment.

Youth are frustrated by the universality of corruption and nepotism in the education system.

Students in Bishkek report that universities are corrupt. For example, prizes for essay competitions were given to the children of the faculty and internships were reserved for youth with important connections. Students report having to pay bribes to be accepted into universities. Bribing instead of studying is also encouraged by teachers in exchange for good grades. Nepotism limits access to opportunities such as special study programs, which students claim are only accessible to individuals with personal ties to the dean. Although only youth respondents discussed this issue, they reported that the source of corruption is coming from all levels of education, including students, teachers, and deans.



Youth lack motivation, role models, and access to after-school activities.

Although less likely to be mentioned, the lack of motivation among youth to complete their education was discussed. Some youth seem uncertain that completing an education will actually lead to a job. Linked to this is the lack of role models available in many communities — those who have used their education to get and maintain a successful job that helps them build a good life for themselves. One or two youth mentioned that after-school activities, like sports or volunteering, might make them feel more connected to their peers, teachers, and community.

Recommendations

Kyrgyz youth, though they are practically all functionally literate and most have completed a basic education, are acutely aware that the Kyrgyz education system does not adequately prepare them for work and other adult life responsibilities. It is safe to assume this is the main reason behind their enthusiasm and advocacy for activities that add value to their employment or career prospects, like life-skills training and enterprise pitching competitions. The limited value of a Kyrgyz education also explains their dreams of attending a foreign university, rather than a domestic one.

Although the challenges in the education sector were copious, respondents offered suggestions for how to tackle these issues. Youth in rural areas were particularly eager to acquire access to computers and the internet and to learn how to use these technologies. To improve the quality of education, curricula should begin to integrate soft skills and quality language lessons in Russian and English. Many suggested increasing teacher salaries to improve the quality of teaching and teachers' motivation, and to decrease corruption instigated by teachers. Several young parents express the need for better access to quality preschools or kindergartens for their children, so they would be free to pursue education or work themselves.

Near Term

PYD Domain: Building Assets

1. Continue USAID early-grade reading program, which MOES representatives and parents said was beneficial.
2. USAID should prioritize teaching youth various soft skills (e.g., communication, critical thinking, and problem solving) that will enable them make better life choices and solidly transition from school to work.
3. USAID should prioritize educational opportunities for female youth, especially those in rural areas. This should include special trainings in computers, English, Russian, or sector-relevant topics in agriculture or civic engagement. Another option would be to offer scholarships to female youth for participation in educational programs provided by other donors, particularly those offered by UN Women.



PYD Domain: Encouraging Agency and Contribution

4. Consider building into relevant programs opportunities for youth volunteering or service connected to community schools. For example, in an agriculture program, consider collaborating with a local school to do a gardening project where youth can learn about agriculture and contribute to their community. In a civic engagement program, youth could participate in any number of community-based activities, like recycling, building playgrounds, cleaning their neighborhood, or creating awareness programs on anti-corruption. For health-related projects, students could organize a health fair that encourages their parents and community members to access needed services.

Long Term

PYD Domain: Building Assets

1. Consider a school-to-work transition program that includes career guidance, soft skills, job readiness training, and work-based learning opportunities, such as job shadowing, internships, or apprenticeships. Ensure that inputs are sought from private sector companies and associations, creating a strong supply-and-demand partnership.

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

2. Incorporate inclusive practices across all projects in all sectors that include building awareness among parents and community members about the importance of educating female youth, particularly in rural areas. Depending on the type of project, messages could be related to improving family economic or health status.



XI. Youth and Economic Growth

Background

The main factors driving economic growth since independence has been agriculture, tourism and hospitality, transportation, communications, and financial services. The GOKR's current economic growth priorities are centered on the aforementioned and the textile and garment manufacturing and ICT industries. Exponential mobile phone usage has driven rapid ICT sector growth. The sector is set to grow even more rapidly with GOKR and international donor investments in initiatives like the Taza Koom Project, which aims to connect every village to the internet via fiber optic cable by the year 2020. Investments in non-traditional e-businesses will inevitably increase, and alongside them the need for a suitably qualified workforce.⁵⁵

The trend toward self-employment in the informal economy and the need to reinvigorate the economy with new businesses has become an economic necessity for the Kyrgyz Republic. However, Kyrgyz youth are ill equipped to start new businesses. Findings from a 2018 report suggest that many young entrepreneurs get into business out of desperation as opposed to an ambition to start and grow a business.⁵⁶ Lack of access to credit is one of the main obstacles to youth enterprise development. Most banks have minimum 23-25 age lending thresholds and/or apply additional cost conditions for borrowers under the age of 30. Despite the exponential growth of microfinance institutions (between 2002 and 2014, the number of MFIs increased from 18 to 204 and number of MFI borrowers from 80,000 to 429,000, with 64 percent of borrowers being female). In 2014, 72 percent of MFI lending was to the 30– to 60-year-old age group and only 20 percent to individuals below 30 years of age.⁵⁷

Remittances received from emigrant workers constitute almost 40 percent of GDP and might be expected to be a valuable source of new business growth and investment. However, remittances are primarily spent on domestic consumption.⁵⁸ Although remittance-spending patterns are starting to change and trend more toward investment in domestic property, there is little evidence that remittance spending has a major impact on business growth trajectories. A 2018 study challenges the idea that returning migrant workers are more likely to start a business or opt for self-employment. The study evidences the fact that self-employment is, more often than not, a temporary employment choice while returning migrants seek salaried or waged positions or take breaks before returning abroad. Migrants who were self-employed before migrating are also less likely to opt for self-employment on their return.⁵⁹

Another major factor inhibiting economic growth is that the Kyrgyz economy is characterized by a “missing middle;” an economic growth void created when small businesses are inhibited from growing into medium-sized ones. Inhibiting factors include inappropriate and ineptly applied business taxation rates, patent system, burdensome bureaucratic business reporting and employment regulations, high interest

⁵⁵ World Bank. 2018. *Kyrgyz Republic - Livelihoods for Youth Community Support Project*. World Bank.

⁵⁶ Combaluzier, Haley. 2018. *Youth Enterprise Ecosystem Study: Kyrgyz Republic*. Aga Khan Foundation and Accelerate Prosperity.

⁵⁷ Karymshakov, Dr. K., K. Sultakeev, and Burulcha. Sulaimanova. 2015. *The Impact of Microfinance on Entrepreneurship in Kyrgyzstan*. International Conference on Eurasian Economies.

⁵⁸ Karymshakov, Kamalbek, Raziakhan Abdieva, Burulcha Sulaimanova, and Kadyrbek Sultakeev. 2016. *Remittances impact on youth labour supply: evidence from Kyrgyzstan*. Partnership for Economic Policy.

⁵⁹ Brück, Tilman, Clotilde Mahe, and Wim Naudé. 2018. *Return Migration and Self-Employment: Evidence from Kyrgyzstan*. Institute of Labor Economics.

rates, and corruption negatively affecting free and fair competition. Although there are a number of business support organizations, their business development services are not of high quality and consequently have had little impact on the “missing middle” problem.

There are stirrings of a start-up culture and young people are eager to actively engage in pitching competitions and start-up training. According to a 2018 report, there are popular programs on the ground dedicated to youth entrepreneurship, particularly in Bishkek City and in and around Osh, implemented by youth CSOs. However, the quality of these training programs is low and they offer little continued support beyond small amounts of (pre) seed funding that allows few youth businesses to get past their idea or start-up phases.⁶⁰ An example of start-up culture gaining traction has been the rapid growth of Ololohaus, a local company that developed a number of co-working spaces in Bishkek and Osh. Ololohaus’ strategy is to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem through partnerships with the businesses occupying its co-working spaces; it shares a lot of similarities with the Impact Hub model.⁶¹

Findings

“People constantly were telling us to study hard and be sure to get a diploma. However, after graduation you get nothing, basically it was a lie. You only have choice to work in a low paid position. It is much better to start your own business instead.” Osh males 24-28

Many youth believe state interventionist policies are key to the country’s economic development.

Youth, like their elders, still adhere to many of the command-led economic principles of former Soviet times and point to a decline in state interventionism, alongside corruption, as a key factor contributing to the Kyrgyz Republic’s low economic growth rates. Youth continually point to the need for the state to ‘create jobs,’ ‘build factories,’ and exert more control over key industries like agriculture and mining.

Youth ambitions are centered on stable, well-paid jobs, not running their own businesses.

In talking about their economic ambitions, youth’s focus is on how to attain a well-paid, stable job as opposed to starting and running a business. Those who expressed ambitions to start their own businesses were predominantly male and from rural areas whose business ideas were primarily centered on agriculture. Some males in Osh City expressed an interest in opening cafes or restaurants and some young women had ambitions to start small sewing businesses. Most urban youth believe that before attempting to start and run a business, it was important to have worked in business before, preferably abroad. Youth thoughts in relation to starting businesses are focused on what they perceive to be major obstacles and barriers, especially accessing finance and the need to have important connections.

The quality of many youth CSO-implemented youth entrepreneurship trainings is low.

The consensus amongst business support organizations is that too many youth entrepreneurship trainings are being implemented by youth CSOs with unproven business training track records, using unqualified trainers with little understanding of business. Many are based on outmoded business training methodologies and concepts with content that is over-focused on generic access to finance strategies,

⁶⁰ Combaluzier, Haley. 2018. *Youth Enterprise Ecosystem Study: Kyrgyz Republic*. Aga Khan Foundation and Accelerate Prosperity.

⁶¹ n.d. *Impact Hub: Global Community*. Accessed May 2019. <https://impacthub.net/>.

which leads them to ignore the importance of context and more successful (and less risky) bootstrapping strategies. Although there are notable examples of good mentorship-based training practices in existence — including the I Invest in KG, Ideagrad and Aga-Khan Acceleration programs — most youth CSO-implemented trainings still suffer from rarely having leadership or mentorship components built in and little follow-up to ascertain impact. Business support organizations also point to the fact that, being free, many are undermining of their ethos of the need to charge to ensure an element of cost recovery and that training courses attract motivated and committed participants.

Grant-based approaches to youth business development have been ineffective.

The consensus amongst business support organizations is that the common donor practice of awarding small grants as an integral part of “entry or first-level” entrepreneurship training programs is ineffective. The view is that the practice is too centered on micro-enterprise development as opposed to startups, and that the prospect of “free-money” attracts youth who are less inclined to seriously pursue the development of their business idea after being awarded the grant. Low- or no-interest loans would be a better incentive in attracting more motivated and committed young entrepreneurs.

“Higher-level” youth business development programs favor youth businesses that have already achieved sustainability and significant market traction.

The consensus amongst business support organizations and GOKR economic development officials is that “higher-level” USAID economic growth programs, as well as being focused on specific sectors, should focus on youth businesses that are already sustainable and have achieved significant market traction. The aim should be to assist them to grow from small to medium-sized businesses. Some representatives of business support organizations stated that USAID should explore the idea of setting up a venture capital fund to support any businesses, particularly within the ICT sector, with high scalable potential.

Youth are interested in learning programming and ICT skills to improve their job prospects.

Unlike in other countries, Kyrgyz youth have yet to develop an ICT sub-culture. At the same time, they are highly cognizant that the ICT sector has high growth potential and offers the potential promise of high and stable incomes. Consequently, male and female youth from both rural and urban areas are equally interested in learning programming or other skills that would enable them to pursue a career in the ICT sector. The CEO of Ololohaus suggested that USAID should invest in ICT training for youth as a matter of priority to enable them to catch up with youth in other countries and position them for the increased opportunities presented by the advent of 5G and increased use of artificial intelligence and machine-learning technologies.

Recommendations

USAID’s economic growth programs are aligned in terms of their sectoral focus with those of the GOKR. In soliciting opinions from a wide variety of government, business, and business support organizations, it was clear that even the most forward-thinking opinion in this transitioning economy still holds firm to the view that government and the donor community should be supporting direct interventions. Consequently, many of the recommendations received were of the “USAID needs to build factories” type as opposed those dedicated to improving the regulatory and business-enabling environment.

Near Term

PYD Domain: Building Assets

1. USAID should adapt current best practice youth entrepreneurship training course material to the Kyrgyz Republic context, drawing upon contemporary training methodologies. The Mission should integrate this training into all its economic development programs implementing youth-centered activities. Course construction should include the development of training manuals and training kits to support comprehensive TOT training and the development of a cadre of local trainers suitable to task.
2. Given that Kyrgyz youth have yet to develop an ICT subculture, USAID should consider support for basic programming and other ICT skills trainings that lead to self-employment as opposed to hackathons or codeathons.

Long Term

PYD Domain: Building Assets

1. USAID should consider the idea of developing youth entrepreneurship hubs or incubators in Bishkek and Osh. The hubs would function as activity, advice, and support centers for youth entrepreneurs and include a low/no-interest loans fund. Organizers should consider supporting ICT entrepreneurs specifically who have already started their businesses by setting up incentives to attract venture capital.
2. The Mission should consider conducting additional research on youth access to finance that investigates the opportunities for creating more youth-friendly financial services that support new businesses.

XII. Youth and Agriculture

Background

The agriculture sector absorbs the largest portion of the Kyrgyz Republic's young workers (39 percent of young male workers and 55 percent of young female workers). Agricultural land usage in the Kyrgyz Republic is composed of arable land (7 percent); permanent crops (0.4 percent); permanent pasture (48 percent) and forest (5 percent). Although arable land is limited to only 7 percent of the total land area of the country, agriculture still plays a significant role in the economy and the resilience of the population, contributing 18 percent of total GDP and employing 48 percent of the total labor force, including an estimated 70 percent of the most poor and vulnerable. The main cultivation centers are in and around the Fergana Valley and Talas and Chui oblasts.

Rural poverty in the Kyrgyz Republic is driven by the fact that most farms are smallholder farms. The Kyrgyz Republic has more than 400,000 smallholder farms that constitute approximately 75 percent of rural households. They are involved in both agriculture and livestock farming, primarily for



subsistence/family consumption. The main crops are hay and other animal fodders followed by winter wheat, barley, corn, and rice. Potatoes, vegetables, nuts, and fruits are also produced alongside milk/milk products, poultry, and eggs. The main cash crops, and those produced for export markets, are cotton, tobacco, sugar beet, and wool/cashmere.⁶²

Small average farm sizes (0.13 hectare per family) allow for very limited numbers of livestock or animals (average three cows and five goats/sheep per family) and farmers have limited access to agricultural extension and veterinary services. Winter feed for animals is often scarce, which negatively affects animal health and nutrition. They also have limited access to quality agricultural inputs, such as seeds and fertilizer, do not make extensive use of machinery, and their poor harvesting and product storage practices produce high post-harvest losses. They similarly have limited access to finance for input supply as well as market links or contract farming arrangements. Farmers do not make extensive use of farmer's organizations or form enterprise groups and cooperatives to support aggregated storage, transportation, value addition, or collective sales and marketing activities.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) views the appropriate selection of higher-value crops and value chains as critical to future interventions and moving farmers to more up-to-date, productive farming practices. The MoA is also planning on implementing clustering strategies that it believes will result in bringing more land into production and more produce into the market. The MoA sees the food and agri-processing industry as possessing very high potential for expansion and job creation as only 7 percent of agricultural produce is processed inside the country.⁶³ With the Kyrgyz Republic's recent moves to adopt EAEU processing standards, which will exempt more than 140 processed food categories from customs duties, the MoA is hopeful it can achieve processing levels of 20-30 percent over the medium term. Consequently, the development of the agri-processing sector is the top priority of the MoA alongside bulk marketing of key product categories, which include meat, milk and dairy products, cherries, peaches and apricots, tomatoes, potatoes, wheat, and beans. The MoA also sees organic farming as a good fit for the Kyrgyz Republic's smallholder farmers amongst whom the practice is starting to gain some traction.

In support of its ambitions for developing the agricultural sector, the GOKR is providing a limited number of agricultural loans at favorable interest rates, including 6 percent for processing-related activities, 8 percent for cattle breeding, and 10 percent for crop production. The GOKR is also interested in making some of the 25 percent of land remaining under its control after privatization available to corporate farming entities.

Findings

“Youth, currently working in agriculture, are compelled to work for low wages. After some time, because of the low salary, they try to find another job and leave agriculture ... most of the youth working in agriculture are forced to do so because they do not have a higher education. I wish that 10 or 20 years from now youth will take their place, bring new technologies to the sector. I hope they will work in high-paying agriculture jobs with new technologies.... It is my dream.” – State Secretary for Agriculture, Bishkek.

⁶² New Agriculturalist. 2010. *Country Profile - Kyrgyzstan*. September. <http://www.new-ag.info/en/country/profile.php?a=1740>.

⁶³ United Nations Development Group. 2017. *United Nations Development Assistance Framework Guidance*. United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office.

Kyrgyz youth hold positive views about a life in agriculture.

Kyrgyz youth view farming and the ownership and control of livestock as desirable occupations that confer social and economic status. Fathers are also eager to pass control of family farms onto their sons — but not their daughters — before they reach an age whereby they can no longer effectively work them. Issues related to keeping youth on the land, therefore, are not primarily related to inclusivity or inheritance but rather the structural factors that limit the amount of income youth can derive from a life in agriculture.

Youth inclusivity in agriculture should be viewed in the context of wider objectives and impacts.

The need for youth inclusivity is essential not just to reinvigorate the agricultural sector, but also to impact other important objectives like decreasing youth migration to the cities and abroad.

There is broad consensus that major opportunities for youth in agriculture exist.

Youth and local community leaders in Naryn and Kochkor saw major opportunities in cattle breeding. In Otuz-Adyr they saw opportunities in fish farming and home-based vegetable production. Other opportunities mentioned during PGDs included land clearance, input supply and distribution, product transportation and aggregation, pest control, and provision of para-veterinary services. The MoA viewed product aggregation and transportation, low-tech product processing and packaging in support of bulk sales, drip irrigation and water conservation, and agricultural machinery maintenance as major opportunities.

Youth inclusivity in agriculture is limited by their low ability to access finance and markets.

Youth face specific barriers to raising finance, including specific age limitations and collateralization conditions. Even when they do manage to raise finance, their limited knowledge and understanding of how to market and sell their products exposes them to even greater risks. For example, youth in Kochkor who had taken out loans to grow potatoes shared that although they had grown copious amounts of high-quality potatoes, they were facing bankruptcy because of their inability to sell them.

There is broad consensus on the need for an agriculture program dedicated exclusively to youth.

There was consensus that keeping youth on the land was key to addressing not just agriculture sector development but issues like youth emigration. Both the MoA and the Agri-Horizon Program stressed the importance of such a program leveraging youth interest in technology and innovation to train youth (both male and female) in things like cold chain management, hydroponics, innovative use of smallholdings for organic farming, poultry breeding and production, seedling and sapling production, greenhouse-based vegetable production, and beehive management and honey production. They also agreed that it would need to encompass partnerships with agricultural universities and the development of demonstration farms, for which the MoA believed it could make land available.

Agriculture program activities should include a strong gender focus.

Females on smallholder farms play major roles that need to be better recognized and supported by agricultural programs. Training schedules and activities dedicated to them need to account for their increased household responsibilities and cultural necessity for them to receive permission from their families to engage in them.

Recommendations

The need for more exclusive efforts on integrating youth — males and females — into agricultural interventions is essential not just to reinvigorate the agricultural sector, but also to impact other important objectives like improving the prospects of youth in rural areas and decreasing youth migration to the cities and abroad. Key to achieving higher levels of youth involvement are more exclusive efforts that focus on creating space for youth to test and develop their agri-entrepreneurial capacities. It is imperative to understand and accept the increased risks associated with youth involvement, identify the best fits for youth aptitudes, and address the need for activities with less commitment and more immediate financial outcomes.

Near Term

PYD Domain: Creating Enabling Environment

- I. USAID should enter an extensive dialogue and consultations with the MoA as an integral part of its considerations and decision-making processes on future youth-inclusive agriculture sector programming, including the possibility of the MoA allowing land under their ownership and control for the development of demonstration farms.

Long Term

PYD Domain: Building Assets

- I. USAID should consider the idea of an agriculture program dedicated exclusively to improving the agricultural skills and income potentials of youth aged 18 to 28. Considerations in relation to scope should be based upon further research to better understand youth preferences, activities with the highest income potentials, best means of addressing gender-based barriers to women's economic empowerment throughout the agriculture value chain, and geographic areas where it might have the most demonstrable impact.



Annex A. Scope of Work

Assessment Purpose:

The purpose of this cross-sector youth⁶⁴ assessment was to:

1. Investigate the contextual landscape, needs, and assets of Kyrgyzstani youth in relation to the programmatic areas outlined in the Mission's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS),
2. Collect specific insights on challenges, preferences, and opportunities for youth engagement in programmatic areas where USAID activities are recently completed or nearing completion.

The assessment serves to update and expand youth-relevant analyses from the Mission's current CDCS, incorporating analysis of publicly available data and other information. The assessment also draws from extensive stakeholder consultations to identify age- and sex-specific youth preferences, and further identify specific opportunities and barriers faced by youth in engaging with and benefiting from USAID programs.

The results of the assessment will be used to inform a mid-term review of USAID's five-year CDCS, which covers the years from 2015-2019. Depending on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, USAID may adjust its strategic approach to achieving the CDCS Development Objectives (DOs). This includes possible changes to the conceptual theory of change that guides activity designs, rebalancing resource allocations across the portfolio, or updating the technical approach within activities.

At the activity level, the Mission will seek to mitigate youth-specific barriers identified by the assessment. It will also prioritize technical approaches that respond to the expressed preferences of youth within strategic program areas, or introduce new activities which take advantage of identified opportunities for youth engagement.

Background

The Kyrgyz Republic is located in the heart of Central Asia and is of crucial importance to U.S. foreign policy goals. This small, landlocked, former Soviet country features a maturing democracy, a vibrant and increasingly influential civil society, and robust cooperation with the U.S. on a number of issues. While it has been successful in lowering its rate of extreme poverty, over 25% of the population remains below the national poverty line. Youth in particular struggle in this context, with youth unemployment more than double the overall rate. Continued U.S. Government development assistance will help the country consolidate its encouraging progress toward accountable, inclusive governance, and reap significant development outcomes such as increased economic opportunities and increased resilience to shocks.

USAID/Kyrgyz Republic's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for the U.S. fiscal years 2015-2019 aimed to take advantage of the Government's commitment to further reform of democratic institutions and the social sectors. The CDCS' overarching goal is a democratic, well-governed, and prosperous Kyrgyz Republic. This goal is based on the hypothesis that if government institutions' relationship with the citizenry is characterized by increasing accountability and inclusiveness, then its main 'deliverables' – service delivery and policy – will improve across all socio-economic development sectors, thus increasing the legitimacy and stability of the Kyrgyz Republic's nascent democracy.

⁶⁴ For the purposes of this assessment, youth will be defined as residents of Kyrgyzstan between 14 and 28 years of age, and younger students as young as 10 engaged by USAID's basic education activities.

USAID/Kyrgyz Republic identified three Development Objectives (DOs) necessary to achieve the goal of a democratic, well-governed, and prosperous Kyrgyz Republic. These three objectives are mutually reinforcing; each is required to achieve the CDCS goal. As all citizens are better able to interact with government in an inclusive and accountable democracy, the legitimacy and effectiveness of the country's nascent political and civil society institutions will grow. As the ability of governing institutions to better deliver services expands to include all segments of society, the environment and capacity for economic growth will improve. Similarly, with a stronger economy and empowered private sector, the Kyrgyz Republic's ability to effectively mobilize revenues will increase and better enable service delivery.

Development Objective 1: Inclusive and accountable democracy: This DO seeks to build inclusive and accountable democracy by increasing the participation of all citizens in democratic processes, increasing mutual accountability between citizens and government, and protecting the universal human rights of all citizens.

Development Objective 2: Improved service delivery and policies for all citizens: This DO seeks to improve service delivery and policies for all citizens through building the capacity of key state bodies to govern, increasing the use of quality public services (particularly health and education), and increasing civil society partnerships with government for improved policy and service delivery.

Development Objective 3: Accelerated growth of diversified and equitable economy: This DO seeks to build accelerated growth of a diversified and equitable economy through expanded human capital, an improved business enabling environment, and improved competitiveness of key economic sectors.

The CDCS notes inclusion challenges which relate to youth, particularly as they relate to exclusion from economic and political power and access to quality education. However, additional research is needed to identify the specific nature of these challenges, the risks they pose to achieving USAID's development objectives and opportunities that may exist for addressing or mitigating them.

Youth-focused and youth-relevant USAID activities

Within the life of the current CDCS, sixteen USAID activities - ranging from civil society, education, health, and economic growth - have had or will entail significant engagement with youth. As these activities turn over, USAID desires to learn from its past experience to develop more responsive programs, including through consolidation of refreshed contextual information, direct engagement with activity implementers and participants, and consultation with other stakeholders in Kyrgyzstani youth development. (See annex I for an annotated list of youth-related activities)

Methodology

As stated above, the purpose of this cross-sector youth⁶⁵ assessment was to:

1. Investigate the contextual landscape, needs, and assets of Kyrgyzstani youth in relation to the programmatic areas outlined in the Mission's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS),

⁶⁵ For the purposes of this assessment, youth will be defined as residents of Kyrgyzstan between 14 and 28 years of age, and students as young as 10 engaged by USAID's basic education activities.

2. Collect specific insights on challenges, preferences, and opportunities for improving youth engagement in programmatic areas where USAID activities are recently completed or nearing completion.

In carrying out this assessment, the contractor collected evidence as to the underlying factors that variously promote or limit youth participation as beneficiaries or recipients in development activities. The contractor considered factors stemming from all aspects of the overall system where development activities operate, possibly including: community social, cultural, and economic factors; youths' internal values and preferences; and the programmatic practices of activities themselves.

The assessment consisted of two phases:

1. A comprehensive document review, culminating in (1) an initial draft assessment report, and (2) a fieldwork proposal.
2. Fieldwork and finalization of the assessment report.

Both the document review and field work prioritized distilling the available body of information down to only what is useful for decision making in program management and in setting strategic portfolio direction.

USAID anticipated there are significant differences in youth preferences, opportunities, and challenges among subgroups of youth among the following demographic variables:

- Sex
- Northern and southern oblast residents
- Urban and rural residents
- Mother tongue (Kyrgyz, Russian, Uzbek, and Tajik)
- Age cohorts (basic education, 14-18, 19-28)
- In and out of school youth

The resulting research product seeks to provide insight into how these subgroups differ in relation to participation in USAID's development activities.

Annex B. Guiding Research Questions

USAID proposed the following detailed research themes and questions to guide the document review:

Cross-cutting

- Identify common barriers faced by young women and young men in engaging with and benefiting from USAID's activities.
- Identify the preferences of youth as they relate to engagement with each of the programmatic areas present in the CDCS
- Identify other opportunities to increase youth participation in activities through improved coordination and design of youth centered activities
- Identify significant youth-led and youth-related organizations that the Mission can work with in the future

Counter Trafficking in Persons

- What reasons do youth cite for labor migration? Identify young male and female migrants' needs before, during, and after migration. What are the services that they need most? What makes them vulnerable before, during, and after migration?

Citizen Participation and Civil Society Strengthening

- Identify factors that prevent or facilitate greater youth involvement in politics, including in election campaigns, as voters, as election observers, or as candidates themselves.
- Identify factors that prevent or facilitate greater participation in established civil society organizations or other types of community groups
- What types of civil society organizations most attract youth?
- What challenges do civil society organizations face in recruiting young members?
- What methods of youth outreach are most effective, or what sources of information do youth most turn to?

Local Governance

- What are the barriers to youth engagement with local government?
- Among local governments who have been more successful in encouraging youth participation, what practices have led to this success?

Human Rights

- Where can youth seek legal support in case of violation of their human rights?
- What is a coping mechanism for young men and women (again depending on the youth cohort) if they experienced violence? GBV? What are their immediate needs and what kind of services do they need? How do youth prevent or try to intervene to prevent violence? How do youth define violence, especially by subgroup? In what cases is bride kidnapping considered violent vs. nonviolent act?

Tuberculosis and HIV

- What are the major obstacles for youth in accessing TB and HIV testing, treatment, and prevention services?
- How do youth view their risk for TB and HIV?
- Do they know if Tuberculosis can be cured?
- Do they know how to keep themselves from getting TB
- Is drug and alcohol use a major problem facing youth? What are the main types of drugs used by youth?
- Are youth services provided by USAID TB and HIV activities youth/adolescent friendly?
- What facilitates uptake of HIV prevention or care and treatment services for youth?

Health

- What are the main health issues faced by youth in the KR?
- Where do they go to access services?
- Where do youth seek information on health topics and family planning?
- What are the barriers to getting accurate health information and getting health services for youth?
- What do you recommend can be done to make health services friendlier to youth?

Education

- What do youth feel about the quality of primary, secondary, and higher education in the KR?
- Do youth feel that the current education system is preparing them for their future jobs and careers?
- What can be done to improve education so it is relevant to their needs and interests?

Enterprise Development (Both agricultural and non-agricultural)

- Explore how USAID's experience with startup, hackathons and business case competitions yield results in terms of actual businesses started or applicable skills for new workers.
- How does youth unemployment or underemployment vary by subgroup and region?
- Investigate how internship programs can more effectively connect students to businesses and gain practical skills and experience.
- What challenges do supported businesses face in hiring new young workers?
- What are the professions for young people that are of high demand by the government/business? What professions will be of great demand among youth in 5 years from now?

Annex C. Positive Youth Development⁶⁶

With more than half of the global population under the age of 30 and a majority residing in low- to middle-income countries (LMICs), USAID believes that young people are not simply program beneficiaries but valuable assets in society. USAID launched its seminal Youth in Development Policy in 2012, making a commitment to strengthen youth participation and partnership by integrating youth issues into its programming and engaging young people across Agency initiatives. Based on a Positive Youth Development approach, the Youth in Development Policy represents a paradigm shift toward viewing youth as assets and resources, and working with them comprehensively across various sectors rather than focusing on single-sector issues.

In the policy, USAID identifies critical priorities for mainstreaming youth across program portfolios. The policy provides guidance on how to intentionally target youth development efforts based on the recognition that, historically, young people have been central to bringing about social, political, and economic change to their countries. Furthermore, USAID seeks to strengthen and ensure the effectiveness of youth programming by moving investments from single sector, problem-focused responses toward cross-sectoral PYD investments that help countries support youth in reaching their full potential.

While many youth development programs focus on young people in the 15 to 24 year age range, USAID recognizes that youth programs are likely to engage a broader cohort of 10- to 29-year-olds. This expanded age range recognizes that the transition from childhood to adulthood varies across and within countries and sectors. In its Youth in Development Policy, USAID asks all Missions to consider how youth should be supported to be actively involved in and lead initiatives that contribute to their well-being and the development of their societies.

What does PYD mean for USAID and its Missions?

Both the PYD field and USAID's Youth in Development Policy recognize youth participation as vital to development. Youths' full participation in development efforts can contribute to more sustainable investments to end cycles of poverty; to build resilient, democratic societies; to improve health and nutrition outcomes; and to strengthen economies⁶⁷ USAID Missions can enact and reinforce the broader Agency's efforts to empower youth by advancing programs which: 1) recognize that youth participation is essential for effective programming; 2) invest in youth's assets; 3) foster healthy relationships by involving mentors, families and communities; 4) account for differences and commonalities among youth; 5) pursue gender equality; 6) harness youth innovation and technology; and 7) create second-chance opportunities for youth. Investments in youth translate to benefits for society by increasing youth's connections to civil society and helping youth make successful transitions to adulthood⁶⁸. The PYD approach can inform evidence-based design of future USAID youth-focused programing, and it can inform evaluation design for such programs.

⁶⁶ This section is adopted from: Hinson, L., Kapungu, C., Jessee, C., Skinner, M., Bardini, M. & Evans-Whipp, T. 2016. Measuring Positive Youth Development Toolkit: A Guide for Implementers of Youth Programs. Washington: YouthPower Learning, Making Cents International.

⁶⁷ Scales, Roehlkepartain and Fraher, 2012. *Do Developmental Assets make a difference in majority-world contexts? A preliminary study of the relationships between Developmental Assets and international development priorities*. Minneapolis: Search Institute.

⁶⁸ World Bank. 2007. World development report 2007: Development and the next generation. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

What does PYD mean for implementers of USAID programming?

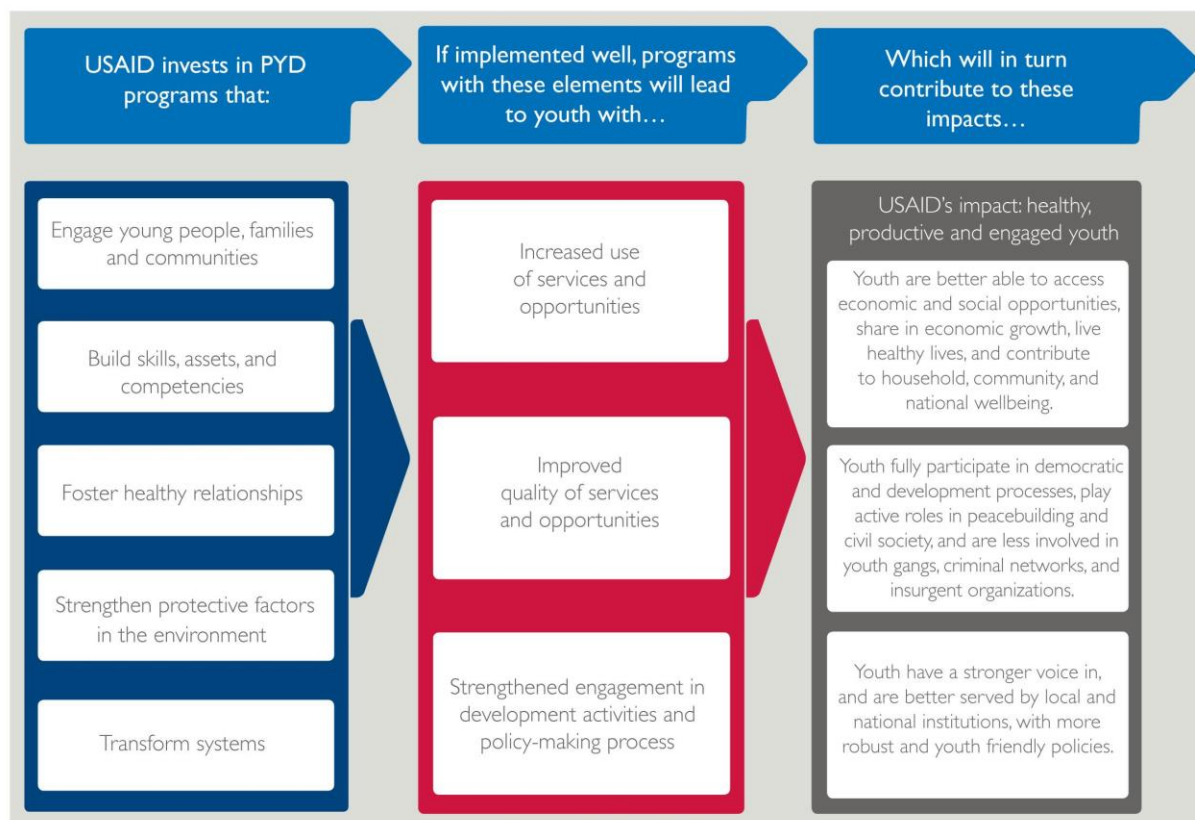
Programs that utilize a PYD approach have increasingly demonstrated that building the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional competence of youth is a more effective development strategy than one that focuses solely on correcting problems⁶⁹ (Scales, Roehlkepartain, & Fraher, 2012). Incorporating a PYD approach during program design and using indicators of positive development to evaluate the program can help to assess trends in positive outcomes over the life of a project. When applied across multiple projects and sectors, implementers can ensure PYD program effectiveness within and across sectors, provide evidence for increased funding, and set the stage for program sustainability and scale-up. Implementers can incorporate and measure PYD in youth programming to improve program performance over time, contribute to the body of evidence on PYD, and ultimately influence multi-sector outcomes and impact.

Theory of Change for USAID's investments in Positive Youth Development

Building on USAID's Youth in Development Policy and the definition of PYD, Figure A-I visualizes how investments in PYD programming lead to long-term impacts for young people. The blue arrows reflect the key elements of the PYD definition. If programs include these elements and are implemented well, they are expected to produce the Intermediate Results (IRs) outlined for YouthPower, in the red boxes. These, in turn, contribute to the overall impact of healthy, productive, and engaged youth, as envisioned in the USAID Youth in Development Policy. Change can be measured across four broad domains.

⁶⁹ Scales, Roehlkepartain and Fraher, 2012. *Do Developmental Assets make a difference in majority-world contexts? A preliminary study of the relationships between Developmental Assets and international development priorities*. Minneapolis: Search Institute.

FIGURE A-1: THEORY OF CHANGE: HOW INVESTMENTS IN PYD PROGRAMMING LEAD TO LASTING CHANGE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



The PYD domains group key PYD constructs into four critical components, or domains, that serve as the overarching PYD Framework. Figure A-2 shows the theoretical connection among the four PYD domains used in the framework – Assets, Agency, Contribution, and Enabling Environment.

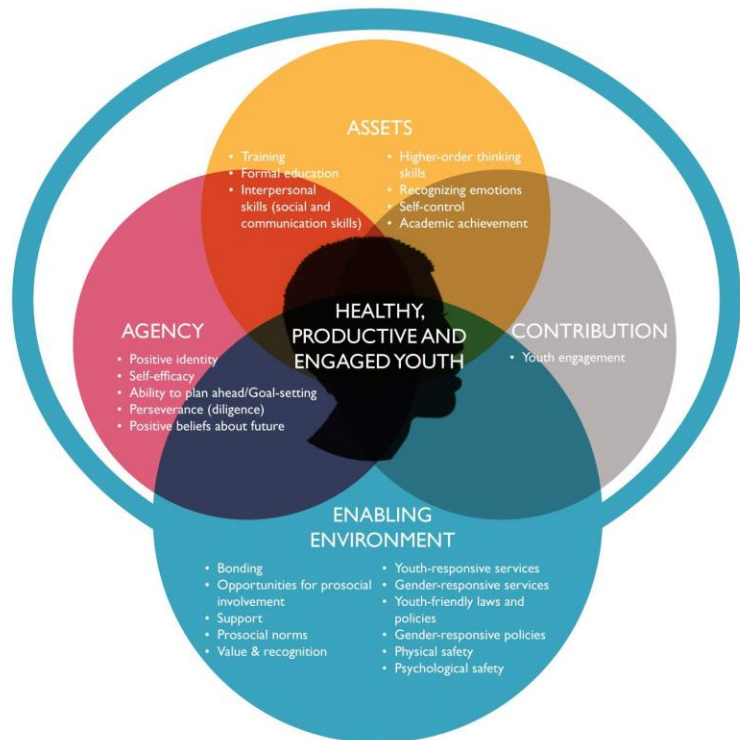
This framework illustrates that to achieve the vision of healthy, productive and engaged youth, PYD programs, practices and policies must work with youth to improve their:

Assets: Youth have the necessary resources, skills, and competencies to achieve desired outcomes.

Agency: Youth perceive and have the ability to employ their assets and aspirations to make or influence their own decisions about their lives and set their own goals, as well as to act upon those decisions in order to achieve desired outcomes.

Contribution: Youth are engaged as a source of change for their own and for their communities' positive development.

Enabling environment: Youth are surrounded by an environment that develops and supports their assets, agency, access to services, and opportunities, and strengthens their ability to avoid risks and to stay safe, secure, and be protected and live without fear of violence or retribution. An enabling environment encourages and recognizes youth, while promoting their social and emotional competence to thrive. The term “environment” should be interpreted broadly and includes: social (e.g., relationships with peers and adults), normative (e.g., attitudes, norms and beliefs), structural (e.g., laws, policies, programs services, and systems) and physical (e.g., safe, supportive spaces).



PYD Framework with Program Features

Seven features of PYD are essential for strong for programs (See Table A-I). These features link directly to the four domains presented in the PYD Framework. Like the domains, these features are grounded in the literature, particularly the work of the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, but are tailored for the context of a developing country. The PYD features can help to define what activities can be incorporated within each of the four PYD domains.

Table A-I Map of PYD Domains and PYD Features

| Domains | Feature |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Assets and Agency | Skill Building Develop soft and life skills through skill building activities within individual, family, peer, and community settings. |
| Enabling Environment | Healthy Relationships and Bonding Identify and link youth to positive adult role models, mentors, coaches, teachers, health care providers, and community leaders. Ideally, youth have at least one caring and consistent adult in their lives. Healthy peer relationships are also particularly important to youth. |
| Enabling Environment | Belonging and Membership Foster activities where youth feel included regardless of one's gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities. Identify activities that provide positive sense of belonging (schools, sports, community service, faith-based youth group, etc.) |
| Contribution | Youth Engagement and Contribution Allow youth engagement to take different shapes. This can include youth expression, youth involvement in community service, and creating opportunities for youth decision-making at various levels of government. This can also include programs that provide structure for youth contribution. |
| Enabling Environment | Safe Spaces Create safe spaces that are tailored to the needs of youth – including physical infrastructure as well as emotional safety. Space can be defined in a variety of ways, including virtual. Many communities lack any space for youth to convene. Thus communities must be committed to providing youth with safe spaces to practice, engage, and learn creatively and collaboratively. An emotionally safe space is critical to learning. |
| Enabling Environment | Positive Norms, Expectations and Perceptions Have clear and consistent norms and expectations about health, relationships, and forms of engagement that provide youth an increasing amount of responsibility and independence and allow youth to grow and take on new roles. |
| Enabling Environment | Access to Age Appropriate and Youth Friendly Services; Integration among Youth, Family and Service Providers Make information available to youth and families, connecting and integrating health and social services so there is a continuum of care and support at a community level. |

Annex D. Methodology and Assessment Details

The Assessment Team's data collection design for answering USAID's guiding research questions (see Annex B) was consistent with USAID/Kyrgyz Republic's Cross-Sector Youth Assessment Scope of Work (SOW) document (see Annex A) and included four primary methodologies:

1. **Comprehensive Document Review:** A review of relevant documents that provided background on the context of the youth experience in the Kyrgyz Republic and the systems that surround them, including those outlined in the SOW.⁷⁰ The document review also targeted gathering information that helped the team construct a Donor and Stakeholder Landscape discussion.
2. **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** Discussions with groups of informants/respondents that were representative of different sub-sectors — for example medical health professionals, teachers, youth workers, and businesspeople — who work at grassroots service delivery and support levels. The number and geographic locations of the FGDs are outlined in the fieldwork proposal based on findings from the document review.
3. **Peer Group Discussions (PGDs):** These discussions were conducted with groups of 8-10 youth — in two age cohorts 18-23 and 24-28. Based on findings from the document review and discussions with USAID, they were further sub-divided by sex. Details on the numbers and locations of PGDs are also included in the fieldwork proposal.
4. **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** Interviews were conducted with high-level actors in line ministries, state agencies and institutions, local municipalities, national and international development agencies, business, and civil society organizations (CSOs). We also interviewed relevant USAID Mission staff. Names were gathered during the document review and discussions with USAID, and a full key informant list is included in the fieldwork proposal.

Key questions answered during the assessment are included in Annex B. FGD, PGD, and KII interview protocols were developed based on these questions and gaps in the background literature are included in Annexes G and H. Before the fieldwork began, YouthPower Learning underwent a human subjects research determination review with the internal Institutional Review Board of its partner, the International Center for Research on Women, and was determined to be exempt human subjects research.

To ensure quality data capture, the Assessment Team worked in pairs. One member was responsible for facilitating the FGD/PGD session or KII, while the other took notes and recorded key responses. In working with groups, the Assessment Team used creative and engaging methodologies developed by YouthPower Learning for recording responses (e.g., drawings, use of buttons/stones for tallying, facial images as Likert scale prompts).

YouthPower learning used *purposive sampling* (prior to the data collection exercise) approach for the FGDs and PGDs through the following processes:

- For the FGDs, the Assessment Team worked with USAID implementing partners, line ministries, youth-serving institutions and agencies, CSOs, business associations and YouthPower Learning's local research partner identified groups of professionals working with youth in the sectors and geographies of interest.
- For the PGDs, the Assessment Team worked with USAID implementing partners, line ministries, youth-serving institutions and agencies, CSOs, business associations and YP Learning's local research partner to identify groups of youths in the areas of geographic focus as indicated by

⁷⁰ USAID/Kyrgyz Republic's Cross-Sector Youth Assessment Scope of Work (SOW), Annex A

USAID. Specifically, the assessment team will strictly apply the age and sex categories and include youth who are both *willing to participate* and *freely share their perspectives and experiences*. The Assessment Team looked at youth preferences, opportunities, and challenges among subgroups of youth among the following demographic variables:

- Sex
- Northern and southern oblast residents
- Urban and rural residents
- Mother tongue (Kyrgyz, Russian, Uzbek, and Tajik)
- Age cohorts 18 -23 and 24-28 (to gather information on younger youth, the 18-23-year-old group will be asked to comment on the lives of their young friends, brothers, and sisters)
- In- and out-of-school youth+
- For the KIIs, the Assessment Team drew upon the document review, its own contacts, and USAID contact information for its implementers and direct activity participants.

All qualitative data was entered into Atlas.ti and analyzed thematically. The Assessment Team gathered information about the underlying factors that promote or limit youth participation as beneficiaries or recipients in development activities. They also investigated how young people are taking leadership positions in the development process and engaging with USAID and other donors in making their voices heard. The Assessment Team considered factors stemming from all aspects of the overall system including community social, cultural, and economic factors; youths' internal values and preferences; programmatic practices of activities; and the availability or absence of youth leadership opportunities.

The following tables show the research schedule and outcomes from the data collection efforts.

| In-country Research Schedule | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|-------|-----------|---------|----------|---|-------------------|
| No | Date | Month | Day | Region | Activity | Participant/s | Completed/Deleted |
| 1 | 17 | 3 | Sunday | Bishkek | Travel | Arrival – YouthPower Learning Assessment Team: Paul Bell and Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 2 | 18 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | Training | Local Partner / M-Vector Staff | Completed |
| 3 | 18 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | In brief | Assessment Team / USAID - Paul Bell and Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 4 | 18 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | FGD | USAID Staff | Completed |
| 4 | 19 | 3 | Tuesday | Bishkek | KII | State Agency for Youth Physical Culture and Sports Representative/s - Paul Bell and Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 5 | 19 | 3 | Tuesday | Bishkek | FGD | Youth CSO Representatives: - Paul Bell and Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 6 | 20 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector and Paul Bell) | Completed |
| 7 | 20 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector and Paul Bell) | Completed |
| 8 | 20 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector and Dr. Christy Olenik) | Completed |
| 9 | 20 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector and Dr. Christy Olenik) | Completed |
| 10 | 20 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | FGD | Ministry of Education Representative/s /TVET/ Secondary Education /Secondary Technical - Paul Bell and Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|---------|---------|--|------------------------|
| 11 | 21 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | Holiday | Data Consolidation/Preparation | Completed |
| 12 | 21 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 13 | 21 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 14 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 15 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 16 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | Ministry of Labor and Social Development Representative - Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 17 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | Ministry of Agriculture Representative - Paul Bell | Completed |
| 18 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | Ololohaus – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 19 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | Ministry of Health Representative- Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 20 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 21 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 22 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 23 | 22 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 24 | 23 | 3 | Saturday | Bishkek | KII | Women's Support Center - Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| | 23 | 3 | Saturday | Bishkek | KII | Project Hope – Dr. Christy Olenik | Not relevant. Deleted |
| | 23 | 3 | Saturday | Bishkek | KII | Association of Fruit and Vegetable Enterprises – Replaced with Agroinform Asia | Not available. Deleted |
| 25 | 23 | 3 | Saturday | Bishkek | KII | Aga Khan Foundation – Paul Bell | Completed |
| | 23 | 3 | Saturday | Bishkek | KII | Textile Industries Association – Paul Bell | Not available. Deleted |
| 26 | 24 | 3 | Sunday | Bishkek | Day off | Data Consolidation/Preparation | Completed |
| 27 | 25 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | KII | Association of Crisis Centers - Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 28 | 25 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | KII | Reproductive Health Alliance – Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 29 | 25 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | KII | Migration Office (Diaspora Director) Paul Bell and Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 30 | 25 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | KII | Bishkek Business Club – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 31 | 25 | 3 | Monday | Bishkek | KII | Reproductive Health Alliance | Completed |
| 32 | 26 | 3 | Tuesday | Bishkek | KII | GIZ - Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| | 26 | 3 | Tuesday | Bishkek | KII | European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - Dr. Christy Olenik | Not available. Deleted |
| 33 | 26 | 3 | Tuesday | Bishkek | KII | Tourism Association - Christy | Completed |
| 34 | 27 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | KII | UNICEF - Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| | 27 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | KII | World Health Organization - Replaced with Reproductive Health Alliance | Not available. Deleted |
| 35 | 27 | 3 | Wednesday | Bishkek | KII | Republican AIDS Center –Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 36 | 27 | 3 | Wednesday | Naryn | Travel | Paul Bell and M Vector | |
| 37 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | KII | Institute for Youth Development – Paul Bell and Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|----------|-----------|--------|---|-------------------------------|
| 38 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | KII | Agroinform Asia – Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 39 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | KII | Chamber of Commerce - Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 40 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | KII | UN Women – Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Bishkek | KII | Public Liberal Youth Alliance – Dr. Christy Olenik | Not relevant. Deleted |
| 41 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 42 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 43 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 44 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 45 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | KII | CAMI Staff - Paul Bell | Completed |
| 46 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | FGD | Youth Centered CSOs – Paul Bell | Completed |
| | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | KII | Mayor's Office | Cancelled. Deleted |
| 47 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | KII | Regional Youth Specialist | Completed |
| 48 | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | FGD | Tendesh Crisis Center | Completed |
| | 28 | 3 | Thursday | Naryn | KII | Ministry of Agriculture Representative | Cancelled. Deleted |
| 49 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | Jashtar Camp Representative – Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 50 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | National University Representative/s - Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| | 29 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | Secondary School – Dr. Christy Olenik | Participated in FGD. Deleted. |
| | 29 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | KII | Secondary Technical School – Dr. Christy Olenik | Participated in FGD. Deleted. |
| 51 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Kochkor | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 52 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Kochkor | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 53 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Kochkor | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 54 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Kochkor | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 55 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Kochkor | FGD | Village Council Representatives – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 56 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Kochkor | FGD | Youth Committee/Council Representatives – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 57 | 29 | 3 | Friday | Bishkek | Travel | Paul Bell and M Vector | |
| 58 | 30 | 3 | Saturday | Bishkek | KII | Muta Kallim – Dr. Christy Olenik | Completed |
| 59 | 30 | 3 | Saturday | Bishkek | Brief | Data Consolidation/Preparation | Completed |
| 60 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Osh | Travel | Paul Bell and M Vector | |
| 61 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Bishkek | Travel | Departure - Dr. Christy Olenik | |
| 62 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Otuz Adyr | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 63 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Otuz Adyr | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 64 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Otuz Adyr | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|------------------------------|
| 65 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Otuz Adyr | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 66 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Otuz Adyr | FGD | Village Council Representative/s – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 67 | 31 | 3 | Sunday | Otuz Adyr | FGD | Youth Committee/Council Representatives – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 68 | 1 | 4 | Monday | Osh | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 69 | 1 | 4 | Monday | Osh | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 70 | 1 | 4 | Monday | Osh | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 71 | 1 | 4 | Monday | Osh | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 72 | 1 | 4 | Monday | Osh | FGD | Youth Council – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 73 | 1 | 4 | Monday | Osh | KII | Chief of Regional Development – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 74 | 1 | 4 | Monday | Osh | FGD | Female Community Leaders – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 75 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | PGD | Male Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 76 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | PGD | Male Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 77 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | PGD | Female Youth 18-23 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 78 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | PGD | Female Youth 24-28 (M Vector) | Completed |
| 79 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | FGD | Youth Centered CSOs – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 80 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | FGD | School of Success Representatives – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 81 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | KII | Labor/Employment Office Representative – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 82 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Osh | KII | CAMI Staff | Completed |
| 82 | 2 | 4 | Tuesday | Bishkek | Travel | M Vector moderators | |
| 83 | 3 | 4 | Wednesday | Osh | KII | Youth of Osh – Paul Bell | Completed |
| | 3 | 4 | Wednesday | Osh | KII | Local Business Association – Paul Bell | Not available. Deleted. |
| 84 | 3 | 4 | Wednesday | Bishkek | Travel | Paul Bell | |
| 85 | 4 | 4 | Thursday | Bishkek | KII | Asian Development Bank – Paul Bell | Completed |
| | 4 | 4 | Thursday | Bishkek | KII | TVET Institution – Paul Bell | Participated in FGD. Deleted |
| 86 | 4 | 4 | Thursday | Bishkek | Meeting | USAID Partner Meeting – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 87 | 5 | 4 | Friday | Bishkek | Out brief | USAID – Paul Bell | Completed |
| 88 | 6 | 4 | Saturday | Bishkek | Travel | Departure – Paul Bell | |

| COP Interviews (Remote) | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| KII | CAMI Program |
| KII | Agro-Horizon Program |
| KII | Collaborative Governance Program |
| KII | Dignity and Rights Program |
| KII | Economic Competitiveness Program |
| KII | CEPPS NDI |
| KII | CEPPS IFES |
| KII | CEPPS IRI |
| KII | Defeat TB Program |
| KII | HIV Flagship Activity |
| KII | Time to Read Program |

| Type and reach of data collection efforts | |
|--|---|
| Key Informant Interviews (virtual) | 11 |
| Key Informant Interviews (in-country) | 30 |
| Peer Group Discussions | 32 (16 individual male and female 18 – 23 and 16 individual male and female 24 – 28-year-old age group PGDs) = 320 youth |
| Focus Group Discussions | 13 |

Locations for Field Work

| Bishkek | | | Naryn/Kochkor | | | Osh/Otuz Adyr | | |
|----------------|------|------|----------------------|------|------|----------------------|------|------|
| KIIs | FGDs | PGDs | KIIs | FGDs | PGDs | KIIs | FGDs | PGDs |
| 24 | 3 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 12 |

Annex E. Assessment Team

The two key field team members for YouthPower Learning were Paul Bell, Team Leader, and Dr. Christy Olenik, Deputy Team Leader, supported by YouthPower Learning headquarters-based technical and operations staff. In addition, YouthPower Learning engaged a local research firm, M-Vector that provided the desk and field research support, as well as and logistical support services. Making Cents International also worked with YouthPower Learning subcontractor, Mathematica Policy Research, who conducted the qualitative coding and analysis. A brief description of the team follows:

Team Leader: Mr. Paul Bell has more than 20 years' experience in community mobilization and public/private sector development in challenging environments, including eight years' leadership experience in Afghanistan and Pakistan managing large-scale, multi-stakeholder, high-impact community development programs. He recently served as Senior Advisor on a USAID-funded Competitiveness, Trade, and Jobs project in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, leading the initial assessment to identify at-risk youth for participation in jobs skills, job readiness, and entrepreneurship training, and designing entrepreneurship and workforce readiness curricula to prepare youth for employment. He has also held positions as Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party for USAID education, community cohesion, and transition initiative programs in Afghanistan and Pakistan. As the Assessment Team Leader, Mr. Bell had the following responsibilities:

- Oversee all aspects of the implementation of the assessment;
- Serve as the lead in defining the research agenda, assessment methodologies, team composition and hiring, schedule, and deliverables;
- Oversee desk review;
- Serve as lead writer of fieldwork proposal;
- Facilitate high-level KIs;
- Oversee the training and fieldwork of FGD facilitators and recorders;
- Support site selection and verification of appropriate selection of FGD participants;
- Work in close coordination with relevant staff of USAID/Kyrgyz Republic; and
- Serve as lead writer of the final assessment report.

Deputy Team Leader: Dr. Christy Olenik is a youth programming and monitoring and evaluation expert with more than 25 years' experience working on youth projects in the United States and internationally. She has designed, implemented, and evaluated youth programs for USAID, Inter-American Development Bank, local governments, and private foundations. She currently serves as Vice President, Technical Services at Making Cents International, responsible for technical leadership, service delivery, and strategy development on youth development, youth economic opportunities, and monitoring, evaluation, research and learning. As Deputy Team Leader, Dr. Olenik had the following responsibilities:

- Support the development of research methodologies, protocols, and schedule;
- Provide inputs to and review of desk review;
- Coordinate with local research firm;
- Co-lead training of research team members;
- Oversee site selection and selection of FGD participants;
- Manage the direct activities of research teams of facilitators and recorders under the guidance and supervision of the Team Lead;

- Ensure the integrity and accuracy of the gathering, processing, and synthesis of data collected from FGD sessions by facilitators and recorders;
- Serve as contributor to the assessment report and fieldwork proposal.

YouthPower Learning will engage a **local research firm, M-Vector** to support the Cross-Sector Youth Assessment activities. M-Vector is a local firm with its headquarters in Bishkek, offices in Osh and other offices in the region. It has more than 20 years' experience providing research and consulting services. M-Vector has implemented more than 1,000 projects, with an extensive focus on research, monitoring, and evaluation projects using qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches. Their experience spans development sectors and includes a focus on youth. M-Vector, provided the following services: literature review support and logistical services.

Focus Group Discussion Facilitation: The FGD (includes PGD) facilitation team was led by the Deputy Team Leader and overseen by the Team Leader. Through M-Vector, YouthPower Learning engaged and trained young people to serve as FGD facilitators, recorders, and interpreters. The team was: pool of youth researchers who served as facilitators, note takers, and interpreters: Karima Omurova, Ainura Esengulova, Samat Amanov, Jibek Jyrgalbek Kyzy, Aigul Osmonbaeva, Nurdin Osmonov, Merwaker Borkuah, Ora Bracewell, Joseph Kamara, Nikwan Kpayea, and James Vululleh, The primary responsibility of the youth facilitators was to guide the FGDs, ensuring open dialogue and full participation of all FGD participants. The youth recorders' primary responsibility was to faithfully and fully capture the responses of all FGD participants, including but not limited to direct quotes. The interpreters supported the youth assessment team.

YouthPower Learning engaged its partner Mathematica Policy Research to support the qualitative analysis within the Cross-Sector Youth Assessment. The key assessment team member from Mathematica were Ms. Elena Moroz and Mr. Josh Meuth Alldredge.

Ms. Elena Moroz's experience focuses on designing, implementing, managing, and providing technical assistance to evaluations of international development programs. She also has experience evaluating youth education programs, youth workforce development, youth reproductive health, and youth development programs in particular. Ms. Moroz holds a Master's in International Public Health and currently works on the Georgia General Education project, a MCC-funded project where she performs instrument development, data collection oversight and data analysis for quantitative and qualitative evaluations. She specializes in Russian.

Mr. Josh Meuth Alldredge has more than five years of relevant experience designing, implementing, managing, and providing technical assistance to evaluations of international development programs. Mr. Meuth Alldredge holds a Master of Global Policy Studies in International Development from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas. He has worked across development issues including migration, education, and youth.

Headquarters-based Support: The Assessment Team will also receive technical and operations support from headquarters-based staff. Cassandra Jessee, as a Director of YouthPower Learning, led the design, provided oversight, technical input, and quality assurance on all deliverables. Caitlin O'Donnell, as Project Officer, coordinated with the Assessment Team, provided input to the assessment reports, and managed contracting and logistical arrangements for this assessment.

Annex F. Youth Intake Interview Forms

PGD INFORMATION

Date: ____/____/____

Name of Facilitator:

Name of Recorder:

Oblast:

Municipality:

PGD # in this location: _____

PGD sex:

() Male

() Female

Age cohort:⁷¹

() Ages 18-23

() Ages 24-28

Observations / comments:

Part I. Individual Intake Form

[Before the start of the focus group, complete the intake form below for each youth participating in the focus group. The intake form should be completed for each participant individually, in a private place out of the hearing range of others.]

Introduction to Part I

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us today. My name is _____ and my colleagues' name(s) is/are _____. We are part of the YouthPower Learning Assessment team. Together, we are conducting an assessment on Kyrgyzstani youth, to better understand the economic, social, and political aspirations and challenges young people like you have. You have been asked to participate in this study because your knowledge, views, and experience as youth are very valuable and important to us.

Our discussion today will take place in two parts. First, I am going to ask some questions to learn more about you. We will do this individually so that only I will hear your responses. Then, we will ask some questions about the lives of Kyrgyzstani youth like you and particularly what aspirations and challenges young people like you have. We will do this through a group discussion.

Whatever information you provide for us during our time together will be kept strictly confidential and will not be attributed specifically to you. We will not be recording your name or any other identifiable information at any time. We ask that you not share who took part in this discussion or what others have said in this room with anyone outside of this room. However, we cannot promise others will not share what you have said during the discussion. We ask that you respond to the questions based on how you think youth in general would respond. Please do not share personal experiences when you respond to the questions. Participation in this discussion is voluntary, and you can choose not to answer any individual question or all of the questions. You can also stop the discussion or leave the group or individual interviews at any time. However, we hope you will participate in this discussion since your views are important.

Will you join us today for this discussion? Please feel free to ask if you have any questions at any time, even before I start.

[Note any questions raised by participants and your responses in the comments section below.]

We anticipate our time together will be up to 90 minutes long. Refreshments will be served at the end.

Comments:

⁷¹ Only youth ages 18-28 will be eligible to participate in peer groups

Demographic Information: We would now like to spend approximately 5 minutes collecting individual information from each of you. My colleague _____ and I will fill out an individual form for each of you that gives us a bit more detail about some of your basic background. *[Complete the form individually, in a private place out of the hearing range of others.]*

Sex: () Female () Male () Other

Age: _____

Oblast: _____

Municipality: _____

Marital status?

() Married

() Partnered (not married, co-habiting)

() Unmarried / Unpartnered

If Unmarried, or un-partnered, have you been married/partnered previously? () Yes () No

Do you have children?

() Yes **If yes, how many:** () 1 () 2 () 3 () 4 or more

() No

What formal educational level have you completed?

(Grade) _____

Are you currently enrolled in a formal education program:

() Enrolled **If enrolled, please provide grade level** _____

() Not enrolled

Are you currently enrolled in a non-formal education program:

() Enrolled **If enrolled, please describe program type** _____

() Not enrolled

What is your employment status:

() Formal employment **If formally employed, list type of employment** _____

() Informal employment **If informally employed, list type of employment** _____

() Not employed, Not looking for work

() Not employed, Looking for work

() Unable to work [please indicate reason why] _____

COMMENTS:

Annex G. Peer Group Discussions Protocol

PGD INFORMATION

Date: ____/____/____

Name of Facilitator:

Name of Recorder:

Oblast:

Municipality:

PGD # in this location: _____

PGD sex:

☐ Male☐ FemaleAge cohort:⁷²☐ Ages 18-23☐ Ages 24-28

Number of PGD participants:

COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Hi! Welcome, and thank you so much for agreeing to participate with us in this Peer Group Discussion! I am _____ and this is _____ and we are here on behalf of YouthPower Learning, a global USAID-funded program based in the United States that seeks to generate information about effective youth engagement. USAID has asked us to conduct an assessment in Kyrgyz Republic to identify challenges and potential opportunities for effectively engaging youth in Kyrgyz Republic. We're excited to be here with you!

As mentioned earlier, during this Peer Group Discussion, we would like to talk with you about the lives of Kyrgyzstani youth like you, with particular focus on what aspirations young people have and what challenges you face. We would like this be a *conversation* between us here in the room. As such, in this process, there are **no right or wrong answers**, only differing points of view. You don't need to agree with others, but we would request that everyone listen respectfully as others share their views. In that spirit we would ask that you speak one-at-a-time. We look forward to this being a lively and energetic conversation where everyone feels safe and comfortable speaking. Remember, participation is voluntary, and you can choose to leave the group at any time. However, we hope you will participate since your views are important. And we also think it will be fun and informative for all of you!

My role will be to facilitate the discussion. You will notice that my colleague, _____, will be taking notes. People often say very helpful things in these discussions and we want to make sure we don't miss any of the important insights you will provide for us! So you'll probably see [recorder's name] furiously writing! As mentioned, we will not record your names. Instead, we will use the information you provide us to generate a report and recommendations for USAID regarding potential future strategic investments to better support youth in Kyrgyz Republic.

Remember, in keeping with our commitment to the confidentiality of all participants, we ask that you not share with people outside of this group EITHER who took part in this discussion OR what they have said during the course of our discussion

Do you have any questions for us before we start? *[Record both questions raised by participants as well as responses]*

Okay, let's get started!

⁷²Only youth ages 18-28 will be eligible to participate in peer groups

PGD QUESTIONS

Note: Due to time limits and amount of discussion, many PGDs will not cover all questions within a 90-minute period. As such, each PGD may include any of the questions listed here so that across all PGDs, all questions are covered in the assessment.

1. Because this is a conversation, we think it's important that we all be on a first-name basis! So we have left name cards in front of each of your chairs. Take a minute or two to write your name on the card—first name or nicknames only; no need to include your last names. Then we would like to go around the table and have everyone tell us their name (first name or nickname only!) and something you would like the group to know about you. We will collect and destroy the cards at the end of the session.

[Work with youth facilitators to determine the most appropriate way to address introductions; IF CARDS ARE USED, THESE SHOULD BE COLLECTED AND DESTROYED AFTER THE SESSION]

2. We'd like to start by asking what you think it means to feel satisfied in life? In an ideal world, what are the factors or things that make life feel full and satisfying?

Probes:

- Another way to think about this is by thinking about the factors that help a person feel like they can achieve their potential. What kinds of things make a person feel that way? What are the components that help a person achieve his or her potential?

3. *[Give each young person the three faces.]* To answer this next question, I'd like you to use the faces we've given you. Now, I'd like you to think about you and the people you know who are your age. Reflecting on our discussion about the factors that influence how satisfied people feel in their lives, how satisfied do you think people your age are with their daily life here in *[COMMUNITY NAME]*?

To start the conversation, I'd like you to use the faces we've given to you. There are three options:

(1) If you think people your age are GENERALLY SATISFIED with their daily life here (have all the factors they need to feel satisfied), place the smiley face in front of you.

(2) If you think that people your age are GENERALLY NOT SATISFIED with their daily life here, place the sad face in front of you.

(3) If you think people your age are generally NEITHER SATISFIED NOR UNSATISFIED with their daily life here, place the neutral face in front of you.

You can take a minute to think about this.

Now, we'd like to discuss your choices. Does anyone want to tell us why they chose the face they chose? Remember, there is no right or wrong answer; everyone's answer is meaningful and valid. *[The recorder should note how many youth choose each face.]*

Probes: *[Refer back to the factors that participants mentioned under question 2]*

- Let's start with the smiley faces- why do you think you are generally satisfied? What are the conditions that help people your age feel generally like their lives are moving in the right direction?
- Neutral faces- why do you think people your age are neither satisfied or unsatisfied? What things might be making them feel this way- what are some good things? What are some bad things?
- For the sad faces what's missing? What do you think are the greatest frustrations of people your age? What priorities and ambitions do those youth have that they are unable to achieve? What keeps them from achieving those things?

4. I'd like to pick up on the topic of the goals of people your age. If you think about the people your age that you know in [COMMUNITY NAME], what are some of the dreams and goals they have for the future?

Probes:

- What do some of the people your age that you know seek to achieve or become in the future? (university studies, office jobs, jobs as farmers, etc.)
- Do males and females have different ambitions here in [COMMUNITY NAME]? If yes, why?
- What are some of your own goals and ambitions? These can be related to education, work, family or anything else you like. (They're your goals so they can be anything you like!)
- Do you feel like these goals are achievable? Why/why not? *[Ask them to use the faces to rate interest]*

5. Now I'm going to lay out some note cards with some words on each of them. These are things that are important to a person's well-being:

- **Improved health**
- **Stronger connections with family/ friends**
- **Increased safety/ security**
- **More active participation and decision-making in the community**
- **Improved spiritual life**
- **Increased education (academic or vocational)**
- **Better livelihoods/ business opportunities/ jobs**
- **Other** (Facilitator PROBE to add to list)

I am now going to give you 3 stones for you to indicate which ones are the most important. Among these things, which are the top three things that would most improve the quality of life for you personally, and/or for youth in your community? *FACILITATOR prepares a piece of paper with one of the bulleted topics above written on it. Facilitator then lays each piece of paper on the table or ground. Facilitator provides each member 3 stickies (or stones/marbles). Youth participants are asked to place their 3 stones on top of their top 3 priorities. Facilitator asks youth about their responses.*

6. Are you aware of any opportunities here in [COMMUNITY NAME] that support people your age to reach their goals/ improve the quality of their lives? *[Try to fully engage around one topic before moving on to the next]*

Probes:

- What social activities are available in your community (religious, sports, theater, dance, music, etc.)? Who sponsors those programs (government, CBOs, NGOS)? What are the key barriers to accessing them? What social activities do you and your friends most enjoy?
- Are you aware of any vocational / entrepreneurship education programs in [COMMUNITY NAME]? If so, which ones? Who sponsors those programs (government, CBOs, NGOS)? What are the key barriers to accessing those opportunities? If you think about what you have heard about those programs, are they helping people get the skills they need for a job or to start a business?
- Are you aware of any programs that friends your age have participated in that have helped them secure employment (on/off-farm, local businesses, etc.)? Which ones? Who sponsors those programs (government, CBOs, NGOS)? What have you heard about those activities (PROMPT USAID)?
- What kinds of health services are available to youth (PROMPT TB, reproductive health/family planning, HIV/AIDS, general health awareness/strategies)? Please raise your hands if you know young people who have used these services? *[note number who raised hands]*
- Which other services and opportunities that we haven't discussed would be most useful for young people? Why? *[note for female peer groups add: Are there services in [COMMUNITY NAME] for young women especially?]*

7. Can you think of any other challenges or barriers that keep people your age from achieving their goals?

Probes:

- Is crime, violence or corruption a challenge in [COMMUNITY NAME]? What are the most common kinds of crimes/violence here in [COMMUNITY NAME]? What are the key causes?
- Where can youth go for help if you have been a victim of crime/violence? How do young people deal with corruption?
- What about substance use or drug trafficking, are these big issues here in [COMMUNITY NAME]? Tell me more about your experience.
- Does everyone have access to health services here in [COMMUNITY NAME]? What health issues are of most concern to youth (PROMPT TB and HIV/AIDS services and reproductive health/family planning if not brought up naturally)?
- Since TB is an issue here in the country, can you tell me what you know about TB (PROMPT is it curable)?
- To what extent are youth moving between rural and urban areas and/or migrating to other countries or regions? Why do they go? How does this affect [COMMUNITY NAME]?
- Are there other community issues we have not discussed that impact youth? *[note for female peer groups add: Are there issues in [COMMUNITY NAME] that impact young women especially?]*

8. Suppose that you were in charge and could make changes to help young people like you achieve their goals and ambitions. What would you do?

Probes:

- What could be improved to offer young people better access to needed health services? (PROMPT access to TB and HIV/AIDS services and reproductive health/family planning if not brought up naturally)
- What could be done to improve the educational system? What improvements could be made for teachers and students to be successful?
- What do you think could be done to improve job opportunities / vocational training / agriculture and food systems programs / links to private businesses, etc.?
- *Note for female peer groups add: Are there changes you would like to see that impact young women especially?*

9. We have talked about many topics related to the goals, ambitions, and available opportunities for people your age. We'd like to discuss the participation of people your age in the community.

Thinking about the people you know, in general how actively do the young people you know participate in community activities and leadership opportunities?

Probes:

- What opportunities are there for youth to participate in community decision-making? (PROMPT community councils or development committees, school councils, CBO groups, etc.) How actively do youth participate in groups? *[note for female peer groups add: Are young women as active as young men?]*
- What challenges do youth experience in their civic engagement and volunteering? What are the key barriers to youth participation? Are there a lot of youth who advocate for community changes in [COMMUNITY NAME]?
- What kinds of civic activities/volunteering do you think young people would be interested in doing more? What would encourage young people to become more active in your community?
- How do older people's attitudes about people your age affect participation?
- Please raise your hands if you know any young people in your community who are involved in politics? "Politics" could mean: advocacy for local, regional, or national issues, involvement on local forums on public policy issues, attending political rallies or political party events and activities, involvement in electoral campaigns, and voting in elections. (PROMPT: If no, why not?) Keep your hands up if you know of any girls or young women who are involved in politics? (PROMPT: If no, why not?)

10. Thinking about youth in your community, describe the young people who have been most successful at obtaining employment, starting a business, or earning an income.

- What has allowed these youth to be successful in earning a livelihood?
- What sectors or occupations are youth most interested to engage in? Why?
- What sectors are least attractive to youth? Why?
- What opportunities exist for youth in the agriculture and food systems sectors? What is the level of interest in participating in agriculture among the people your age that you know? High interest, neutral or little interest? [Ask them to use the faces to rate interest]
- What are the key barriers to earning an income? *[note for female peer groups add: Are there any special barriers for young women in [COMMUNITY NAME] especially?]*
- Do youth in your community save money? Tell me more about the savings habits of young people you know.
- Do youth in your community take out loans? Tell me more about how youth are able to access credit. Are there any barriers to accessing credit in [COMMUNITY NAME]?

11. How do young people in your community share and obtain information about what's going on?

- Radio, Internet, Texting Apps, Word of Mouth (peers, family), newspaper, community bulletin board, community events, etc.

12. Wrap-up: As I mentioned earlier in our discussion, in our study we are trying to understand the situation of young people like you living in Kyrgyz Republic today. Of all the things we discussed today, what do you think is the most important thing for us to understand? *[Recorder to highlight the key issues raised]*

Have we missed anything? Is there anything else we need to know about what it's like to be a young person living in Kyrgyz Republic today? *[If they add anything else, probe for rationale and other relevant information as youth share their thoughts with the group.]*

As we finish our discussion, do you have any questions for our team? *[Recorder to capture questions and answers]*

THANK YOU VERY MUCH for your thoughts and insights today. We really appreciate your time and energy!

Annex H: Key Informant Interview Questions

These are key questions that will be raised across KII and FGDs. Specific questions will be selected based on the lens, experience and specialization of the given stakeholder(s) and

Youth FGDs/Cross Cutting

1. What factors might encourage or discourage young women and young men in engaging with and benefiting from USAID's activities. **(Priority)**
2. How interested would young women and young men be in being involved in active coordination and design of youth centered activities that might lead to their improvement? **(Priority)**
3. What aspects of youth service provision are youth most interested in? Recreation, sports, music, culture, technology, employment, or other? How do these differ by geography, ethnicity, and gender?
4. What is youth experience of violence? What forms does it take and how common is it?
5. What is a coping mechanism for young men and women (again depending on the youth cohort) if they experienced violence? What are their immediate needs and what kind of services do they need?
6. What is the situation in relation to GBV?
7. How do youth prevent or try to intervene to prevent violence?
8. How do youth define violence, especially by subgroup?
9. In what cases is bride kidnapping considered violent vs. nonviolent act?
10. What civil organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to the provision of youth services? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness? **(Priority)**
11. Do you have anything else you would like to say on the current situation of youth in the KR?

Gender

1. What are the biggest issues in relation to gender?

Youth Policy

1. What do you see as the main features of the new 2017-2020 Youth Strategy?
2. Could you please explain the process of youth inclusion in the formulation of the Youth Strategy? For example, how is the Republican Congress of Youth constituted and how does it work and impact both process and outcomes?
3. How well do you think youth inclusion worked? Did it lead to a better strategy and higher GOKR prioritization of youth related issues and actions to address them?
4. What tangible outcomes emerged from youth involvement in the construction of the Youth Strategy and subsequent involvement in monitoring its implementation?
5. Did their levels of interest and involvement in the construction of the Youth Strategy demonstrate male/female, urban/rural, or ethnic variation?
6. What has been the specific impact of the GOKR's Youth Strategy in terms of actual youth provision? What have been the tangible outcomes?
7. Do youth and youth-serving/led CSOs feel their involvement produced real results?
8. How does the Youth Strategy direct and guide actions at the local level? Has it increased awareness and prioritization of youth issues at the local level?
9. What is the current landscape and opportunity for USAID to work with the GOKR to further solidify youth involvement in national and local decision-making? **(Priority)**

10. Leveraging youth willingness to volunteer could add value to many aspects of the service delivery system in the KR. What service delivery aspects have the highest potential and would produce best fits? How receptive would the GOKR be to youth volunteerism, and how capable would they be in managing it?
11. How has the strategy been resourced? Is the level of resources allocated commensurate with the scale and scope of issues related to youth?
12. Would you be willing to share how much has been allocated within the GOKR's budget and how is it distributed? How does resource allocation work at local levels?
13. What's working well within the Agency for Youth and what could be improved?
14. What needs to be done to improve youth services? In order of priority:
 - What would be the three big things to focus on?
 - What would be three small things but that would have major impact?
15. What civil society organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to promoting youth issues or providing youth services? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
16. Do you have anything else you would like to say on the Youth Strategy and the workings of the Agency for Youth?

Citizen Participation and Civil Society Strengthening

1. While there has been good youth engagement in USAID-funded good governance and democratic system support to date, how does USAID plan to sustain youth interest and involvement over time and beyond the 2020 elections? (USAID Democracy and Governance Team)
2. Seeing as concerns about corruption in government are an issue among youth, would more anticorruption activities be worthwhile, and would youth be receptive to them? Additionally, would youth be interested in engaging with more human rights, legal frameworks, and advocacy types of activities?
3. What is the current landscape and opportunity for USAID to work with the GOKR to further solidify youth involvement in national and local decision-making?
4. What are the deeper differences in service delivery needs for rural versus urban youth? What does this look like on the ground, community by community? What are the differences in interest and access for different ethnic groups (particularly Uzbek youth)?
5. Identify factors that prevent or facilitate greater youth involvement in politics, including in election campaigns, as voters, as election observers, or as candidates themselves. **(Priority)**
6. What types of civil society organizations most attract youth? **(Priority)**
7. What factors that prevent or facilitate greater youth participation in established civil society organizations or other types of community groups
8. Is there a need for continued capacity building of youth-serving/led CSOs, particularly as it relates to best practices in PYD and PYD measurement and to produce parity of capacity between urban and rural youth CSOs and optimize female involvement?
9. Would you describe youth as being more interested in leading or following? What factors might prevent or facilitate greater youth interest in assuming leadership roles?
10. Who do youth look up to? Who are their role models? How might these role models be different for male and female youth?
11. What types of civil society organizations most attract youth?
12. What challenges do civil society organizations face in recruiting an active youth membership? How are these challenges different for male and female youth?

13. What civil society organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to promoting youth issues or providing youth services? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness? (Priority)
14. Do you have anything else you would like to say on youth political and civil society participation?

Local Governance

1. What do you consider are the biggest issues in relation to youth in your local authority? How might these be different for male and female youth?
2. How high a priority are youth issues and services for local authorities and your local authority in particular? How might these be different for male and female youth?
3. How would you describe the impact of your local authority on youth? Are there any initiatives you would like to describe that have had a positive impact?
4. Are you familiar with the GOKR's Youth Strategy? Does it inform the local authority's processes and practices in relation to the provision of youth services?
5. What has been the specific impact of the GOKR's Youth Strategy in terms of actual youth provision?
6. Do you have a specific youth services budget? Would you know or be willing to share how much is allocated?
7. How much do youth voices count in relation to the work of the local authority? What factors might prevent or facilitate them counting more?
8. Among local authorities that have been more successful in encouraging youth participation, what practices have led to this success?
9. Do you have anything else you would like to say on youth in relation to the work of local authorities and/or your local authority in particular?

Human Rights

1. What are the main issues in relation to youth rights? How might these issues be different for male and female youth and youth of different age cohorts?
2. What are the deep dive differences in service delivery needs in relation to gender?
3. What is the opportunity for USAID to provide services that change gender norms with the new generation of Kyrgyz youth? Along with health and wellness, how might this kind of focus tackle issues related to high female youth suicide and adolescent pregnancy rates, gender-based violence, bride kidnapping, LGBTI inequities, and the feminization of migration?
4. What are the main issues in relation to the rights of LBGT youth?
5. What are the main issues related to child labor?
6. Where can youth seek legal or other kinds of support when their rights have been violated? How effective is this support and how can it be made more effective?
7. What are the main coping mechanisms for youth who have experienced violence; particularly GBV? What are their immediate needs and what kind of services do they need?
8. How prevalent is bride kidnapping? What are the main motivating factors that lie behind it and how might they be countered more effectively?
9. What are the main issues in relation to the rights of:
 - Ethnic minority youth
 - Novastroyki youth
 - 'Stateless' youth

10. What organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to promoting or defending youth rights? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
11. Do you have anything else you would like to say in relation to the rights of youth?

Migration and Counter Trafficking in Persons

1. What do youth cite as the main reasons for youth migration? **(Priority)***
2. What vulnerabilities or risks are youth exposed to in migrating? How are these vulnerabilities different for male and female youth? **(Priority)***
3. What are the most important services young male and female migrants need: **(Priority)***
 - Before they migrate?
 - During their migration?
 - After they return?
4. What are the main impacts on youth that stay at home? How are these impacts different for male and female youth?
5. What factors might decrease the numbers of youth migrating? How might these factors be different for male and female youth?
6. What organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to youth issues associated with migration and or human trafficking? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
7. Do you have anything else you would like to say on youth migration?

*Priority to be accomplished through organizational landscape table.

Health

1. What are the main youth health issues? How might these be different for male and female youth? **(Priority)**
2. How would you describe youth levels of awareness in relation to their health issues? What factors might prevent or facilitate greater youth awareness?
3. Where do youth go to access health services and information on health topics and family planning? **(Priority)**
4. What are the major obstacles for youth in accessing health services and information? What factors might prevent or facilitate greater youth access and how might these be different for male and female youth?
5. What health service mechanisms for youth need growing or scaling? What are the best practice, youth-friendly models in Kyrgyz Republic or the region, and how can they be scaled?
6. Is drug and alcohol use a major problem facing youth? What are the main types of drugs used by youth? **(Priority)**
7. What are the main youth mental health issues? How might these be different for male and female youth?
8. What are the main youth disability issues? How might these be different for male and female youth?
9. What organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to youth health issues? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
10. Do you have anything else you would like to say in relation to youth health?

Tuberculosis

1. What's the current status in relation to MDR TB and youth? Are the numbers of cases amongst youth increasing or declining and what factors are driving them?
2. What are the main issues in relation to MDR TB and youth? How might these be different for male and female youth?
3. How would you describe youth levels of awareness in relation to MDR TB? Do they know if it can be cured? What factors might prevent or facilitate greater youth awareness? **(Priority)**
4. Where do youth currently get information on MDR TB? What factors prevent or facilitate their getting information?
5. What are the major obstacles for youth in accessing MDR TB testing, treatment, and prevention services? What factors might prevent or facilitate greater youth access and how might these be different for male and female youth? **(Priority)**
6. What are the opportunities for increasing youth knowledge on issues related to MDR TB?
7. How much does it have to do with increasing youth knowledge with building the capacity of the GOKR to deliver educational services?
8. What do you recommend can be done to make MDR TB services friendlier to youth?
9. What organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to HIV and youth? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
10. Do you have anything else you would like to say in relation to MDR TB and youth?

HIV/AIDS

1. What's the current status in relation to HIV and youth? Are the numbers of cases amongst youth increasing or declining and what factors are driving them?
1. What are the main issues in relation to HIV and youth? How might these be different for male and female youth?
2. How would you describe youth levels of awareness in relation to the disease? Do they understand how it is transmitted and treated? What factors might prevent or facilitate greater youth awareness? **(Priority)**
3. Where do youth currently get information on HIV? What factors prevent or facilitate their getting information? What are the opportunities for increasing youth knowledge on issues related to MDR TB?
4. What are the opportunities for increasing youth knowledge on issues related to HIV?
5. What are the major obstacles for youth in accessing HIV testing, treatment, and prevention services? What factors might prevent or facilitate greater youth access and how might these be different for male and female youth? **(Priority)**
6. What do you recommend can be done to make HIV services friendlier to youth?
7. What organizations do you know of that are effective in relation to HIV and youth? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
8. Do you have anything else you would like to say in relation to HIV and youth?

Education

1. What are the main issues in relation to education?
 - Primary education
 - Secondary education
 - Technical and vocational education

- Higher education
- 2. What do youth feel about the quality of education in the KR? Would their feelings align with yours? **(Priority)**
- 3. Do you feel that the current education system prepares youth for their future jobs and careers? Would their feelings align with yours? **(Priority)**
- 4. What can be done to improve education so it is more relevant to youth needs and interests in relation to their future jobs and careers? **(Priority)**
- 5. What needs to be done to improve education? In order of priority:
 - What would be the three big things to focus on?
 - What would be three small things but that would have major impact?
- 6. How important is the need to develop youth soft skills?
- 7. What role might the private sector play in improving the quality of education or its ability to better prepare youth for their future jobs and careers?
- 8. What educational practices or policies adopted in other places do you think need to be benchmarked for the KR education system? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
- 9. Do you have anything else you would like to say on education?

Employment

- 1. What are the main issues in relation to youth employment? How might these be different for male and female youth?
- 2. What are the main issues in relation to formal and informal sector employment?
- 3. How does youth unemployment or underemployment vary by subgroup and region? **(Priority)**
- 4. What challenges do businesses face in hiring new young workers? How might these be different for male and female youth? **(Priority)**
- 5. What are the skills that are most in demand by employers?
- 6. How important are soft skills?
- 7. How might internship programs more effectively connect students to businesses and gain practical skills and experience.
- 8. What are the professions for young people that are of high demand by the government/business? **(Priority)**
- 9. What professions will be of great demand 5 years from now? **(Priority)**
- 10. What needs to be done to improve youth employment prospects? In order of priority:
 - What would be the three big things to focus on?
 - What would be three small things but that would have major impact?
- 11. What role might the private sector play in improving youth employment prospects?
- 12. Do you have anything else you would like to say on youth employment?

Enterprise Development

- 1. As a transitioning economy would you agree that entrepreneurship is not really part of the Kyrgyz economic system's DNA? If so, how might it become more so?
- 2. Do many Kyrgyz youth aspire to starting and running their own businesses or is their overwhelming preference for paid employment? What do you think are the underlying reasons for their preferences?
- 3. What are the main issues and trends in relation to youth enterprise development? Are youth faced with the increasing prospect of having to be self-employed in the future? How might these issues and trends be different for male and female youth?
- 4. What do you see as the main risks associated with supporting youth led businesses or entrepreneurial ideas and how might they be overcome? Are the risks different for males and females?

5. How important is training in relation to building youth entrepreneurship development?
6. What part do you see the education system playing in relation to building youth entrepreneurial skills and a more entrepreneurial mindset amongst youth?
7. What entrepreneurial practices, models or policies – like hackathons, hubs co-working spaces and pitching competitions - adopted in the KR, the region and other places do you think need to be benchmarked for youth entrepreneurship development in the KR? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness? **(Priority)**
8. What role might incubators or hubs might play in youth entrepreneurship development?
10. What needs to be done to improve youth entrepreneurship? In order of priority:
 - What would be the three big things to focus on?
 - What would be three small things but that would have major impact?
11. What organizations do you know of that have been effective in relation to youth entrepreneurship development? What do you think is the key to their effectiveness?
12. Do you have anything else you would like to say on youth entrepreneurship development?

Agriculture

1. What are the main issues in relation to youth inclusion in agriculture? How might these be different for male and female youth?
2. What role does patriarchy play in relation to youth inclusion in agriculture?
3. Where are the biggest opportunities for youth inclusion in relation to:
 - Productive agriculture?
 - Agricultural processing and value adding services?
 - Livestock and poultry production and value adding services?
 How might these opportunities be different for male and female youth?
4. What agricultural value chains offer the most potential? **(Priority)**
5. What is the level of youth interest in agricultural entrepreneurship and how might it be grown? **(Priority)**
6. Is there currently enough investment in the agriculture sector to produce career and self-employment opportunities for youth? **(Priority)**
7. Now that the Agro-Horizon project has closed out, does USAID have any plans for a further program dedicated to productive agriculture and addressing issues surrounding smallholder farming and especially the lack of youth agency in relation to it? **(Priority)**
8. How might negative youth perceptions of a life in agriculture be countered? How might these be different for male and female youth?
9. How big a problem is child labor in agriculture? What factors are driving the problem and how can they best be countered?
10. Do you have anything else you would like to say on youth inclusion in agriculture?

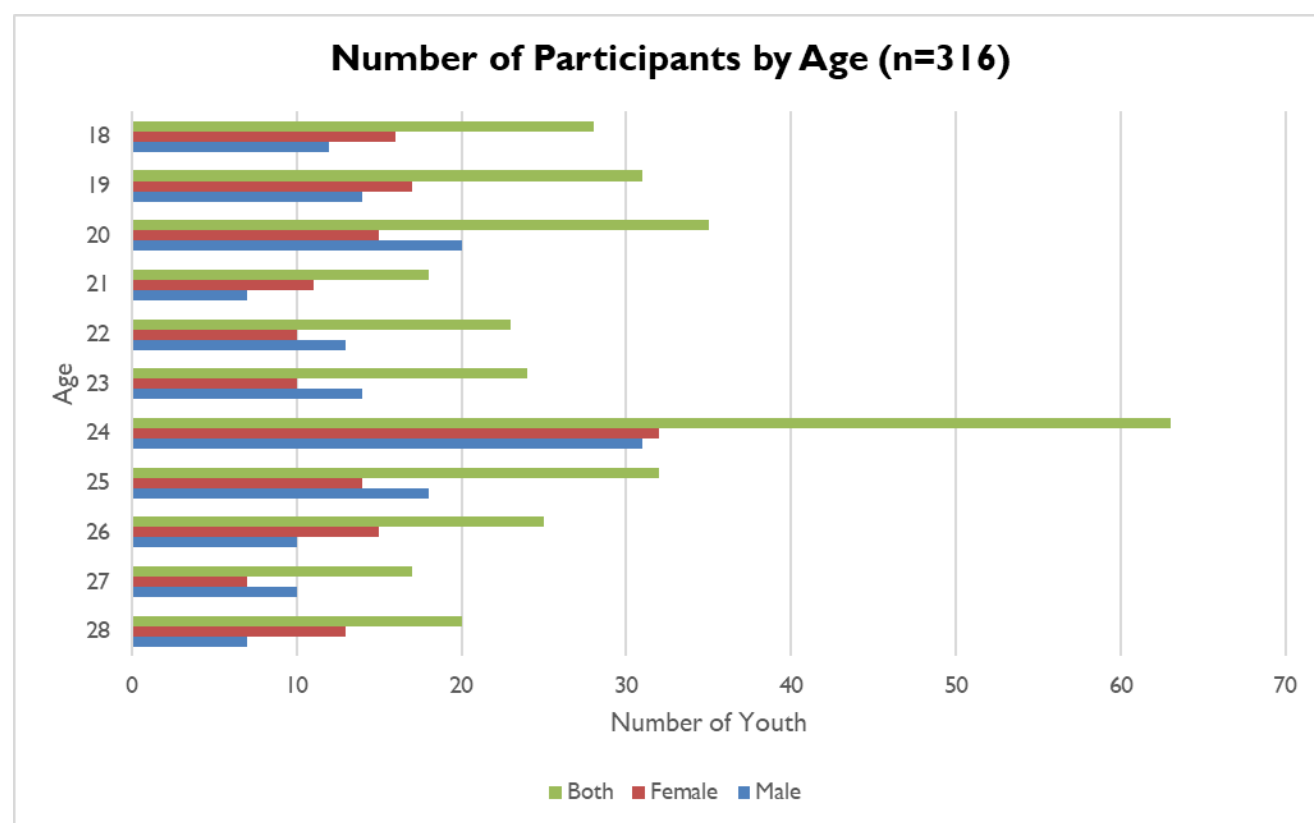
Rural Communities

1. What are the deeper differences in service delivery needs for rural versus urban youth? **(Priority)**
2. What does this look like on the ground, community by community? **(Priority)**
3. What are the differences in interest and access for different ethnic groups (particularly Uzbek youth)? **(Priority)**

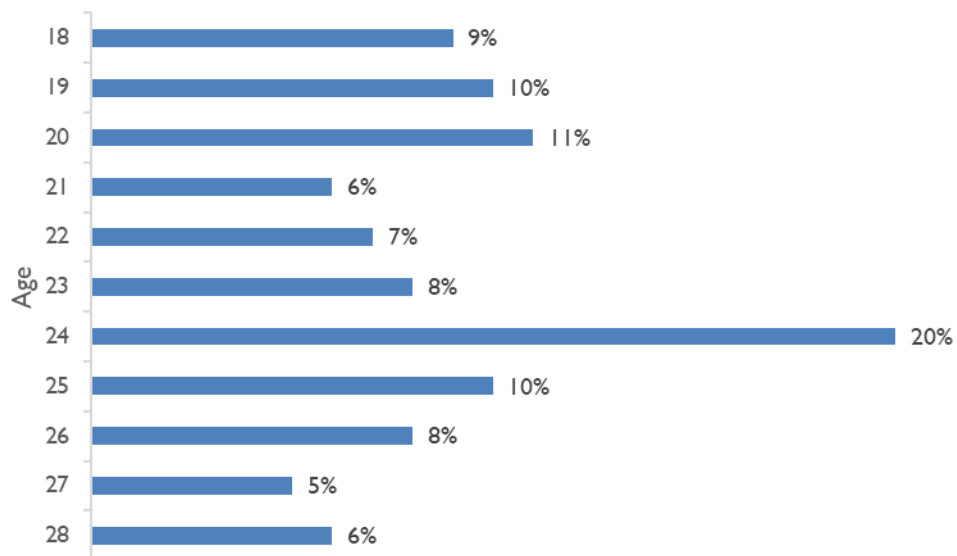
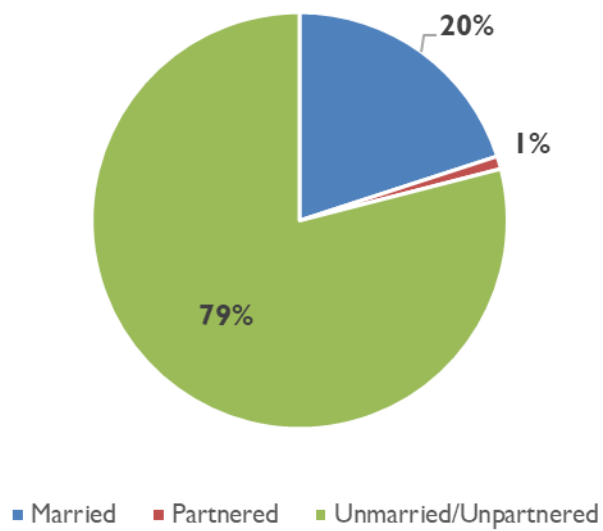
Annex I. Peer Group Discussion Demographic Data⁷³

Overview of PGDs and Participants by Oblast

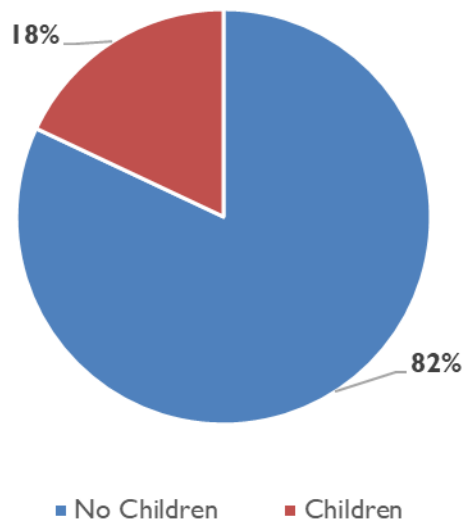
| Oblast | # of PGD | 18-23 | 24-28 | Participants Total | Male | Female |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Bishkek | 12 | 6 | 6 | 120 | 60 | 60 |
| Kochkor | 4 | 2 | 2 | 38 | 19 | 19 |
| Naryn | 4 | 2 | 2 | 38 | 19 | 19 |
| Osh | 8 | 4 | 4 | 80 | 38 | 41 |
| Otuz-Adyr | 4 | 2 | 2 | 41 | 20 | 21 |
| Total | 32 | 16 | 16 | 317 | 156 | 160 |



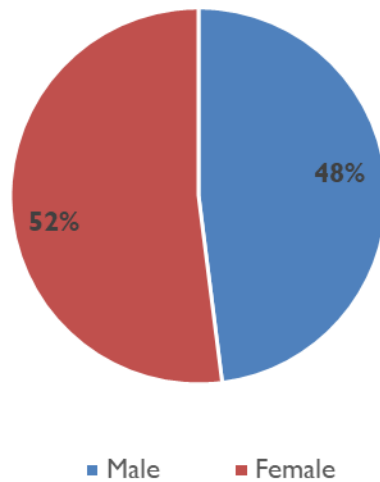
⁷³ Sample size (n) does not always equal 317 because of missing data or because it has been filtered to look at a specific topic.

Percentage of Participants by Age (n=316)**Participant Marital Status (n=316)**

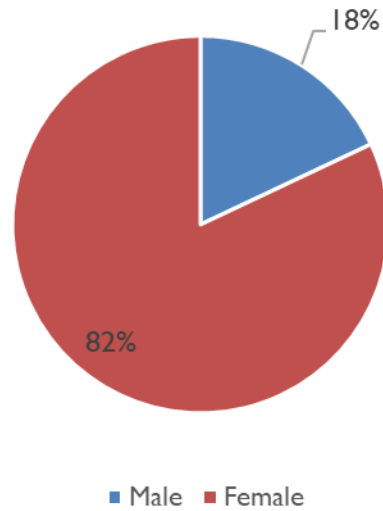
Percentage of Participants with Children (n=300)



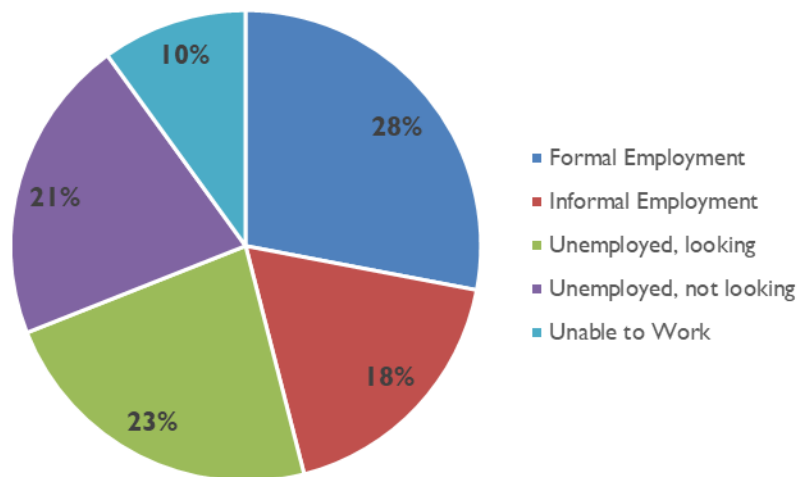
Percentage of those Enrolled in Formal Education by Sex (n=145)



Percentage of those Enrolled in Non-Formal Education by Sex (n=33)



Employment Status (n=305)



Employment Status by Oblast

| | Bishkek | Kochkor | Naryn | Osh | Otuz-Adyr |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|-------|-----|-----------|
| Formal Employment | 37% | 34% | 24% | 24% | 12% |
| Informal Employment | 15% | 16% | 18% | 23% | 20% |
| Unemployed, looking | 16% | 29% | 34% | 22% | 24% |
| Unemployed, not looking | 10% | 18% | 13% | 27% | 44% |
| Unable to Work | 22% | 3% | 11% | 4% | - |

Annex J. Stakeholder Landscape Table

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|---|---------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | Institute for Youth Development | To create a sustainable environment for youth development through stakeholder engagement | Working on the expansion of opportunities for active participation of Kyrgyz youth in sustainable development, making quality decisions on youth issues for sustainable development of the country. TARGET GROUP / CLIENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth and youth leaders • Youth NGOs and organizations working with young people • Government and Local Government • Decision makers (DM) Focused across sectors within youth development | location Chui region, focus countrywide | X |
| 2 | NGO 'Women's Support Centre' | Development of a democratic and humane society through understanding the role and capabilities of each; Promotion of gender equality through the protection of human rights and active participation in democratic reforms in Kyrgyzstan | The Women's Assistance Centre promotes the capacity of civil society to address gender issues. The implementation of this task involves increasing the gender sensitivity of the population and the introduction of gender approaches in various spheres of society. -Gender training; - Ensuring access of civil society representatives to information on gender issues; - Monitoring - Expansion of the information base on gender, including the development and publication of materials in the Kyrgyz language - Development and implementation of new teaching methods, including in the Kyrgyz language - Conducting research on various aspects of gender, taking into account local specifics Focused on democracy and governance sector | location Chui region, focus countrywide | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|---|---------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| 3 | NGO 'BIOM' | The organization is working towards positive changes in the quality of the environment and people's lives by engaging diverse populations in the realizations of sustainable development principles and preservation of natural ecosystems | Works in Education of Youth and Sustainable Development, Climate Change, Sustainable Development Policy, Environmental Safety, Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency, Environmental Management, Biodiversity Conservation. Work at local level: involvement of local communities in social-ecological activity. Focused on education and environment sectors. | location Chui region, focus countrywide and Central Asia region | |
| 4 | NGO 'DIA' | Establishing a platform for female deputies at the local level in order to promote issues of concern; strengthening the network of women in politics, with the aim of combating early marriage and polygamy, and the provision of support to victims of trafficking. | Works on gender education and awareness issues. Focused on gender across sectors, with emphasis on democracy and governance. | location Osh, focus unclear | |
| 5 | NGO 'Insan Diamond' | The main focus of its work is research, training, and community work, and its main partner is OSCE. It has also recently begun collaboration with 'Saferworld.' | Has conducted studies like school drop-out rates. Focused across sectors. | location Osh, focus unclear | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|---|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 | Public organization of rural women 'Alga' | The focus of its work originally was to address the unequal distribution of land in rural areas between men and women. | Work on lobbying district and provincial authorities as well as Parliament, to assist rural women in obtaining fair land shares. In order to address rural poverty, women have been trained in agricultural techniques, business planning, and access to credit on the basis of social collateral. Focused on economic development, agriculture, and gender. | location Chui region, focus unclear | |
| 7 | Public Fund 'Positive Dialogue', Osh | This organization provides legal assistance to women related to recovering alimony payments and the division of property following divorce. | The organization works with women in conflict with the law. Focused on gender and democracy and governance sector. | location Osh, focus unclear | |
| 8 | NGO 'ISEDA' – Institute for Social and Economic Development, Osh | The organization works on social and economic issues in the Osh region. | They establish self-help initiative groups. Local people have received capacity building in monitoring local service provision and how to demand better quality services from local municipalities (ayl okmotu) based on legislation. www.isedworld.org Focused on democracy and governance sector. | location and focus Osh | |
| 9 | NGO 'Saferworld' Osh | Prevention of violent conflict and build safer lives. | Saferworld works on a range of issues relating to conflict and peace: -People's security and justice -Gender, peace and security -Global action against conflict -Peacebuilding responses to terrorism and migration -Effective arms control | location and focus Osh region | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|-----------------------|--|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | -People and power structures Focused on democracy and governance sector. | | |
| 10 | NGO DVV International | DVV International promotes women and gender equality building a dialogue platform on religion civil society and democracy. | DVV has also recently initiated an EU-funded project 'Democracy and Religion - Dialogue between Equal and Moderate voices (DREAM)' targeting 14 districts and aimed at civic engagement. A second component will focus on the media which will be trained in how to produce materials on these issues. Youth groups will stage interactive theatre performances based on life stories in specific locations dealing with religion, equality, and gender. Focused on democracy and governance sector. | location Bishkek, focus unclear | |
| 11 | Oasis | Oasis is a Public Charitable Fund. | Oasis runs the Care Leavers Transition Program, which prepare young people and supports them through their transition; this includes orphanage visits, support through case-work, and providing sport trainings on the permanent basis. This program also includes Sport program, human rights summer camps. Focused across sectors. | location Bishkek, focus unclear | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| 12 | PEP (Partnership for Economic Policy) | Research firm that has worked on youth related issues and topics. | Conducted research on youth employment and migration https://www.pep-net.org/pep-national-policy-conference-kyrgyzstan-impact-remittances-youth-labor Focused on economic development. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 13 | NGO 'Indigo' | Work on creation of attitude towards LGBTIAQ, which is tolerant and free from prejudice and stigma and improvement of the quality of LGBTIAQ lives through comprehensive programs on human rights, information and visibility, developing capacity of the organization and community, and build partnership and solidarity with other organizations. | Works on advocacy for LGBTIAQ issues. Focused on gender. | location Chui region, focus countrywide | |
| 14 | Branch in the city of Osh of the public association "United Youth Organization" | The main goal of the organization is to strengthen the unity of the youth of Kyrgyzstan. | Local youth organization based in Osh City. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 15 | Municipal institution "Youth Club" | Working with youth and elderly population, organizing events in chess, Kyrgyz Language events. Overseeing the situation with children of migrants who went to Russia. Supporting and monitoring their situation | Local youth organization based in Osh City. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh region | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|---|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 16 | Public association "Youth club" Brand " | Association works with youth, particularly they promote youth empowerment through developing youth leaders, training and teaching job skills that are necessary in Kyrgyzstan | Local youth organization based in Osh City. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 17 | Public Association "Progress Aravan" | Operates in Aravan with youth, unemployment, improving potential of youth. Conduct training, launching information campaign aimed to improve situation of youth. | Local youth organization based in Osh City. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh region | X |
| 18 | PA "Insan Taanu" | The main goals of the organization are to: 1) Increase the level of culture in Kyrgyzstan. 2) Increase the level of education and literacy of youth in Kyrgyzstan. 3) Strengthen the unity and prevent the regional division among youth of Kyrgyzstan. 4) Assist to low-income families and people with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan | Local youth organization based in Osh City. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh city | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|--|--|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 19 | Public Association "New Rhythm" | The goals of organization are to promote an active, influential, and diverse civil society; to foster active citizens; and to widen the horizons of future generations in order to facilitate a society in which human rights are respected. | Local organization concerned with citizen participation and rights based in Osh City that also includes a youth focus. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused on democracy and governance sector. | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 20 | PA "Youth of Osh" | Vision is that a society where young people are educated, economically independent, have a clear civic position and actively participate in the development of the country. | Create public spaces, conditions for leisure and education, platforms for youth interaction, as well as organizing youth events and coordinating country events. Have served 27,547 young people in programs, of which more than 200 young people implemented their social projects, and 69 young people launched their business and provided about 175 young people with regular work. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 21 | PA "Naryn Jashtar Ordosu" (Naryn Youth Center) | Promoting the creation of sustainable conditions for self-development and self-realization of young people. | Local youth organization in Naryn. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Naryn based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn | X |
| 22 | PF "Bizdin Tilek" | Provide social assistance to low-income families in difficult life situations through the involvement of citizens, businesses, and non-profit organizations in charitable activities. | Local youth organization in Naryn. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Naryn based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn | X |
| 23 | PA "Jash Danaker" | The mission of the organization is to involve the citizens in socially significant works and to develop | Local youth organization in Naryn. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Naryn based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|-------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------|
| | | the different aspects of the society. | | | |
| 24 | PF "MSDSP KG" | The Kyrgyzstan Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (MSDSP KG) is a locally registered public foundation which seeks to improve the livelihoods of select communities in Kyrgyzstan's mountain areas. | AKF's MDGSP Program representative. MDGSP includes activities for youth. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Naryn based youth organizations. Focused on economic development. | location Naryn, focus in Osh and Naryn oblasts | X |
| 25 | PF "Akipress" | Improving the overall situation of Kyrgyzstan through the provision of operational political, economic, social, cultural information of the society. | Local youth organization in Naryn. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Naryn based youth organizations. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn | X |
| 26 | PA "Enactus" | Improving the socio-economic situation of the population of Kyrgyzstan through the development of entrepreneurship. | Enactus representative in Naryn involved in running business/youth entrepreneurship training. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Naryn based youth organizations. Focused on economic development. | location and focus Naryn | X |
| 27 | Crisis Center "Tendesh" | The activities of the Tendesh Crisis Center are aimed at promoting gender equality, eradicating gender discrimination, and protecting the rights of women / girls. | Offers counseling and support for young women on a variety of health, relationship, legal, and other issues. Focused across sectors on gender. | location and focus Naryn | X |
| 28 | Ololohaus | Coworking space for entrepreneurs and innovators. | Provide support for youth start-ups. Focused on economic development. | location and focus Bishkek | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| 29 | Consultant for Women's support center | Promotion of gender equality in Kyrgyzstan through the advancement of human rights and active participation in democratic reforms. | The main activities and objectives of the Women Support Center are concentrated on building the capacity of civil society to address gender issues. This is one of the most important crucial activities of the organization's work. The achievement of this objective implies raising gender sensitivity among the population and introducing gender approaches into different areas of social life. Focused on gender. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 30 | Association of Crisis Centres (ACC) | Reduce violence and its consequences in society; Promotion of the principles of gender equality; Promotion of sustainable institutional and organizational activities of crisis centres; Implementation of network projects aimed at addressing the priorities of the Association. | Through a telephone hotline, victims are able to receive legal assistance, psychological support, and advice on finding employment. Activities: Information and educational activities; Publishing activity; Research activity; Capacity building of members; Cooperation and joint activities; Participation in international and national conferences, forums; Youth engagement Focused on gender and health sector. | location Chui region, focus countrywide | X |
| 31 | Reproductive Health Alliance | Promotion and protection of the basic rights of men and women to free and informed choices regarding their reproductive and sexual health. | Provide health education, community advocacy, and health services to young women. Focused on health sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 32 | Progressive Public Association of Women "Mutakalim" | The mission of "Mutakalim" - to serve as a bridge between the secular and religious parts of society to promote the interests and rights of women believers and strengthen peace in the country. | Provide activities and support for youth; build relationships between youth, community, and religious leaders. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Bishkek | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| 33 | State Agency for youth affairs, physical culture and sports under the government of the Kyrgyz Republic | To develop and realize the potential of young people, physical culture and sports in the Kyrgyz Republic | Promotes youth issues for Kyrgyz government. Focused across sectors. | location Chui region, focus countrywide | X |
| 34 | Ministry of Labor and Social Development | Increasing the level of social protection for low-income families; Provision of comprehensive rehabilitation and integration services to persons with disabilities (PWD), as well as improving the process of manufacturing prosthetic and orthopedic products for PWDs; Assistance to low-income families to get out of difficult life situations by involving them in socially useful work (building roads, canals, drinking water systems, repairing social facilities, etc.); Implementation of measures to assist in the employment of unemployed citizens; Implementation of measures to ensure the rights of the child to the family environment, through the development of alternative forms of organization of children | The development of social, psychological, rehabilitation and legal services provided by day care centers. Development and provision of social services to socially unprotected persons with disabilities. Focused across sectors. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|---|---|-----------------------|
| | | left without parental care (foster (foster) family, family orphanage); Support for families and children in difficult situations; Implementation of measures to improve the regulatory framework in the field of social protection of families and children in the housing stock; Implementation of measures to improve the regulatory framework in the field of labor and labor relations | | | |
| 35 | Delegation of the European Union to the Kyrgyz Republic | The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, the European Union, and Development Partners continue to support the strategic goals of the Country Sustainable Development Strategy as they relate to the Education Sector | Representing the EU in the Kyrgyz Republic; enhancing political, economic, trade and external assistance cooperation; implementing EU policies in all sectors; promoting and defending EU values and interests; improving awareness and understanding of the EU across the country. Focused across sectors. | location Chui region, focus countrywide | |
| 36 | Health Policy Analysis Center | To support evidence-based decision making in health sector and the wider public sector in order to achieve better health, good access to high quality medical care, and reasonable financial burden of health care seeking | Conduct research on health issues. Focused on health sector. | location Chui region, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| 37 | Ministry of Education | The main objective of the Ministry is the formation of the state policy in the field of education, science, and scientific and technical activities. The main tasks of the Ministry are: creation of an education system aimed at the formation; development and professional development of the individual; improve education; creation of conditions and mechanisms for the development of scientific activity. | The Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic is the Central Executive body conducting state policy and carrying out management in the field of education and science and state control over the availability and quality of education, ensuring the constitutional right of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to education. Focus education and economic development sectors. | location Chui region, focus countrywide | X |
| 38 | Ministry of Health | Oversees government activities in health including TB and HIV/AIDS | Acts as partner to USAID on health activities. Focused on health sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 39 | Ministry of Agriculture | Oversees government activities in agriculture. | Acts as partner to USAID on agriculture activities. Focused on agriculture sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 40 | National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic | The GOKR's statistical department | Essential source of population/demographic statistics. Focused across sectors. | location Chui region, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|------------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| 41 | Ministry of Internal affairs | To lead and manage the internal Affairs bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic, to organize work in the main areas of activity, as well as directly participate in the implementation of tasks | Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic (MIA Of the Kyrgyz Republic or the Ministry) is the Central authority state administration of the Kyrgyz Republic - ensuring public order, security of the person and society; -the fight against crime; - execution of criminal penalties and administrative penalties in the limits of the competence; - implementation of control and licensing measures in the field of security and road safety; - ensuring supervision of the state of fire safety and OSU-fire-fighting system Focused on democracy and governance | location Chui region, focus countrywide | |
| 42 | State Migration Service | The State Migration Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is an independent body implementing state policy in the field of migration and ensuring compliance with the migration legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic and carrying out functions for the provision of public services in the field of migration. | Oversees country's migration activities which highly impact the youth community. Focused across sectors. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 43 | Republican AIDS Center | The Republican AIDS Center carries out a set of measures aimed at the timely detection, treatment, and prevention of the spread of HIV infection in the country. | Provides health policy, community awareness and other activities on behalf of government in HIV/AIDS. Focused on health sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|--|--|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 44 | Ayil Aimak "Otuz-Adyr" Osh region | Ayil Aymak is an administrative-territorial unit, within the boundaries of which the local community exercises local self-government and consists of representative and executive bodies that provide solutions to local issues. | Local administrative body whose responsibilities include youth provision in Otuz Adyr. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh region | X |
| 45 | Osh City Hall | The Osh City Hall is the executive body of local self-government in the city and performing all delegated issues of state administration and local self-government, with the exception of the powers assigned by the laws of the Kyrgyz Republic to the competence of other bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic. | Executive Department of Osh City with responsibility for youth provision in the city. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 46 | Osh Youth Committee | One of the main tasks of the Youth Committee is to implement the state youth policy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the certain region. | Main Youth Committee of Osh City with responsibility for day to day implementation and coordination of youth activities Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh region | X |
| 47 | Committee for Youth Affairs of the Otuz-Adyr aymak | One of the main tasks of the Youth Committee is to implement the state youth policy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the certain region. | Local Youth Committee with responsibility for youth provision in Otuz Adyr Aymak. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Osh region | X |
| 48 | Labor and Employment Bureau of Osh | Labor and Employment Bureau is a government that implements employment and social support policies for civilians. | Provided optic on youth employment issues and how the GOKR is attempting to produce inter-departmental coordination Focused on economic development | location and focus Osh region | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|--|--|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 49 | State Administration of Osh region | State Administration ensures the implementation of the authority of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the increase in the efficiency of the activities of the government in the region. | Provide support on youth in agriculture activities. Focused on agriculture | location and focus Osh region | X |
| 50 | Kochkor Committee on Youth | One of the main tasks of the Youth Committee is to implement the state youth policy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the certain region. | Local Youth Committee with responsibility for youth provision in Kochkor. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn region | X |
| 51 | Naryn Regional Youth, Sport and Physical Education Department, Kochkor regional sector | Regional Youth, Sport and Physical Education Department is the executive body responsible for implementing state policy in the field of physical culture and sports, youth affairs and child protection in the region. | Regional officer with responsibility for youth provision in Kochkor. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn region | X |
| 52 | Kara Suu Youth Committee | One of the main tasks of the Youth Committee is to implement the state youth policy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the certain region. | Local Youth Committee with responsibility for youth provision in Kara Suu. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn region | X |
| 53 | Ayil Aimak "Kochkor" of the Naryn Region | Ayil aymak is an administrative-territorial unit, within the boundaries of which the local community exercises local self-government and consists of representative and executive bodies that provide solutions to local issues. | Local administrative body whose responsibilities include youth provision in Ayil Aimak. Focused across sectors. | location and focus Naryn region | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|--------------------------------|---|--|---|-----------------------|
| 54 | Association of Women Judges | To improve access to justice of vulnerable groups, such as children, persons with disabilities, women, migrants, and the elderly, and also to raise the awareness of gender concerns with judges | The Association is involved in four projects which address the needs of vulnerable groups, one of which focuses on the prevention of gender crimes, funded by INL (US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs) and implemented by UNDP. Key points: Promotion of judicial and legal reform; Assistance in strengthening the rule of law and enhancing the status of judges of the Kyrgyz REPUBLIC; Assistance in building a state governed by the rule of law and participation in the creation of conditions for the full observance of human rights Focused on democracy and governance sector | location Chui region, focus countrywide | |
| 55 | Jasa.kg | Web platform for freelance job seekers | An employment hub for Kyrgyz youth. Focused on economic development sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 56 | Bishkek Business Club (bdk.kg) | The Bishkek Business Club (BDK) is a public organization which brings together business leaders in order to improve business conditions and promote the development of the Kyrgyz Republic as a developing business center in the Central Asian region. | The Bishkek Business Club is the initiator of the creation and active members of the National Alliance of Business Associations (NABA), which today unites 38 industry-specific business associations. For four years now, the BDK has paid great attention to working with young people, carrying out various projects aimed at developing the potential of young leaders. This includes teaching young people the basics of entrepreneurship, and organizing business camps, trainings, as well as unique one-time youth activities. Focused on economic development sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 57 | Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic | The Chamber of Commerce and Industry is aiming for protection of the business's interests in favour of prosperity of national economy. The Chamber provides a platform for effective constructive coordination of entrepreneurship and government at all levels. | The Chamber has capacity necessary to assist in the business development and establishment of economic external relations. They organize large-scale economic forums and work related to business, investment and of the foreign economic activities. Within the framework of its activities, the Chamber concentrates particular attention in fostering the small and medium enterprise Development, starting with improving the legal framework, infrastructure building, training and retraining of qualified staff that are in demand in the real sector of the economy. Focused on economic development sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 58 | Association of Fruit and Vegetable Enterprises | The Association unites 20 processing enterprises and one trade company. It a non-government, non-profit organization uniting legal entities on voluntary bases and on basis of common interests involved in production and processing of agricultural produce. | Is a business association that works with smallholder farmers and business owners. Focused on agriculture. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 59 | Dordoi Association | The Dordoi Association is a diversified organization with an extensive trading system and production-related subsidiaries. | Acts as an association of farmers and traders who sell goods through the Dordoi market. | location and focus Bishkek | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 60 | The Kyrgyz Association of Tour Operators (KATO) | One of the largest and leading associations of representatives of the tourism industry in Kyrgyzstan, officially registered 1999 as a non-profit organization. Basic goals are: to turn tourism into the leading branch of the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic; to achieve support for the further development of tourism; to create a favorable climate for tourists by creating jobs, encouraging the development of national cultures and environmental education; to simplify the visa system and other formalities. | KATO is also engaged in the implementation of specific projects on marketing, education, and information. The Association conducts daily news distribution, organizing various meetings, round tables, social events, etc. including on youth employment. Focused on economic development sector. | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 61 | Textile industry association of Kyrgyzstan | The Legprom association was created to unite enterprises of the textile and sewing sector in order to protect and promote their interests and products in the domestic and international markets. Tasks include: coordination of activities of manufacturers of light industry, aimed at promoting their products in the domestic and international markets; preparation and implementation of measures aimed at improving the quality of products; representation of interests in government and other | Provide opportunities for youth employment. Focused on economic development sector | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|----------------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| | | bodies, international organizations; development of an overall industry strategy. | | | |
| 62 | JIA Business Association | A community of entrepreneurs for the benefit of the development of the Kyrgyz Republic. The association has set a goal to protect the rights of entrepreneurs and their interests. Currently, the Association unites more than 500 entrepreneurs across the country. | The JIA Business Association was established in December 2006 in Bishkek at the initiative of young entrepreneurs. Focused on economic development sector | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 63 | Silk Road Tourism Association | Representation and protection of the rights and interests of its members, promoting the improvement of the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic in the field of tourism, promoting the development of tourism on the Silk Road. | Provide support for youth employment in the industry. Focused on economic development. | location Bishkek, focus is areas near to Silk Road | X |
| 64 | Agroinform Asia | Agricultural Information and Marketing System with the ability to search for the necessary fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, market prices, resellers. Research in the development of agriculture and rural areas. | AgroInform provides information service for agrobusiness, farmers up to processors, wholesalers, agricultural input suppliers, and others who have an interest in agricultural sector. Focused on agriculture sector | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 65 | UCA (University of Central Asia) | The purpose of UCA is to promote the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain | UCA provides higher education training, research and also includes the Central Asian Faculty Development Programme, and the Aga Khan Humanities Project. | location Chui region, focused countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|---|---|-------------------|-----------------------|
| | | communities, by offering an internationally recognized standard of higher education. | Focused on education and economic development sectors | and regionally | |
| 66 | Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University | Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University has 8 faculties, 80 academic departments, 6 research centers, 15 scientific and educational centers, 4 laboratories, a law center, a medical center, and 25 institutes of students' aesthetic education. | The University provides higher education services and is linked to the Yeltsin Foundation. Focused on education and economic development sectors. | location Bishkek | |
| 67 | University SCO | Provide training in energy, ecology, engineering, metallurgy, materials science, construction, transport, fuel and energy, history, linguistics, IT technologies. | Provides higher education training. Focused on education and economic development sectors | location Bishkek | |
| 68 | The Kyrgyz National University | The Kyrgyz National University, as one of the leaders among the higher educational institutions of the country, is gaining more and more authority among young people and is becoming popular locally and internationally. | Provides higher education training. Focused on education and economic development sectors | location Bishkek | X |
| 69 | Osh State University (with Youth Committee) | University provides wide variety of higher education opportunities in Osh. | They include a youth committee as part of their governing processes. Focused on education | location Osh city | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 70 | Osh Technological University (with Youth Committee) | University provides technology and entrepreneurship higher education opportunities in Osh. | They include a youth committee as part of their governing processes. Focused on education | location Osh city | X |
| 71 | Osh State Law Institute (with Youth Committee) | University provides law and policy-focused higher education opportunities in Osh. | They include a youth committee as part of their governing processes. Focused on education | location Osh city | X |
| 72 | OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) | The OSCE has a comprehensive approach to security that encompasses politico-military, economic and environmental, and human aspects. It therefore addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism, and economic and environmental activities. All 57 participating States enjoy equal status, and decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis | They often work on youth-focused projects. Focused on all sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 73 | WHO (World Health Organization) | To create a better and healthier future for people all over the world, to fight diseases – infectious diseases such as influenza and HIV, and noninfectious, such as cancer and cardiovascular disease | They often work on youth-focused projects. Focused on all health sector | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 74 | IOM (International Organization of Migration) | To assist the government in protecting Kyrgyz labour migrants throughout the migration cycle; to work with the government to develop a modern system of labour migration management | Work on gender equality; prevention of human trafficking; protection of victims of trafficking; prosecution of recruiters and traffickers, and the development of regional co-operation among the countries of Central Asia Focused on democracy and governance and economic development sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 75 | UN Women | UN Women prioritises initiatives such as: economic empowerment; ending violence against women; peace and security and engendering humanitarian action; national planning and budgeting, as well as UN system coordination | Working on a number of initiatives and adolescents and young women. Focused on gender | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 76 | UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) | To deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. The work of organization is based on the premise that all human beings are entitled to equal rights and protections. | UNFPA focuses on women and young people because these are groups whose ability to exercise their right to sexual and reproductive health is often compromised. Focused on gender and health | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 77 | UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) | To significantly reduce gender inequalities by empowering women and promoting and protecting their rights, to pay special attention to women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, due to ethnicity, disability, or migratory and indigenous status | The UNDP organized a platform on free legal aid issues and contributed to simplifying the issuance of identity documents. An innovative activity was to implement a mobile legal service – ‘Solidarity Bus’, which allowed people in remote areas to access the services of lawyers for legal advice. Focused on gender and across sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 78 | UNAIDS (United Nations Programme on AIDS) | The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths | UNAIDS’s gender-responsive HIV programming for women and girls is considered important because, globally, AIDS-related complications are a leading cause of death in women of reproductive age. Focused on gender and health | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 79 | UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) | It is committed to achieving health, security and justice for all by tackling threats from illicit drugs, organized crime and terrorism worldwide | A focus is placed on providing assistance to governmental authorities, civil society organizations, and victims of trafficking and smuggled migrants. Focused on democracy and governance sector | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 80 | ILO – International Labour Organization | The organization ensures that it serves the needs of working women and men by bringing together governments, employers and workers to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes. | Set and promote standards and fundamental principles and rights at work; Create greater opportunities for women and men to decent employment and income; and focus on youth employment. Focused on economic development | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 81 | World Bank | To focus on the ambitious goals of ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. It is committed to helping countries reach these goals with proven solutions that integrate the WBG's development knowledge and financial services | The strategic focus of the World Bank programme is to support Kyrgyzstan's efforts to improve governance, with a particular emphasis on raising the standards of public administration and public service delivery; improving the business and investment climate; and strengthening the stewardship of natural resources and the physical infrastructure. Focused on economic development | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 82 | ADB (Asian Development Bank) | The Asian Development Bank envisions a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty in the region | ADB mainstreams gender equality in its operations, based on a gender categorization system for projects, classifying them according to four categories: gender thematic projects, effective gender mainstreaming projects, projects with some gender elements, and projects with no gender elements. Focused on gender and across sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 83 | EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development) | EBRD's engagement in the Kyrgyz Republic is to foster sustainable growth by strengthening regional cross-border linkages; enable SMEs to scale-up and bolster competitiveness, and promote sustainability of public utilities through commercialisation and private sector participation. | The Bank's purpose focuses specifically on two main aspects of the Gender Strategy: ensuring equal and fair access to the services which the EBRD finances, and improved equal opportunities within the workplace Focused on gender and across sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 84 | ACTED | ACTED empowers communities and develops the capacity of both civil society organizations (CSOs) and local authorities are key to building a strong democratic society and to ensuring sustainable ownership of local resources and access to basic services and income-generation opportunities | ACTED strategy in Kyrgyzstan is based on our three Global Program Pillars: 1. To respond to emergencies and build disaster resilience 2. To strengthen civil society, effective governance and social cohesion 3. To promote inclusive and sustainable growth sustainable development Focused across sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 85 | GIZ | GIZ works on economic development and employment promotion, energy and the environment, and peace and security | Works on issues of youth employment. Focused on economic development sector | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 86 | UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) | To save children's lives, to defend their rights, and to help them fulfil their potential, from early childhood through adolescence | The organization is a part of the Global Movement for Children – a broad coalition dedicated to improving the life of every child. Through this movement, and events such as the United Nations Special Session on Children, it encourages young people to speak out and participate in the decisions that affect their lives. Child protection and inclusion; Child survival; Education; UNICEF in emergencies; Gender; Innovation for children; Supply and logistics; Research and analysis | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 87 | Mercy Corps | Mercy Corps is a global team of humanitarians who partner with communities, corporations, and governments to transform lives around the world. The purpose is to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression by helping people build secure, productive and just communities | Working in the following sectors: -Agriculture; -Children & youth; -Conflict management;-Disaster preparedness; -Economic opportunity;-Education; -Emergency response; - Environment; -Food security; -Health; -Water; -Women & Gender Focused across sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 88 | RDF (Rural Development Fund) | To alleviate poverty and achieve sustainable development in rural areas. RDF has been dealing with various types of research and applied science activities in field of rural development, economics, and management. | Works on issues related to agriculture. Focused on agriculture | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |
| 89 | EFCA (Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia) | Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia mobilizes public and private resources to help citizens participate in building their future by strengthening their communities and improving their civic and economic wellbeing | EFCA trains organizations to better represent their interests; supports engagement between the government, business and non-profit sectors; builds organizations' capacity; promotes transparency and adherence to local laws in itself and its partners Focused across sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 90 | Aga Khan Foundation | The Aga Khan Foundation brings together human, financial, and technical resources to address some of the challenges faced by the poorest and most marginalized communities in the world. Special emphasis is placed on investing in human potential, expanding opportunity, and improving the overall quality of life, especially for women and girls. It works primarily in six areas: Agriculture and Food Security; Economic Inclusion; Education; Early Childhood Development; Health and Nutrition; and Civil Society. | AKF is involved in a wide variety of relevant activities including civic participation, local governance, early learning, youth entrepreneurship, and agricultural support programming. AKF was formerly working with school parliaments until permission to do so was rescinded by the GOKR in 2016. Focused across sectors | location Bishkek, focus countrywide | X |
| 91 | Training center "Dostuk" for youth in Osh | Conduct trainings for youth in topics related to a slave trade, labor migrations. | Local organization concerned with labor and migration rights based in Osh City that also includes a youth focus. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused on democracy and governance sector | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 92 | International Independent Accreditation Agency "Etned" | The main purpose of the Agency is improving the internal and external quality assurance systems and the promotion of a culture of quality through an independent accreditation of educational programs of higher educational institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic. | Local organization concerned with education based in Osh City that also includes a youth focus. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused on education sector | location and focus Osh city | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 93 | Political party "Ata-Meken" | The Political Socialist Party "Ata Meken" is a political party - a voluntary association of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic who have common political goals and objectives. | Local socialist organization concerned with citizens' rights based in Osh City that also includes a youth focus. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. Focused on democracy and governance sector | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 94 | Quarterly Committee, HOA "Dostuk" | The partnership of owners of residential and non-residential premises in an apartment building is a non-profit organization. | Local residents organization based in Osh City that also includes a youth focus. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 95 | Osh Technological University, editorial office of the "Stud-times" newspaper | The student newspaper is a creative association of students covering significant, interesting events of student life of University, structures of student self-government | Local student newspaper that caters to and covers youth issues. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. | location and focus Osh city | X |
| 96 | Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic, Osh | The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic is an authorized state executive authority of the Kyrgyz Republic, implementing a unified state policy in the field of civil protection, fire, radiation safety, safety of people at water bodies and hydrometeorology. | Local branch of state organization concerned with civic protection based in Osh City that also includes a youth focus. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. | location Osh, focus on the region | X |

| | Organization Name | Brief Description of Purpose | Importance to USAID | Oblast | Met During Assessment |
|----|---|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 97 | Cultural Center of the Turkic people, Osh | At the end of 2018, Osh city was declared the cultural capital of the Turkic world for 2019. During the planned cultural events in Osh, a significant number of events were held throughout the year devoted to the Program “Osh – the Cultural Center of the Turkic World in 2019”. | Local cultural organization concerned with promotion of Turkic culture based in Osh City that also includes a youth focus. Contributed to FGD on youth needs alongside other Osh City based youth organizations. | location and focus Osh city | X |

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