Examining Why and How to Engage Young People in Global Development: A Literature Review

Driving Youth Social, Economic and Political Inclusion, and Putting Youth at the Center of Development

Photo: Hundreds of youth gather at the #YouthSummit in London in September 2015, as the largest-ever gathering of world leaders at the United Nations in New York agrees to the Sustainable Development goals (Jessica Lea/DFID)

Written by Nada Zohdy, World Bank Consultant

June 2017

Prepared for the World Bank Group – Vice Presidency on Equity, Finance and Institutions (Learning & Innovation Unit)

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary 6
Top Overall Findings from the Literature 7
Why Engage Youth in Development? 7
How to Engage Youth in Development? 8
Recommendations for Supporting More Youth-Led Development 10
Overall Recommendations for Programs "for" Youth (as beneficiaries) 10
Overall Recommendations for Programs "with" Youth (as partners) 10
Overall Recommendations for Programs "by" Youth (as leaders) 11
Recommended Guiding Principles Across All Forms of Youth Engagement 11

II. Introduction 13
Emerging Trends Over the Last Decade 13
Why and How Engage Youth in Global Development? 15
Terminology and Related Approaches 15
Who Are Youth? 15
What is Inclusion? 16
Terms 16
Youth Engagement Approaches 18
What Do Youth Engagement Approaches Share in Common? 23
How to Read this Report 25

III. Guiding Conceptual Framework 26
Assessing the Literature 29
Methodology 29
Selection Criteria 29
Limitations 30

IV. Overall Findings 31
Cross-Sector Trends in the Literature 31
Why Engage Youth in Development? 34
How to Engage Youth in Development? 36
Youth as Beneficiaries 38
Youth as Partners 39
Youth as Agents 40

V. Chapter One: Costs and Benefits of Youth Political Exclusion/Inclusion 41
1. Why Promote Youth Political Inclusion? Intrinsic and Instrumental Arguments 42
2. How to Promote Youth Political Inclusion? 44
Formal Means of Youth Political Inclusion 44
Informal Means of Youth Political Inclusion 46
Recommendations for More Meaningful Youth Political Inclusion 48
"Youth Participation, Voice and Governance" Note 49

Theoretical Frameworks of Citizen Participation Frameworks, Compared to the Three Approaches to Youth Engagement *49*
What Does the Civic Participation Literature Tell Us About What Works and What Doesn't? *51*
Practical Guidance on Youth Engagement from the Citizen Participation Literature *56*

VI. Chapter Two: Costs and Benefits of Youth Economic Exclusion/Inclusion 58
1. Why Promote Youth Economic Inclusion? The Costs of Youth Economic Exclusion, and Returns to Economic Inclusion 61
Costs of Youth Economic Exclusion – At the Individual Level *61*
Costs of Youth Economic Exclusion – At the Societal Level *62*
Economic Returns to Youth Economic Inclusion *63*
2. How to Promote Youth Economic Inclusion? 64
Reallocate Investments in Youth *64*
Effective Labor Market Intervention Programs *65*
Life Skills/Integrated Training *65*
What Labor Policies May Support or Hinder Youth Employment? *67*

VII. Chapter Three: Costs and Benefits of Youth Social Exclusion/Inclusion 69
1. Why Promote Youth Social Inclusion? 70
Costs of Youth Social Exclusion *70*
Returns to Youth Social Inclusion *71*
2. How to Promote Youth Social Inclusion? 73
Life Skills, Social Emotional Learning, and Positive Youth Development *74*

VIII. Snapshot Stories: What Are the Outcomes of Youth-Driven Development? 76
Youth as Agents Fulfilling the SDGs 76
Youth as Infomediaries 78
Youth as Social Entrepreneurs 79
Youth as Peacebuilders 80

IX. Brief Examples of Cross-Sector Youth Engagement 82
Why Use Cross-Sector Approaches to Engage Youth in Development? 82
How to Use Cross-Sector Approaches to Engage Youth in Development? 83

IX. Note on Youth and Conflict, Violence, Fragility, and Migration 85
Why do a Minority of Youth Engage in Violence? 85
Jobs are Not Enough *87*
How to Steer Vulnerable Youth Away from Violence? *89*
How does Migration Affect Young People? 90
How does Living in Conflict/Fragile Environments Affect Youth? Youth Role in Peacebuilding 90

X. Recommendations: Toward More Effective Youth Engagement and Youth-Driven Development 93
Recommended Guiding Principles – How to Effectively Engage Youth in Development 94
What to Avoid in Youth Engagement *97*
Spotlight on One Promising Approach: Youth Participatory Action Research *97*
Synthesis of Quick Practical Tips from the Literature *99*

XI. Conclusion 101

XII. Sources 102
69. *Restless Development. How to Scale Up Ambition on Youth-led Accountability for the SDGs. November 2015. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/follow-up-and-review-how-to-scale-up-ambition-on-youth-led-accountability-for-the-sdgs-pdf* *107*

XIII. Appendices 109
Appendix 1 – How to Engage: Cataloging 25 Common Tools/Methods/Instruments to Engage Youth 109
Appendix 2 - Different Methodological Approaches to Quantifying the Costs of Youth Exclusion and Returns of Youth Inclusion 111
Appendix 3 - Snapshots of Select Youth Development Strategies 111
Appendix 4 - Select Annotated Bibliography of 10 Key Sources 111
Appendix 5 - Closing the Gap Between Literature on Engaging At-Risk/Marginalized Youth in Developed vs. Developing Contexts ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

List of Figures

Figure 1. A Taxonomy of Terms
Figure 2. (Key Figure) Summary of Five Core Assets Across Youth Engagement Approaches
Figure 3. Guiding Conceptual Framework: Three Components (Dimensions, Justifications, Approaches)
Figure 4. (Key Figure) Arguments for Different Types of Youth Engagement
Figure 5. (Key Figure) Arguments for the Costs and Benefit of Youth Political, Social Exclusion/Inclusion
Figure 6. (Key Figure) Summary Table of Evidence and Programs Across Three Dimensions and Approaches
Figure 7. (Key Figure) Status Quo and Recommendations by Approach to Youth Engagement
Figure 8. Benefits and Considerations for Youth and Adult Participants in Youth-Adult Partnerships
Figure 9. Summary Table of "Why" Promote Youth Political Inclusion
Figure 10. (Key Figure) Participation Frameworks Compared to Three Approaches of Youth Engagement
Figure 11. Four Key Defining Factors of Citizen Participation Frameworks
Figure 12. Applying Four Fundamental Questions from Citizen Participation Frameworks to Three Levels of Youth Engagement Summary Table of Cost of Youth Political Exclusion and Benefits of Youth Political Inclusion
Figure 13. (Key Figure) Summary Table of "Why" to Promote Youth Economic Inclusion
Figure 14. Summary Table of "How" to Promote Youth Economic Inclusion
Figure 15. General Challenges and Opportunities of Youth Economic Inclusion General Challenges and Opportunities of Youth Economic Inclusion
Figure 16. Select Practical Resources to Help Guide Youth Employment/Economic Opportunity Efforts S
Figure 17. Summary Table of "Why" Promote Youth Social Inclusion
Figure 18. Summary Table of "How" to Promote Youth Social Inclusion

Figure 19. Select Youth-Led Initiatives to Fulfill the SDGs/Global Goals Summary Table of "How" to Promote Youth Social Inclusion
Figure 20. Common Theories for Why Young People Engage in Violence
Figure 21. (Key Figure) Summary of Overall Recommendations Across Three Youth Engagement Approaches
Figure 22. Benefits of Engaging Young People Across Stages of Research Summary Table of the Evidence on "What Works with Youth and Peacebuilding" from Youth Power

I. Executive Summary

Our world today has the largest number of young people in history, both in relative and absolute terms. Half of all people are under the age of 30, and the vast majority of these billions of young people (90%) are in the developing world. Never has there been a more pressing need – or opportunity – to meaningfully engage youth for the development of themselves and their societies, in order to help solve some of the most pressing global problems of our era.

The objective of this literature review is to assess the "why" and "how" of engaging young people in global development. In focusing on these central questions, this two-sided approach synthesizes ideas and evidence at both the theoretical and practical levels in every section of this review, and across a wide variety of youth-related issues. The report is rooted in **the central notion of *youth inclusion,*** and examines both the costs and benefits of youth exclusion and inclusion respectively across three *dimensions*: politically, economically, and socially.

This sweeping desk review scanned a wide-ranging body of literature on youth engagement, predominantly literature published in the last decade, and predominantly coming from practitioner rather than academic sources (i.e. grey literature). This included well over 150 reports that were narrowed down from a broader set of initial sources, and several more websites that spanned a broad range of international development institutions, and organizations "for" and "by" youth in the Global South and North.

The review was structured around an original conceptual framework made up of three primary components, each with three pillars within them: **three *justifications* for youth engagement, three *approaches* to youth engagement, and three *dimensions* of youth engagement.** While the three approaches to youth engagement has existed in the literature since 2010, the addition of the two other components and combination of these three elements to create a unique conceptual framework allows this review to shed new insights on a number of key issues.

First, we considered three *dimensions* and objectives of youth engagement: the social, political, and economic dimensions of youth exclusion and inclusion.

Second, for each of these dimensions, we explored three broad types of *justifications* to answer the question of "why" care about and engage young people to begin with. These are: the costs of youth exclusion, the benefits of youth inclusion, and the outcomes of youth engagement in development.

Third, again across each of the three dimensions, to answer the "how" question, we applied the existing **asset-based approach to youth development** to examine three different *levels* of youth engagement: **engaging young people as beneficiaries, as partners, or as leaders and agents** of their own and societal development (in other words, programs "for" youth, "with" youth, or "by" youth). We particularly sought to identify insights on how to successfully achieve meaningful youth-driven and youth-led engagement.

Again, across all sections of this review, we attempted to synthesize evidence and ideas **offer insights at two levels: the theoretical, and the practical**.

This review also features two somewhat distinct sections that could be seen as stand-alone: a ***Youth Voice, Participation and Governance Concept Note,*** which synthesizing top takeaways from the governance, citizen engagement and social accountability literature and applies them to help make youth engagement approaches more effective.

The second stand-alone section is a short ***Youth and Conflict, Migration and Violence Concept Note*** that summarizes that particular sub-set of this literature. This is done because many people are concerned about how youth relate to these critical issues, and because both the justifications and the strategies (i.e. the why and the how) for engaging young people in situations of conflict, violence or migration should differ compared to other contexts.

This broad-ranging review identified the following top takeaways:

Top Overall Findings from the Literature

Why Engage Youth in Development?

1. **Countries with significant youth populations can avoid major societal costs by prioritizing the social, political and economic inclusion of young people.** A few different methodologies have been developed and built upon over the last decade to quantify the impact of youth exclusion. These illustrate how in some cases a country may lose several percentages of GDP as a result of youth exclusion. (See Appendix for more detail on these methodologies).

2. **Most youth efforts focus on economic inclusion, and treat youth as recipients rather than partners or agents. Yet the most promising ways to deter youth from participating in behaviors that are harmful to themselves and their societies (crime, instability, extremism, violence) comes more from their political and social inclusion, and from approaches that involve them as partners or agents.** There is a major gap between where many organizations have focused much their youth efforts (including research and programs) – *on* promoting youth economic inclusion, and offering services to youth as beneficiaries; versus where there is greatest potential impact – which is in promoting the social and political inclusion of youth as well, promoting more cross-sector engagement (rather than addressing the many types of transitions youth make in silos), and in engaging youth as true leaders and drivers of their own and their community's development.

3. **There is no proven causal link between unemployment and youth engaging in violence**. Despite common perception of unemployment as a driver of youth engagement in political violence, there is no proven causality between the two. Instead, the literature seems to indicate that social and political exclusion impacts a small minority of young people to engage in extremism and political violence more than economic exclusion. Youth experiencing instances of social isolation and exclusion and/or injustice or discrimination seems to be stronger drivers.[1]

[1] Mercy Corps. *Youth and Consequences: Unemployment, Injustice and Violence.* February 2015. https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/youth-consequences-unemployment-injustice-and-violence

4. **Across virtually all areas of the youth engagement literature in the social, political and economic dimensions (ex: from youth and peacebuilding to youth and jobs training, etc.), there is very little longitudinal research that has been done to determine the long-term, generational impacts of such interventions for youth.** Rather, the strongest evidence that supports the notion of a **multiplier effect** when it comes to investing in youth instead comes from the social-psychological literature on individual adolescent cognitive and emotional development.

5. **Though often excluded in a variety of ways, countless young people worldwide are taking the initiative themselves – whether or not they are recognized by development institutions - to contribute to a better world for themselves, their families, their communities, societies and the world. This includes notable contributions young people are making to fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, including but not limited to tackling some of the greatest issues their generation is facing: climate change and inequality. Youth-led efforts tend to be energetic and creative, and often lead to promising outcomes, so there is great opportunity to increase investments in youth-led efforts.

6. **Declining youth participation in some formal institutions (including formal politics and formal civil society organizations) does not necessarily mean youth are disengaging. Rather, young people are increasingly self-organizing in more informal (and in some cases transnational) movements and activities.** Many young people are disengaging in traditional political and civil society spaces (ex: lower voter turnout rates) but, even in the face of closing civic spaces, many young people are instead organizing through more informal, decentralized, and fluid social movements across borders and around issues of common concern (ex: climate).[23] Thus the development community should recognize and adapt to this shift in order to better support powerful, organic, youth-led efforts for social change.

7. **The most compelling, rigorous cost-benefit analyses that illustrate high return on investment from youth engagement comes from the health sector specifically** (which we consider a sub-set of the social inclusion dimension in this review). The most well-developed engagement tools also seem to come from this sector. Programs targeted at youth economic exclusion (ex: employment) are much more common than those promoting youth social inclusion, but there could be promising outcomes from any programs "for: youth (i.e. with youth as beneficiaries) focusing more on youth social inclusion.

How to Engage Youth in Development?

1. **There is significant evidence (and growing consensus) that positive outcomes are generated from positive youth development approaches – including the inter-related aspects of emphasizing life skills, social emotional learning, and ecosystems of support). There is a need to translate solid young engagement research and practices from developed to developing**

[2] United Nations. *Youth Political Participation and Decision-Making.* November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf
[3] Rhize. *The New Global Citizen: Harnessing Youth Leadership to Reshape Civil Society*. 2016. http://www.rhize.org/newglobalcitizen/

countries. These approaches emphasize soft skills and life skills beyond just technical and vocational capacities. Most of the evidence supporting the proven positive outcomes (for the individual and also for the community) from these inter-related, holistic approaches comes from developed country contexts (primarily the US and the UK). But some new efforts are beginning to support both the evidence/research and applied practice of positive youth development approaches[4] specifically in developing contexts, and there is great potential to continue applying lessons from PYD in developed countries and tailoring these to developing contexts. More broadly, there is great potential to improve efforts to engage youth in global development by deliberately translating and adapting findings and practices from developed to developing contexts.

2. **Youth engagement needs to in fact not only be about engaging youth!** The positive youth development literature underscores the need to consider and invest in **ecosystems of support –** i.e. working not only with young people themselves, but also the people surrounding them. Focusing on ecosystems of support make efforts to promote youth inclusion, help young people fulfill their individual potential, avoid negative behaviors, and contribute to the well-being of their communities all more effective. Meanwhile, the governance literature emphasizing the risk of promoting citizen empowerment (especially youth voice in political processes, governance, and decision making) *without* also building the capacity of adults in decision making positions (including in and out of government) to sufficiently hear and response and engage these active youth effectively. Thus, youth engagement programs should also invest in increasing the **receptivity and institutional responsiveness of adults in general and governments and development agencies** in particular to be able to truly hear and effectively respond to youth voice and enable more youth-initiated engagement.

3. **Youth engagement in general is more effective as a means than an end.** The complementary governance and citizen participation literature indicates that the most effective citizen participation efforts tend to be those that design participation not as an end in and of itself (even if there is an intrinsic or rights-based argument underlying the work). Instead, a broader base of both citizens and government officials are more likely to participate and see value in such efforts if they are targeted toward solving specific, concrete, and tangible lived problems (for example, poor quality basic services like education, health, sanitation and transportation). This principle can/should also be applied to inform youth engagement efforts. Young people and their adult counterparts will generally be more likely to engage and to see value in their engagement if it is structured around meaningful opportunities to change material conditions, decisions/policies, or other concrete outcomes, than general participation efforts not linked directly to solving actual problems in people's lives.

4. **Focus on youth *political and social inclusion, not just economic inclusion.*** It is not enough to focus on either educating or employing young people to help prevent them from going down destructive paths and being swayed by extremist recruiters. Rather, many of the rare young people who do engage in political violence do so because of experiences of injustice (feelings of political exclusion), not necessarily because they are less educated or unemployed. So, any

[4] USAID. *Positive Youth Development in Low and Middle Income countries.* May 2017. https://www.icrw.org/publications/pyd-measurement-toolkit/

programs seeking to prevent youth engagement in violence must seriously consider how to promote their political inclusion, in addition to economic and social.

5. **Little academic research has been done to explore the outcomes of explicitly cross-sector approaches, yet preliminary results from the world of practice indicate promising outcomes from these integrated (and often innovative) programs**. Cross-sector approaches can include programs that adopt an integrated approach to emphasizing the holistic development of the *individual* young person (such as positive youth development and the growing consensus on the strength of that approach). They can also include programs that are designed for, with or by youth to address more than one type of youth exclusion (as discussed in finding #4 above) at *the societal level*.

Recommendations for Supporting More Youth-Led Development

Youth-led approaches may not be appropriate for all youth-related contexts and at all times (depending on the program's objective). Yet this review finds that most programs tend to engage youth passively as recipients. Instead, we emphasize moving toward the asset-based approach to youth development, and find encouraging outcomes from efforts proactively led by youth.

We offer some specific overall recommendations to improve the impact of each of the three approaches to youth engagement:

Overall Recommendations for Programs "for" Youth (as beneficiaries)

- **Health-related activities** (and some other aspects of youth social inclusion) **show the highest overall returns on investment**, so programs that involve youth as beneficiaries should prioritize health and other aspects of youth social inclusion

- These programs can experiment with moving more toward engaging youth as partners and youth as leaders (one example program would be peer education programs targeted to mitigation HIV/AIDS)

Overall Recommendations for Programs "with" Youth (as partners)

- **Youth participatory action research is a promising means by which youth can be meaningfully engaged as partners in a wide variety of programs** targeted to addressing all three types of youth inclusion (social, political and economic); this is done by involving youth as active researchers who help identify their community needs while also building their capacities with guidance from adult mentors and leaders

- Any programs involving youth as partners must also seriously consider how they increase **institutional capacity** (from government or other adult decision-makers) **to respond to youth voice** in tandem with any efforts to raise youth participation and engagement

Overall Recommendations for Programs "by" Youth (as leaders)

- Authentically **engaging youth as leaders of development is by far the least utilized and most untapped approach** found in the literature

- Efforts to engage youth as leaders should start by seeking existing youth leaders wherever they may be organizing (including in less traditional or informal political spaces), and should also increase the likelihood of cultivating new youth leaders by promoting supportive networks of parents, teachers, and others that help build youth capacity and agency to lead.

Recommended Guiding Principles Across All Forms of Youth Engagement

In addition, we offer several guiding principles to help strengthen the practice of youth engagement more broadly (elaborated in the Recommendations section):

- Adopt a "**lifecycle" approach** and consider how youth-led efforts an provide individual youth greater opportunities to meet their full potential for holistic **individual development** ("positive youth development" and similar approaches)

- Engage and supporting the people/communities surrounding youth to **foster enabling environments and ecosystems of support**

- **Build capacity of adult decision-makers and institutional capacity and responsiveness of governments** to better hear, partner with and support youth leaders

- **Look for and support youth who are already active and leaders** – including in perhaps less expected, unconventional, and informal spaces (such as social movements)

- Break **silos and coordinate across multiple sectors**, as cross-sector interventions can have outsized impact/multiplier effects (this is lifecycle approach?)

- Invest in **ongoing evidence gap-filling and knowledge generation** while at the same time **applying, experimenting and adapting the existing and emerging good practices** of youth-driven development

- Create **opportunities to unleash youth creativity** when designing programs, and seek and showcase examples of youth-led development efforts that have **impact at scale**

- **Support youth as researchers/investigators** ("youth participatory action research" and similar approaches) of to best identify the needs of their peers and communities, while at the same time helping build the broader knowledge/evidence base for the field

- **Invest sufficient resources** in youth engagement to avoid eroding trust and not meeting expectations, as tokenistic and superficial engagement can have serious costs and make any future engagement that much more difficult

- Identify, support, invest in building the capacity and resources for, and **uplift impact stories from truly youth-led organizations**

- **Create clear pathways for increased involvement and responsibility over time** for both individual youth participants and for youth-led organizations – youth agency should be respected such that, if they so choose, they can reach increased levels of responsibility and impact in any initiative over time

II. Introduction

Our world today has the largest generation of young people in history.

There are 1.8 billion young people aged 10 to 24, and half the entire world is under the age of 30 [5], with 90% of all young people living in the developing world. The numbers are clear: there is an unprecedented opportunity to meaningfully engage youth in shaping better lives for themselves and a better world for the global community. There is also an unprecedented need to acknowledge and address the challenges and opportunities facing today's youth population, in order to promote global sustainable development and shared prosperity, and avert serious costs and harmful consequences on economies and societies in every region and especially in the world's poorest countries.

The literature review is centrally focused on examining the costs of youth exclusion and benefits of youth inclusion (as two sides of the same coin), as answers to its two guiding research questions: why engage youth in development, and how engage them?

This literature review was commissioned on and took as its starting point the 10th year anniversary of the World Bank's seminal **World Development Report (WDR) 2007 on youth: *Development and the Next Generation.*** The WDR 2007 made a number of critical contributions to the field of youth engagement notably through the introduction of two frameworks: *five lifecycle transitions*, and *three lens of assessment* (see Annotated Bibliography in Appendix for more details). WDR 2007 identified five key life transitions as young people move to becoming adults (learning, working, staying healthy, forming families, and exercising citizenship); and introducing a *three-lens approach* that helps prioritize youth engagement activities on the basis on three principles: expanding opportunities, enhancing capabilities, and providing second chances.

Emerging Trends Over the Last Decade

In the 10 years since the WDR youth report was published, there have been a number of broad new global trends, which are highlighted here as they directly affect youth and youth engagement work:

- A new global development agenda: the 17 **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs)
- Emergence of **climate change** as a top global priority
- Global re-emergence of some authoritarian/strong man governance tendencies and **shrinking of civic space**
- Rise in the number and impacts of decentralized (and in some cases, transnational) social movements – from the Arab Awakenings, to movements around racial and income equality, open government, and environmentalism

[5] UNESCO. *World Radio Day, Statistics on Youth*. 2013. http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/prizes-and-celebrations/celebrations/international-days/world-radio-day-2013/statistics-on-youth/

- Increase in the number of countries (and thus, the percent of the global population) considered **fragile** (politically instable/weak states and/or systemically affected by conflict)

- Growth in **global migration**

At the same time, the last decade has seen a number of emerging issues that developed consensus around in the youth engagement field in particular:

- WDR 2007-related: Affirming the importance of offering **second chances,** particularly for at-risk youth (including those not studying or working full-time)

- WDR 2007-related: Clarifying the relationship between the five youth transitions to one another and across contexts (what exact ages do these transitions occur in different contexts? Are the transitions at all cyclical? Etc.) [6]

- Further empirical work to quantify the **costs of youth exclusion**

- Importance of **cross-sector coordination and engagement** (for example: programs that both increase the employability of young people but also help strengthen social cohesion among diverse youth groups)

- New emphasis on the critical importance of holistic **life skills development** for young people (rather than merely technical skill-building)

- Emerging challenge of **"delayed adulthood"** (due to a variety of factors, more young people facing obstacles that delay their transition to fully independent lives, occurring both in the developing and developed world)

- **Continued youth bulge**, the net global youth population will continue to grow before it begins to taper, and many developing countries have yet to face the largest youth populations they have ever seen[7]

have been reviewing the evidence that has been published in the last decade that deconstructs notions of why and how to engage young people in development - across dimensions (social, political, economic), and across types/levels of engagement (engaging young people as beneficiaries, partners, and agents).

[6] Notes from Interviews conducted by World Bank consultant Steve Commins on 10-year anniversary of WDR 2007 in mid-2017.
[7] Euromonitor International. *Special Report: The World's Youngest Populations.* February 2012. http://blog.euromonitor.com/2012/02/special-report-the-worlds-youngest-populations.html

Why and How Engage Youth in Global Development?

As alluded to above, the demographics alone help make a powerful case for focusing on young people - as they represent for the first time ever nearly *half the world's population.* The common 'demographic dividends' argument for youth engagement is rooted not only in this unprecedented youth bulge, but also in the notion that a multiplier effect exists that enables investment in young people to have outsized benefits. The multiplier effect largely comes from psycho-social literature on cognitive youth development, which tells us that the period of adolescence offers a critical window of opportunity to shape all aspects of an individual's identity, capabilities, and behaviors for a lifetime.

Yet in addition to this relatively straightforward demographic case, this literature review examines a body of evidence that helps make the case for youth engagement in development by examining:

- The costs of youth exclusion (in other words, what happens if we *fail* to engage young people meaningfully?),
- As well as the outcomes and impacts of a variety of efforts to achieve holistic youth inclusion (socially, politically, and economically).

Within each section of this report, we begin by summarizing the more *theoretical* justifications and evidence that answer the question of why engage young people in a variety of ways. Then we move to offering more *practical* ideas to answer the question of how to engage young people. We draw on the vast and wide body mostly of grey literature from implementing organizations (including some organizations for youth and others by youth) to discern:

- tools for engagement,
- example cases/programs,
- and stories of outcomes and impact.

Finally, when it comes to thinking about how to engage youth, it is possible to think about two basic differing approaches to youth engagement: efforts that seek to support and **uplift youth who are *already* leader**s working toward social change, versus efforts meant to strengthen the conditions and **environments to *enable* youth to step up** to become active and lead in solving problems for themselves, their communities and their world. This review (particularly the Recommendations chapter) provides insights on both.

Terminology and Related Approaches

Who Are Youth?

There are a number of different ways youth is defined across the literature. For example, the World Bank's World Development Report 2007 defined youth as individuals aged 12-24, while the UN's definition of youth is ages 15-24. Practically speaking, this review took a broader approach and generally defined young people as falling between the **ages of 12-29**. The terms youth, young people, adolescents, and young adults all used interchangeably.

And to some other work (such as a previous study commissioned for DFID), this review conceptually defines youth as the "**transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, rather than as a rigid construct based on age.**"[8]

What is Inclusion?

In this review, we use the term inclusion to refer simply to the idea of youth as a cohort generally having access to meaningful opportunities to improve their own lives and to contribute to the improvement of their communities and societies, and having their unique needs and strengths recognized. Meanwhile, exclusion is the absence of these things.

For example, youth economic exclusion can certainly refer to chronic unemployment, but also barriers to access finance or relevant quality education to prepare them to obtain sustainable livelihoods.

In other sources, the term inclusion may be used to refer specifically to the integration of traditionally marginalized, under-represented and/or at-risk subgroups into broader populations. Though this review discusses the integration and inclusion of marginalized groups in a few places, and recognizes that youth engagement in general should always consider how it can also advance inclusion of marginalized groups, the concept of inclusion in this report should be interpreted much more broadly.

Terms

Given its broad scope, this literature review spanned a variety of sometimes overlapping yet distinct youth-related terms and concepts. This section seeks to provide clarification around how similar terms and concepts are understood in this report, before introducing the report's guiding conceptual framework and subsequent syntheses and findings.

FIGURE 1: A Taxonomy of Terms

Term	Definition	Example
Youth development	centered on developing *individuals;* the natural progression an individual adolescent makes through various stages of human development	A 19 year old is developmentally different from a 13 year old in terms of their cognitive, physical, emotional, and psycho-social development
Youth in (global/international) development	Engaging young people in any way in local, national, and/or global efforts to reduce poverty and promote shared prosperity	The World Bank's 2016 Global Youth Forum convened hundreds of young people from around the world to inform how the Bank and other

[8] Hilker, L. M., Fraser E. M. *Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States*. Report prepared for DFID by Social Development Direct, London. 2009 http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-exclusion-violence-conflict-and-fragile-states/

		development institutions can effectively engage youth in their efforts to promote development
Youth-driven development	Any youth initiated and youth led efforts to promote international/global development	Restless Development's programs promote global development for youth, by youth
Youth engagement	Used in this report to refer to virtually any form of interactions with young people, including engaging youth as recipients of services, partners in development or leading agents of change; another definition emphasizes meaningful engagement as "active, empowered, and intentional partnership with youth as stakeholders, problem solvers and change agents in their communities."[9]	A government consultation with youth to obtain youth insights to inform a particular policy
Youth exclusion	Any conditions that prevent youth from fully participating in and benefiting from opportunities in their surrounding environment or having their distinct needs met	Young people are not provided the skills and education needed for them to obtain sustainable livelihood/employment
Youth inclusion	"Provision of opportunities that enable youth to fully participate in normatively prescribed roles and activities."[10]	This can include a variety of activities that integrate youth fully into society, such as provision of quality education, affordable housing, and the power to shape their communities more broadly.
Youth empowerment	Focused on creating greater community change and relies on the development of individual young people's capacity to do so.[11]	A program that emphasizes providing mentorship and a supportive environment to enable young people to build

[9] French, Matthew, Sharika Bhattacharya and Christina Olenik. *Youth Engagement in Development: Effective Approaches and Action-Oriented Recommendations for the Field*" USAID January 2014. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00JP6S.pdf

[10] Dhillon, Navtej and Tarik Yousef. *Inclusion: Meeting the 100 Million Youth Challenge.* Middle East Youth Initiative. December 2007 http://www.meyi.org/uploads/3/2/0/1/32012989/dhillon_and_yousef_-_inclusion-meeting_the_100_million_youth_challenge.pdf

[11] Ledford, Meredith King and Lucas, Bronwyn. *Youth Empowerment: The Theory and Its Implementation.* Youth Empowerment Solutions. 2013. http://www.youthempoweredsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Youth_Empowerment_The_Theory_and_Its_Implementation_YES-11-13-13.pdf

		confidence in themselves and their skills and abilities.
Youth work	"The science of enabling young people to believe in themselves and to prepare for life"[12]	The UK's National Youth Agency work that helps build the confidence, character and resilience needed for young people to thrive by offering safe spaces to develop their identity, decision-making and other abilities.
Youth participation	Linked with the related concept of citizen/civic participation, which emphasizes giving everyday people voice to shape the public policies and decisions that affect them.	A youth-driven participatory budgeting process that allows young people to define the top problems in their community, collaboratively find appropriate solutions, then decide and vote upon how public resources are spent to implement them.
Meaningful youth engagement	"An inclusive, intentional, mutually-respectful partnership between youth and adults whereby power is shared, respective contributions are valued, and young people's ideas, perspectives, skills and strengths are integrated into the design and delivery of programs, strategies, policies, funding mechanisms and organizations that affect their lives and their communities, countries and globally.[13]"	Efforts that seek to change the institutional power structures and norms that prevent young people from being considered experts in regard to their own needs and priorities, while also building individual youth leadership capacities.

Youth Engagement Approaches

In addition to the terms above, there are numerous prevalent frameworks for working with and for young people. Here we highlight four approaches that have particular salience for this review (listed in order of relevance): Asset-Based Approach to Youth Development; Positive Youth Development; Youth Organizing; and Youth Social Entrepreneurship.

1. Asset-Based Approach to Youth Development

[12] National Youth Agency UK. Site accessed May 2017. http://www.nya.org.uk/about-us/
[13] Youth Power. *Youth Engagement Community of Practice*. Site accessed May 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/youth-engagement-cop

An asset-based approach to youth development has gained prominence over the last decade and is advocating by a variety of organizations. Fundamentally, **an asset-based approach recognizes young people as assets with great potential to offer for all, rather than as liabilities or problems to be mitigated.**

This review builds upon the asset-based approach that was particularly developed in an influential 2010 report produced by the DFID CSO Youth Working Group: *Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers.*[14]

First, that report built upon the *three-lens prioritization framework* developed in the WDR 2007 (alluded to above), and modified it in order to represent three different types of youth engagement: **engaging youth as beneficiaries, as partners, or as leaders**.

That report then advocates for an asset-based approach to youth development within this context – it recognizes value in all three types of engagement, but encourages development agencies to **move toward youth-driven development that engages youth as leaders and agents**. This literature review takes a similar approach (elaborated on in the Conceptual Framework section below).

(Source: Youth Participation in Development Guide from DFID CSO Youth Working Group, 2010)

2. Positive Youth Development (PYD) Approach

A second influential approach that has evolved in this field over the last decade is that of **positive youth development (or PYD).** "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.[15]"

[14] DFID-CSO Youth Working Group. *Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policymakers*. 2010. UK Department for International Development. http://www.restlessassets.org/wl/?id=umaETRcmVyn2VEpSrxu7JWWkHom5RYli

[15] Youth Power. *Positive Youth Development*. Site accessed May 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development

According to a second definition (from a US context), PYD "is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages **youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families** in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and **enhances young people's strengths**; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing **opportunities**, fostering positive **relationship**s, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.[16]"

PYD aligns with a "lifecycle" approach to youth engagement as it builds on an understanding of adolescent and human development literature to identify development milestones at different stages of adolescent development.

To synthesize, PYD is defined by the following traits:

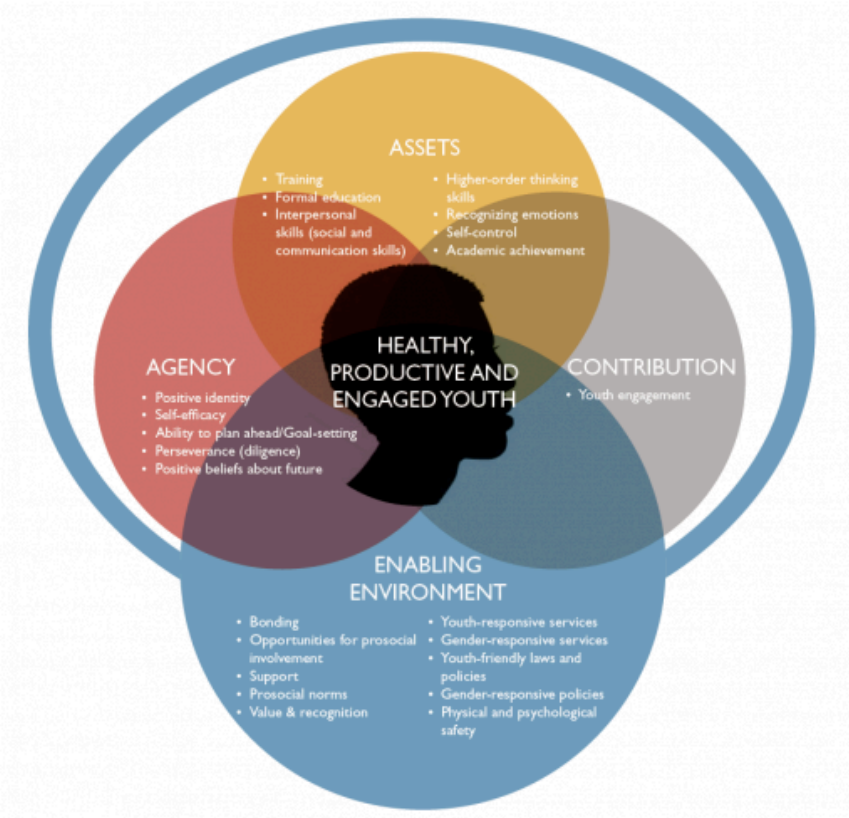
- Begins with and **enhancing young people's strengths and capabilities**, rather than weaknesses or vulnerabilities

- Emphasizes the need for **supportive surrounding environment** to enable a young person to achieve their full developmental potential (this links to one of our recommendations in section 4 on how to meaningfully engage youth) – including with a variety of actors (parents, teachers, other adult mentors) and in a variety of settings (home, school, community spaces, etc.)

- Emphasizes **measuring certain developmental milestones of a young person** (emotional, social and moral competencies that indicate pro-social behavior, in addition to measuring the outcomes of the particular intervention at hand

In this way, PYD also aligns well with the asset-based approach described above.

[16] Youth.Gov (US Government website). *Positive Youth Development*. Site accessed May 2017. http://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development



(Source: Image summarizing Positive Youth Development Approach, from YouthPower.org)

Evidence on Outcomes from PYD

The PYD approach seems to have emerged around the year 2000 from the United States. In recent years it has gained increased attention, research and application. An evidence body has emerged that largely affirms the positive outcomes of this approach, both on the participating youth and on their surrounding communities.

Yet most of the theoretical and practical work on PYD comes from developing country contexts. Only recently have some development actors – such as USAID – begun to invest in bringing PYD to inform engagement of youth in development. There is great potential to build upon the solid evidence base supporting this approach and tailor it more specifically to developing contexts.

3. Youth Organizing Approach

The Youth Organizing approach/approaches, which build upon community organizing approaches, are fundamentally about **building power** in (often marginalized) communities to enable them to solve the problems they face.

Youth Organizing tends to emphasize **systemic social injustices** that different groups face, and promotes various strategies to build collective identity and collective action to combat them. Some examples of youth organizing also feature creative use of **culture as a tool** to raise awareness on issues of injustice and empower individuals to act. Youth organizing examples often powerfully

demonstrate that "the efforts of young people often lead to better public policy, stronger communities, more relevant services, and healthier communities.[17]"

Like PYD, the Youth Organizing literature again seems to originate in developed countries, and many examples also come from developed settings. But it is beginning to be applied in developing contexts, with great potential to enhance youth-led efforts by furthering understanding of this approach.

4**. Youth Social Entrepreneurship Approach**

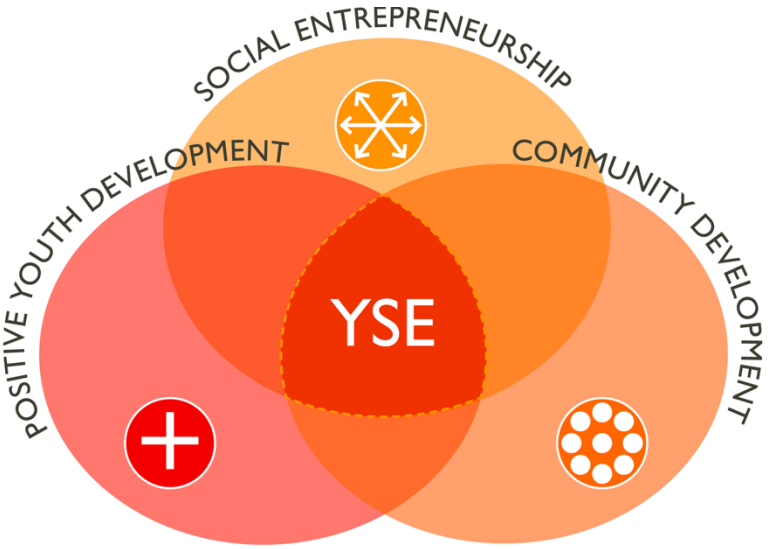
There are four fundamental principles of social entrepreneurship in general that also apply to youth-specific social entrepreneurship: [18]

- **Achievement of positive social impact:** Social entrepreneurship responds to communities that have been marginalized or excluded by existing market actors and non-market institutions.
- **Non-conventional thinking**: Social entrepreneurship aims for what Joseph Schumpeter called "creative destruction," a revolutionary transformation of a pattern of production which is often associated with entrepreneurship at large but, in the case of social entrepreneurship, is applied to social challenges.
- **Use of sustainable methods**: Social entrepreneurship must include a strategy for achieving financial sustainability, such as earning income.
- Innovation that can be adapted and "**scaled up**" beyond the local context.

Youth social entrepreneurship, for example as defined by the US-based Sundance Family Foundation that works to empower low-income youth of color, lies at the intersection of positive youth development, social entrepreneurship, and community development.

[17] Ginwright, Shawn and James, Taj. *From assets to agents of change: Social justice, organizing, and youth development*. New Directions for Youth Development. Vol. 2002, Issue 96 Winter 2002. Pages 27–46. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/53cb/b086381ef1e58d380a5f6020dae85c523494.pdf

[18] Abdou, Ehaab and Fahmy, Amina et al. *Social Entrepreneurship in the Middle East*. Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings. April 2010. http://www.meyi.org/uploads/3/2/0/1/32012989/abdou_fahmy_greenwald_and_nelson_-_social_entrepreneurship_in_the_middle_east_-_toward_sustainable_development_for_the_next_generation.pdf



Positive Youth Development
Intentional efforts to engage youth in building developmental assets. Focus is on positive programmatic activities, social emotional skill development, and intergenerational relationships to promote well-being.

Social Entrepreneurship
An approach by individuals and groups creating new economic enterprise opportunities with an emphasis on social good as one of the most important value propositions.

Community Development
A process in which community members take collective action and generate solutions to common problems.

(Source: The Sundance Family Foundation)

What Do Youth Engagement Approaches Share in Common?

All four of these approaches exist in the literature and are being studied and applied in a variety of settings, though the most material tends to come from developed countries.

These four approaches – along with others in the literature – generally share an emphasis on building generally one or more of these five fundamental assets or building blocks for young people and youth development.

This review builds upon contributions from the WDR 2007 and other sources and offers a new synthesized, simplified way to understand key ingredients for successful youth engagement approaches:

1. **Capabilities –** skills and abilities in a variety of professional and personal settings (individual level)

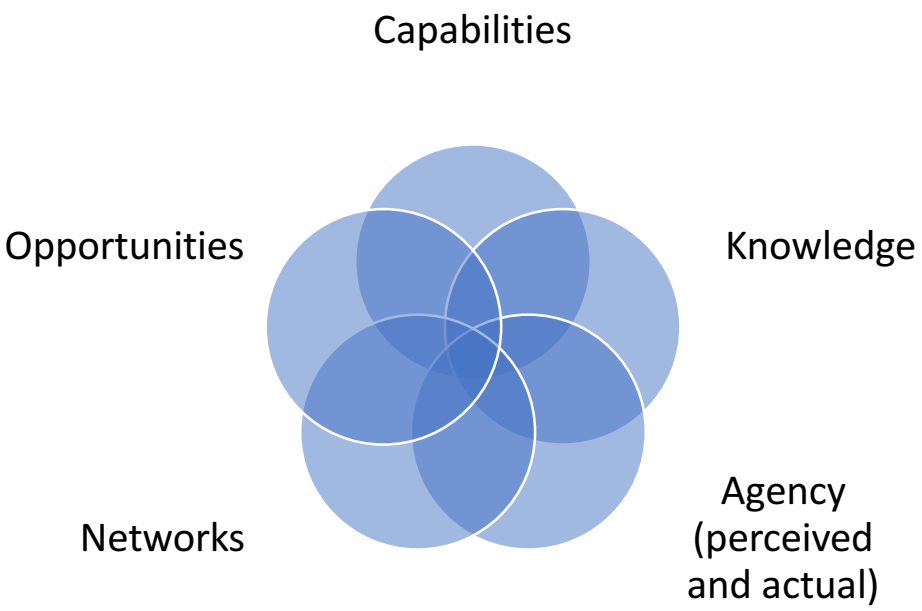
2. **Opportunities** - for employment, for leadership development, etc. including pathways for engagement with opportunities for increased responsibility and authority (surrounding the individual youth)

3. **Knowledge/Information** - including formal education but also critical information about employment opportunities and tips and other practical information which may help with self-advancement (and can often come from adult mentors, etc.)

4. **Networks -** broadening the social networks of young people is seen as one of the key benefits of programs that engage young people as partners along with adults (for more information see Appendix about youth and social capital); much of the literature also emphasizes the enabling environment and surrounding eco-system of support.

5. **Agency -** finally, and most importantly, all these approaches share in common an emphasis on increase the agency of young people. They help increase youth's perceived self-efficacy/self-awareness/ability to enact change, as well as their likelihood of actually acting upon that perception in order to make change.

Key FiGURE 2 –Summary of Five Core Assets Across Common Youth Engagement Approaches



(Source: Author)

These five core assets are interrelated and can be emphasized differently in different contexts. Generally speaking, **strengthening youth capabilities, knowledge, networks, and perception of can be thought of important inputs that collectively translate into the output of increased perceived and actual youth agency**.

By combining and developing these five youth assets, youth engagement approaches across the board are more likely to increase their chances of success and impact.

How to Read this Report

This report in structured in a way that follows the conceptual framework outlined in the next section. It offers three core chapters examining the costs and benefits of youth political, economic and social exclusion and inclusion. The political chapter also includes a standalone note on "Youth and Governance." It then summarizes some findings around cross-sector approaches to youth engagement, and spotlights some stories of impact from youth-led efforts. Next it presents another stand-alone note, this one looking at how youth relate to the critical issues of conflict, migration, violence and peacebuilding. Finally, the recommendations chapter summarizes good practices for development led *by* youth/ about how to effectively engage youth in development, with a particular focus on tips and tools for meaningfully promoting youth-led and youth-driven development (recognizing youth as agents and leaders of development).

Every section of this report consistently first offers a more **theoretical or conceptual summary** – answering the "why" question, then summarizes **practical guidance** to address the "how" question. **Key figures** are highlighted in Table of Contents and throughout the report – these are visuals that quickly summarize major concepts and findings from this review.

III. Guiding Conceptual Framework

Summary: This section describes the multi-component conceptual framework that has guided this review of a vast scope of youth engagement literature. It begins with the two guiding research questions: why and how to engage young people in development. The framework is centered on three ***justifications for why engage youth (costs, returns, outcomes), three approaches of how to engage youth (for, with, by youth), and examines all of this across dimensions (social, political, and economic) of youth exclusion and inclusion****.*

The conceptual framework developed to guide this broadly scoped review can be summarized by these four bullets:

- **Two key questions** - *why and how* engage young people in development?
- **Three dimensions –** address both questions across political, social and economic youth exclusion/inclusion
- **Three justifications –** costs of youth exclusion; benefits of/returns to youth inclusion; outcomes of youth engagement (including of youth-led development)
- **Three approaches –** youth as beneficiaries, partners, or agents (aka "for, with, or by" youth)

This review begins with the two guiding research questions of why and how to engage youth in global development, and seeks answers to these questions across three broad dimensions of youth inclusion: in the political, economic, and social realms. This framework allows us to synthesize findings in the literature across both the theoretical ("why") and practical ("how") levels.

While this three-dimension framework is meant to help synthesize findings in this broad topic across more discrete categories, it is important to note that these dimensions overlap. As one report articulates: "Exclusion is a cumulative process, with each of these life transitions [transition from school to work, being a young person to starting a family, becoming an adult citizen, etc.] having an overlapping impact on the others...The dimensions of youth exclusion are closely related. Poor learning leads to poor job prospects. The ability to form families and achieve personal independence is closely linked to the ability to find productive employment and earn an adequate income. Civic participation is essential to successfully transitioning to meaningful adult roles in which people can participate fully in society and contribute to community development."[19]

Thus, we have compared trends in the literature across the political, social and economic dimensions throughout this analysis, and these cross-sector comparisons provide the basis for some of the most striking findings. We also offer a short reflection on the nature of some cross-sector approaches to youth engagement to provide further practical guidance on how youth engagement strategies can move toward this more holistic and realistic approach.

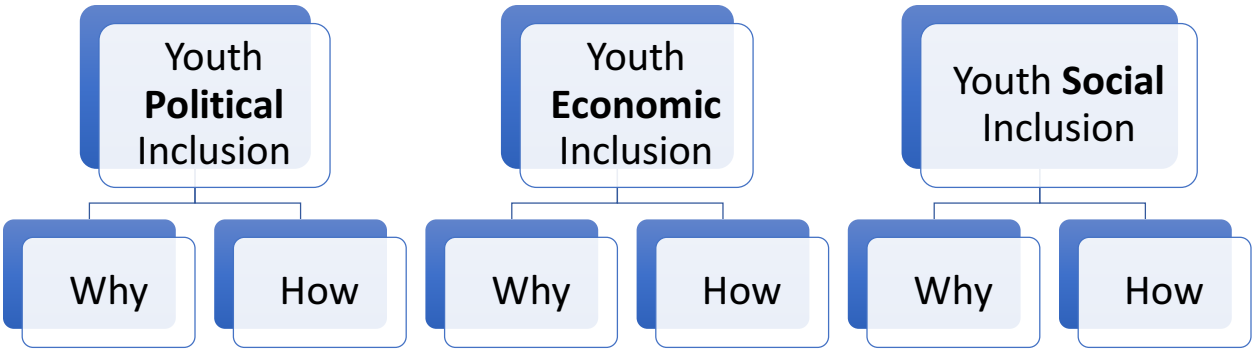
[19] Assaad, Ragui and Ghada Barsoum. *Youth Exclusion in Egypt: In Search of "Second Chances."* Middle East Youth Initiative. September 2007. http://www.meyi.org/publication-youth-exclusion-in-egypt-in-search-of-second-chances.html

In addressing the more theoretical question of "why" engage youth, we begin each section by first examining the costs of what is the status quo in most cases, which is significant youth populations experiencing some form of societal exclusion. We then look at the high-level societal benefits or returns to investments in youth inclusion. Finally, to address this question we also summarize examples of some of the program-level outcomes of youth engagement work, including of youth-driven development.

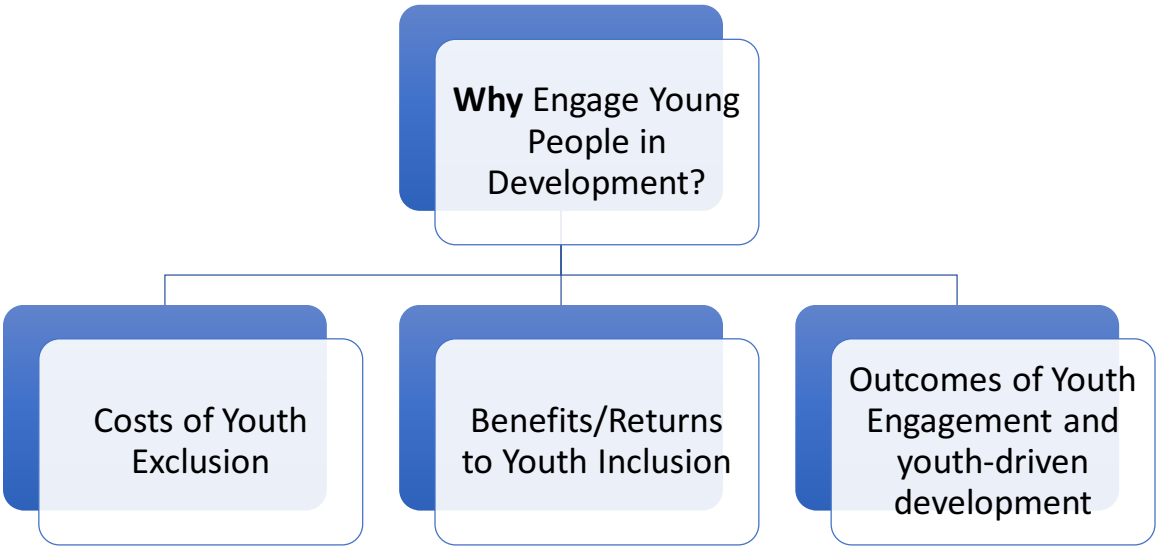
In addressing the more practical question of "how" to engage youth, this review adopts the existing three-lens approach that considers engaging youth either as beneficiaries, partners or agents of development. We place a particular focus on the assets-based approach to youth development - enabling young people as agents of change and drivers of their own and global development. Of course, these approaches will overlap in some cases, and one youth program might treat young people as beneficiaries, partners and agents in different stages, but this framework helps simplify the analysis.

Key Figure 3: Three Components of Guiding Conceptual Framework

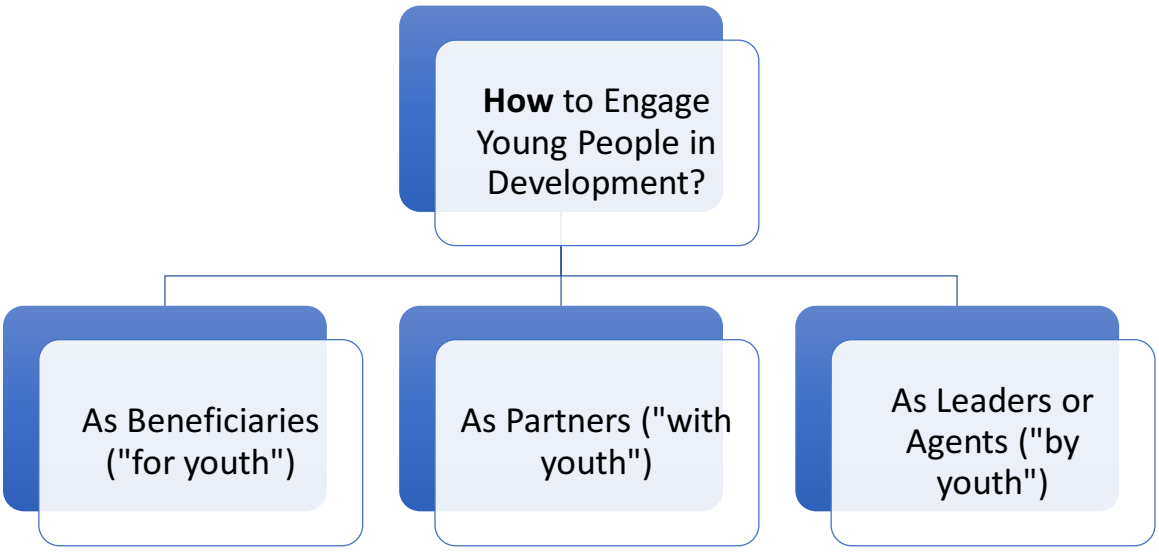
Key Figure 3.1 The Three **Dimensions** of Youth Engagement



Key Figure 3.2: Three **Justifications** for Youth Engagement



Key Figure 3.3 Three **Approaches** to Youth Engagement



Assessing the Literature

Methodology

This study reviewed well over 150 documents examining various aspects of youth engagement and development, **primarily grey literature** from a wide variety of implementing organizations working with youth in developing and developed countries, as well as some academic sources. Sources were identified through searches using a variety of relevant keywords and phrases, and a "snowball" type of approach was used. As sources revealed additional keywords and concepts – for example searches around youth social inclusion then uncovered material on positive youth development - those concepts were then used as search criteria to identify additional sources in an ongoing manner.

The working definition of youth used throughout this search includes young people ages 12-29. Hence, we included some sources that examine specific subgroups within this broad category, including adolescents, young professionals, and young adults.

In addition, select databases were skimmed for youth-relevant grey literature, such as the hundreds of annotated sources available through **Youth Power,** as well as nearly 400 youth-relevant sources available through the **GSDRC (Governance and Social Development Resource Centre) Applied Knowledge Services Library**. This desk-based review was conducted between March and June 2017 and was supplemented with a small number of interviews.

Selection Criteria

Given the broad scope of these two guiding research questions, it was necessary to establish criteria to filter through the large pool of potential resources to review.

1. **Does it provide insights on either the why or how of engaging young people in global development?**
2. **Does it address one or more dimensions of social, political, and/or economic youth inclusion or exclusion**, including costs of exclusion and benefits of inclusion**?**
3. **Does it relate to one or more guiding principles**, including cross-sectoral, lifecycle and/or asset-based approaches to youth engagement**?**
4. **Does it address one or more major trends that are seen as important in the context of youth that have emerged over the last decade,** including challenges around conflict, violence, voice/governance, and migration and the global growth of social movements?

To more efficiently summarize the widest number of findings, this review also paid close attention to the numerous aggregate analyses that were found - other literature reviews, meta-analyses, and systematic reviews that have been published - in order to obtain the most comprehensive current snapshot of "what the literature says" on this broad topic (creating a kind of "review of reviews").

Finally, a small number of informal interviews were performed to help validate assumptions and ideas that appeared in the literature review. Additional structured interviews are recommended in the next phase of follow up work.

We began with the 2007 World Development Report on youth as the starting point for investigation, considering the **five life transitions** framework it presents as an organizing principle for the initial skim of literature. This evolved to emphasize costs of exclusion and benefits of inclusion in three dimensions - political, social, and economic.

Limitations

As with all research, this review encountered a few limitations:

- **Inconsistent use of terms across the literature –** This field of youth engagement and development is filled with various terminology that is not always used consistently in the same way across actors – even the foundational terms "youth engagement" and "youth development" can mean very different things in different contexts (see Introduction for clarification on terminology). So one limitation of this review is its reliance on searches of key terms. This reality is verified by the recent USAID *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries*, for example, which examined **nearly 100 positive youth development programs across 60 countries, but found that only 11% of those programs actually described themselves using positive youth development terminology**.[20] We attempted to compensate for this by searching numerous variations of key terms and concepts (including all the terms listed in Figure 1), but this limitation is still worth noting.

- **Type I and type II errors** - Due to how this review's scope was defined, there is the possibility that we have excluded some programs that do not explicitly mention youth but somehow meaningfully benefit or engage them (as beneficiaries, partners, or agents). There is also the possibility that we have included some reports and programs that do have some explicit focus on youth, but that did not actually serve or engage youth in the way that was intended. The only way to mitigate the latter problem is through impact evaluations or other assessments to measure the impact of youth programs. We reviewed these when they were available, but such assessments of youth programs - especially those which engage youth as agents - are relatively few in number.

[20] Alvarado, G. and Skinner, M., et al. *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Brief.*: Youth Power Learning, Making Cents International. 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics

IV. Overall Findings

Chapter Summary: Following the conceptual framework outlined above, we present this literature review's key findings here, in two categories: answering the why and how of engaging youth in development. The most striking findings come from comparing the literature on the political versus the social versus the economic dimensions of youth inclusion. We summarize top arguments underlying various components of the literature and compare the relative volume and types of supporting evidence.

Cross-Sector Trends in the Literature

There are a number of common arguments we found across the literature that respond to the questions of why and how to engage youth, across the three different approaches, and across the three different dimensions of inclusion.

KEY FIGURE 4: Common Arguments for Different Types of Youth Engagement

Approach	Why?	How?
Invest *in youth*	• high costs of youth exclusion • multiplier effect (the earlier and more you invest in young people's development and social, political and economic inclusion, the greater the returns)	• invest in proven interventions, especially for social inclusion and human development (ex: first 1000 days, window of adolescence, provide second chances, etc.) • continue to build the evidence base to clarify what we don't know
Partner *with youth*	• benefits to youth and adults alike (build youth capacity and opportunities, and support goals of partnership)	• build youth voice in tandem with increasing institutional government and adult capacity and responsiveness
Support work *by youth*	• intrinsic and instrumental arguments ("by youth" approach is right thing to do, and the smart thing to do)	• identify and support existing youth leaders • create enabling environments conducive

	• youth leadership is necessary to drive overall development and meet the SDGs • youth leadership in policy/decision-making can help produce better outcomes	for the emergence of more youth leaders

KEY FIGURE 5: Common Arguments for the Costs and Benefit of Youth Political, Social and Inclusion and Exclusion

Type	Costs of Youth Exclusion	Benefits of Youth Inclusion
Political	• instability • violence • unrepresentative political systems	• better decisions/policy outcomes/resource allocations
Economic	• lost GDP/productivity • outward migration	• increased productivity, micro and macroeconomic benefits
Social	• individual level: harm on individual's social development, health and identity • social costs: instability, vulnerability to conflict,	• moving toward greater equality (especially by including youth from marginalized groups) • aggregate impacts of youth leaders/social entrepreneurs (on a variety of sectors/development outcomes) • (draw in part on positive youth development psychosocial literature)

NOTE: Each row of this table will be expanded and elaborated upon at the beginning of each chapter on political, social, and economic dimensions.

In comparing the relative volume of both theory and practice across various sectors, we **find that the most common type of youth engagement programs are those that engage youth as beneficiaries** ("for youth"), and are those that focus on youth economic inclusion. However, the literature shows that political and social inclusion are stronger drivers of negative youth behaviors (such as engagement in violence). If it is a top concern to mitigate the likelihood of youth engagement in negative behaviors, then political and social inclusion should be more prioritized.

At the same time, the most compelling cost-benefit evidence comes from youth social exclusion/inclusion. This gives further support for increasing the number of programs that focus on youth social inclusion as a central objective.

KEY FIGURE 6: Summary Table of Relative Amount of Research and Programs Across Three Dimensions and Approaches

	Evidence of costs & benefits	**Prevalence of programs**	**"For youth"**	**"With youth"**	**"By youth"**
Political Inclusion	Low	Low	Low	Med	Low
Social Inclusion	High (but especially in health)	Low	Med	Low	Low
Economic Inclusion	High	High	High	Low	Low

It is important to note that **this review did not find any rigorous, "gold-standard" evaluations that experimentally tested the difference that youth-driven engagement makes in attempting to address any kind of development challenge, whether it be related to health, education or any other sector (compared to non-youth driven engagement). However, the grey literature from practitioners shows encouraging outcomes from youth-driven development, and offers several tips for good practices (see Recommendations chapter).** Thus, there is a need to continue building the research/theoretical literature on this topic – honing in on the added effect from youth-led compared to non-youth-led approaches – while at the same time to understand the positive outcomes from youth-led work, apply practical lessons and continue evolving more effective youth-led approaches.

There is a large theoretical literature on engaging young people in global development, which includes both rights-based and outcomes-based arguments for engaging young people at various levels and in various roles (beneficiaries, partners, leaders).

There is a smaller though still significant base of empirical literature on the costs, benefits, and outcomes of youth engagement, most of which comes from "grey literature" sources and qualitative case studies. Furthermore, most of the outcomes-based literature examines shorter term outcomes of youth intervention programs on the individual and community levels, while longitudinal studies on the longer-term outcomes of various forms of youth engagement are scarce and predominantly come from developed rather than developing countries.[21]

[21] Carter, B. *Development Outcomes of the Political and Social Inclusion of Young People.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1237. 2015. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham.

Within the social development framework, we found significant work has been done on health. There is both greater clarity on how to quantify the costs and benefits of youth exclusion and inclusion as it relates to health[22], and there are also several positive youth development programs being implemented in the health sector[23] (80% of the 97 positive youth development programs examined by Alvarado et al 2017 were health-related). What's more, health-related programs also seem to tend to be receive more high-quality evaluation compared to youth programs in other sectors (again in the case of Alvarado et al 2017, the majority of the positive youth development studies which did indeed meet the criteria for high-quality evaluation were in the health sector). Thus in this review, we provide a brief summary of the findings but delve more deeply into other aspects of social development.

Similarly, there has been a tremendous amount of programs and reports that addresses youth economic inclusion and livelihoods. Again, we provide a snapshot of this landscape of work and the findings, but put relatively greater emphasis on much less-understood areas of youth development, such as questions related to youth voice/participation/governance.

Another rapid literature review was unable to find empirical evidence on the relationship between young people's political and social participation, and a broader economic impact.[24]

Why Engage Youth in Development?

1. **Countries with significant youth populations can avoid major societal costs by prioritizing the social, political and economic inclusion of young people.** A few different methodologies have been developed and built upon over the last decade to quantify the impact of youth exclusion. These illustrate how in some cases several percentage of GDP is lost due to youth exclusion. (See Appendix for more detail on these methodologies).

2. **Most youth efforts focus on economic inclusion, and treat youth as recipients rather than partners or agents. Yet the most promising ways to deter youth from participating in behaviors that are harmful to themselves and their societies (crime, instability, extremism, violence) comes more from their political and social inclusion, and from approaches that involve them as partners or agents.** There is a major gap between where many organizations have focused much their youth efforts (including research and programs) – *on promoting youth economic inclusion,*

http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/development-outcomes-of-the-political-and-social-inclusion-of-young-people/

[22] Sheehan, Peter et al. *Building the Foundations for Sustainable Development: A Case for Global Investment in the Capabilities of Adolescents.* The Lancet. April 2017. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30872-3

[23] Alvarado, G. and Skinner, M., et al . *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Brief*.: Youth Power Learning, Making Cents International. 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics

[24] Carter, Becky. *Development Outcomes of the Political and Social Inclusion of Young People.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1237. 2015., University of Birmingham. http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/HDQ12371.pdf

and offering services to youth as beneficiaries; versus where there is greatest potential impact – which is in *promoting the social and political inclusion of youth as well, promoting more cross-sector engagement (rather than addressing the many types of transitions youth make in silos), and in engaging youth as true leaders and drivers* of their own and their community's development.

3. **There is no proven causal link between unemployment driving youth to engage in violence**. Instead, youth experiencing instances of feelings of social isolation and exclusion and/or injustice or discrimination from the state seems to be stronger drivers. Despite common perception of unemployment as a driver of youth engagement in political violence, there is no proven causality between the two. Instead, the literature seems to indicate that social and political exclusion contributes to driving a small minority of young people to engage in extremism and political violence more than economic exclusion.

4. **Across virtually all areas of the youth engagement literature in the social, political and economic dimensions (ex: from youth and peacebuilding to youth and jobs training, etc.), there is very little longitudinal research that has been done to determine the long-term, generational impacts of such interventions for youth.** Rather, the strongest evidence that supports the notion of a **multiplier effect** when it comes to investing in youth instead comes from the social-psychological literature on individual adolescent cognitive and emotional development.

5. **Declining youth participation in some formal institutions (including formal politics and formal civil society organizations) does not necessarily mean youth are disengaging. Rather, young people are increasing self-organizing in more informal (and in some cases transnational) movements and activities.** Many young people are disengaging in traditional political and civil society spaces (ex: lower voter turnout rates) but, even in the face of some closing civic spaces, many young people are instead organizing through more informal, decentralized, and fluid social movements across borders and around issues of common concern (ex: climate).[25][26] Thus the development community should recognize and adapt to this shift in order to better support powerful, organic, youth-led efforts for social change.

6. **Though often excluded in a variety of ways, countless young people worldwide are taking the initiative themselves – whether or not they are recognized by development institutions - to contribute to a better world for themselves, their families, their communities, societies and the world. This includes notable contributions young people are making to fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, including but not limited to tackling some of the greatest issues their generation is facing: climate change and inequality. Youth-led efforts tend to be energetic and creative, and often lead to promising outcomes, so there is great opportunity to increase investments in youth-led efforts.

7. **The most compelling, rigorous cost-benefit analyses that illustrate high return on investment from youth engagement comes from the health sector specifically** (which we consider a sub-set

[25] United Nations. *Youth Political Participation and Decision-Making.* 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf
[26] Rhize. *The New Global Citizen: Harnessing Youth Leadership to Reshape Civil Society.* 2016. http://www.rhize.org/newglobalcitizen/

of the social inclusion dimension in this review). The most well-developed engagement tools also seem to come from this sector.

How to Engage Youth in Development?

1. **There is significant evidence (and growing consensus) that positive outcomes are generated from positive youth development approaches (including the inter-related aspects of emphasizing life skills, social emotional learning, and ecosystems of support) There is a need to translate solid young engagement research and practices from developed to developing countries.** These approaches emphasize soft skills and life skills beyond just technical and vocational capacities. Most of the evidence supporting the proven positive outcomes (for the individual and also for the community) from these inter-related, holistic approaches comes from developed country contexts (primarily the US and the UK). But some new efforts are beginning to support both the evidence/research and applied practice of positive youth development approaches[27] specifically in developing contexts, and there is great potential to continue applying lessons from PYD in developed countries and tailoring these to developing contexts. More broadly, there is great potential to improve efforts to engage youth in global development by deliberately translating and adapting findings and practices from developed to developing contexts.

2. **Youth engagement needs to in fact not only be about engaging youth!** The positive youth development literature underscores the need to consider and invest in **ecosystems of support –** i.e. working not only with young people themselves, but also the people surrounding them. Focusing on ecosystems of support make efforts to promote youth inclusion, help young people fulfill their individual potential, avoid negative behaviors, and contribute to the well-being of their communities all more effective. Meanwhile, the governance literature emphasizing the risk of promoting citizen empowerment (especially youth voice in political processes, governance, and decision making) *without* also building the capacity of adults in decision making positions (including in and out of government) to sufficiently hear and response and engage these active youth effectively. Thus, youth engagement programs should also invest in increasing the **receptivity and institutional responsiveness of adults in general and governments and development agencies** in particular to be able to truly hear and effectively respond to youth voice and enable more youth-initiated engagement.

3. **Youth engagement in general is more effective as a means than an end.** The complementary governance and citizen participation literature indicates that the most effective citizen participation efforts tend to be those that design participation not as an end in and of itself (even if there is an intrinsic or rights-based argument underlying the work). Instead, a broader base of both citizens and government officials are more likely to participate and see value in such efforts if they are targeted toward solving specific, concrete, and tangible lived problems (for example, poor quality basic services like education, health, sanitation and transportation). This principle can/should also be applied to inform youth engagement

[27] USAID. *Positive Youth Development in Low and Middle Income countries.* May 2017. https://www.icrw.org/publications/pyd-measurement-toolkit/

efforts. Young people and their adult counterparts will generally be more likely to engage and to see value in their engagement if it is structured around meaningful opportunities to change material conditions, decisions/policies, or other concrete outcomes, than general participation efforts not linked directly to solving actual problems in people's lives.

4. **Focus on youth *political and social inclusion, not just economic inclusion.*** It is not enough to focus on either educating or employing young people to help prevent them from going down destructive paths and being swayed by extremist recruiters. Rather, many of the rare young people who do engage in political violence do so because of experiences of injustice (feelings of political exclusion), not necessarily because they are less educated or unemployed. So, any programs seeking to prevent youth engagement in violence must seriously consider how to promote their political inclusion, in addition to economic and social. Integrated cross-sector approaches have greater likelihood for success, as the reality is that challenges facing youth are indeed interrelated, so all three dimensions of inclusion are linked. (For example, social, political, and economic youth exclusion can be both a significant driver *and* a result of youth migration).

5. **Little academic research has been done to explore the outcomes of explicitly cross-sector approaches, yet preliminary results from the world of practice indicate promising outcomes from these integrated (and often innovative) programs**. Cross-sector approaches can include programs that adopt an integrated approach to emphasizing the holistic development of the *individual* young person (such as positive youth development and the growing consensus on the strength of that approach). They can also include programs that are designed for, with or by youth to address more than one type of youth exclusion (as discussed in finding #4 above) at *the societal level.*

KEY FIGURE 7– Status Quo and Recommendations by Approach to Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement Approach	**Status quo**	**Recommendations (and knowledge generation)**
Development for youth *(youth as beneficiaries)*	• Mixed impacts depending on type of intervention and context; strong cost-benefit evidence from youth social inclusion programs	• More **cross-sectoral** approaches • More comprehensive and **integrated services** for youth that take a holistic "lifecycle approach" • Incorporate more "user-centered" or youth-centered approaches to design services and programs (building off growing movement around human/user-centered design, etc.)

		• Most emphasis on youth social inclusion
Development with youth *(youth as partners)*	• Small but growing body of implementation • Many PYD programs for example engage youth as partners in adult-led activities[28]	• More cross-sectoral approaches and coordination across development actors • Invest in additional knowledge generation about how a variety of different actors (including but not limited to development funders and implementers) can best partner with youth in different contexts
Development by youth *(youth as agents)*	• Emerging outcomes from youth-led initiatives and organizations, such as those supporting the SDGs	• experiment/innovate and Implement more youth-driven initiatives • Invest in additional knowledge generation about how to best support youth-driven development initiatives, and how to *enable* more youth leadership and engagement

Youth as Beneficiaries

Although this review encourages an asset-based approach to youth engagement as much as possible that allows youth to lead and catalyst their own and societal development, we recognize that there are several instances where youth are in fact a demographic in need of services (like any other social group). We found that there are a few key opportunities for improving youth engagement at this first level:

- Investments *in* youth must consider how to promote youth social and political inclusion, not only economic inclusion
    - We found that most youth engagement work to tend has tended to focus on help youth obtain employment and livelihoods. Of course this is a critical part of the transition to adulthood, but it is not the whole picture. Furthermore, the literature suggests that experiences of social and political exclusion are actually more important in driving a minority of youth to engage in violence compared to their experiences of economic exclusion.

[28] Alvarado, G. and Skinner, M., et al . *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Brief*.: Youth Power Learning, Making Cents International. 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics

Youth as Partners

This review also found many practical tips around how to engage youth and adults together as partners working toward shared development goals. Relatively few of the youth engagement programs we reviewed make explicit attempts to set up such co-equal partnerships. Thus, **there is great untapped potential to further develop youth-adult partnerships as a youth engagement strategy**, and apply this across sectors and across the interrelated goals of youth social, political and economic inclusion more broadly.

Some practical tips for successful youth-adult partnerships include: mutual respect and trust, creating space for contributions from all participants, and encouraging young people to step up and engage more while encouraging adults to step back a bit. [29]

An additional resource that provides guidance on how to effectively engage youth as partners comes from the Youth Participation Guide: Assessment, Planning and Implementation developed by USAID-funded YouthNet Program to increase the level of meaningful youth participation in reproductive health (RH) and HIV/AIDS programming at an institutional and programmatic level[30]

FIGURE 8: Benefits and Considerations for Youth and Adult Participants in Youth-Adult Partnerships

	Benefits	Tips
For Youth	• Gain access to mentors to learn skills from • Supportive space for individual development of skills and building courage to raise voice/opinions among adults • Broaden their social network/social capital	• Step up • Mentor younger peers to help create sustainable pathways for youth engagement
For Adults	• Gain exposure to often out-of-the-box innovative ideas • Gain renewed energy and commitment to working on issues affecting young people	• Step back and listen to give room for youth to led but support ("maximum support and maximum challenge")

[29] The Freechild Project. *Youth-Adult Partnerships Tip Sheet*. 2002. https://web.archive.org/web/20070701120947/http://freechild.org/YAPtips.htm

[30] Advocates for Youth. *Youth Participation Guide Assessment Planning and Implementation.* Site accessed May 2017. http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/publications-a-z/1652-youth-participation-guide-assessment-planning-and-implementation

Youth as Agents

There are several common challenges to engaging youth as agents and catalysts of development:

- Risk of tokenistic activities that reduce participation and engender disillusionment;
- Technical capacity constraints (both of individual young people, and of youth-led organizations);
- Discriminatory social norms and ageism;
- Formal political rules and procedures.[31]

At the same time, there is great opportunity to promote more youth-led development through applying the Recommended Guiding Principles in the Recommendations section.

[31] Carter, Becky. *Development Outcomes of the Political and Social Inclusion of Young People.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1237. 2015., University of Birmingham. http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/HDQ12371.pdf

V. Chapter One: Costs and Benefits of Youth Political Exclusion/Inclusion

Chapter Summary: This chapter examines the why and how (or the evidence and impacts) of youth political inclusion – that is, incorporating youth voice and participation in formal political decision making bodies and processes, and promoting youth political awareness and civic engagement in informal ways and more broadly. Overall, the evidence on the impacts of including young people in political decision making on outcomes (both for the individual youth and for the broader community) is mixed. Interviews and other qualitative sources suggest significant impact on the young people themselves. Yet we were unable to find evidence that the presence of youth in political decision-making bodies tends to change the culture of those bodies themselves. Longitudinal research on this topic is needed to discern the long-term impacts of civic participation and engagement in adolescence, both on the young people themselves and on the institutions with which they engage.

This section also includes a stand-alone "Governance and Youth" Note of numerous key lessons from the civic participation literature that can be applied to better inform youth engagement approaches across all sectors, to address political, economic, and social inclusion more effectively and holistically.

Figure 9: Summary Table of "Why" Promote Youth Political Inclusion

Assumption	Volume and Type of Evidence	Findings, or Select Source(s)	Practical Implications/Recommendations
1. Civically engaged youth are more likely to reach their full potential (excel academically, etc.) And raising political education and involvement of young people increases their likelihood of being **lifelong engaged citizens**, and helps cultivate future generations of engaged citizenry	Little empirical evidence, but significant qualitative evidence reported from variety of youth training programs (ex: tracking impact of their alumni)	Young Elected Leaders Programs; Youth Parliament, Councils, etc.	Youth fellowship programs trained to promote youth civic education and activism should invest in building their capacity to evaluate the impact of their alumni, and make evaluation frameworks consistent across programs
2. Involving youth in political decision-making about policies that affect them leads to better policies/decisions and resource allocation	Some empirical but mostly anecdotal evidence to date; evidence shows that participating youth benefit but that the culture government bodies	PNPM example from Indonesia	This aligns with a broader emerging literature on the critical notion of "feedback" and how meaningfully incorporating any beneficiary group can lead to improved outcomes

	themselves do not tend to change because of the presence of youth		
4. Youth political exclusion increases the risk of political instability as well as violence.	Significant emerging evidence, especially from literature on youth violence/extremism	Mercy Corps research on youth violence	Youth political inclusion programs should not only focus on the most promising youth leaders, but also target at-risk youth

1. *Why Promote Youth Political Inclusion? Intrinsic and Instrumental Arguments*

This survey of a wide variety of articles and reports addressing various aspects of youth involvement in political life concludes that the single biggest cost of youth political exclusion is the **risk of instability (including political instability and transition, as well as the risk of conflict and violence**). This unlikely though serious risk underscores the need to provide ongoing, meaningful opportunities for youth to fully engage in informal and formal political and decision making processes. Ensuring youth are included and voice is heard at all levels is a powerful deterrent/antidote to the risk of instability fomented by youth frustrations at their own political (as well as social and economic) exclusion.

The consequences of this lack of youth voice/representation is especially costly in fragile/conflict-prone settings (see separate section on this topic). Mercy Corps notes in one of its reports that single greatest driver that motivated some young people to engage in political violence was not unemployment, but rather experiences of injustice/frustrations with government or other formal institutions.

This assumption is validated by a variety of data points. For example, in a survey conducted by the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) in August 2012, a majority of the 13,000 respondents from 186 countries identified the main challenges for youth as being limited opportunities for effective participation in decision-making processes. [32]"

GSDRC produced a rapid literature review on youth involvement in accountability mechanisms (formal and informal) in 2015. It concluded there are three primary justifications for engaging young people in governance:

1. **intrinsic argument** - that young people have a fundamental right to participate in decisions that affect them which must be upheld;
    a. For example, UNDP takes an explicitly rights-based approach in its youth political engagement work.

[32] UNDESA. *Youth, Political Participation and Decision-Making*. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Focal Point on Youth. November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf

2. **instrumental argument (impact on policy outcomes)** - youth involvement helps generate better policy decisions and program outcomes;
3. **instrumental argument (generational societal impact)** - youth involvement helps support national and global development outcomes and creates a cohort of activated and engaged lifelong citizens.

Key findings from this GSDRC review include:

- There are a **wide range of individual and societal outcomes from youth engagement in accountability**. For example, "Youth participation is seen to encourage greater respect for youth rights in relation to early marriage, access to education, ending discriminatory practices and exploitative conditions of work (UNICEF, 2004). Case studies suggest that youth participation can lead to better informed and more effective policy and planning, budgeting and programme management. IDS et al (2011) report better results and greater awareness of young people's needs, capacities and aspirations stemming from greater participation."
- At the same time, the literature suggests that the outcomes are **mixed, content-specific**, and are difficult to verify in some cases.
- Youth political participation efforts need to take into account **inclusive engagement of marginalized youth sub-groups** (ex: girls and young women, ethnic minorities, young people with disabilities, youth affected by HIV/AIDS, slum dwellers) in order to avoid negative outcomes. Outcomes can be negative if youth participation efforts entrench or reinforce other aspects of social exclusion.
- The review also found that an **enabling environment** is critical to ensure effective participation of youth in both formal and informal accountability mechanisms.
    - UN: The promotion of an enabling environment (legal frameworks, policies and plans) for young people's participation in a broad range of processes and areas (electoral and parliamentary processes, public administration and local governance, including in peacebuilding environments) at local, sub-national and national levels.

Does Involving Young People in Decision-Making Change Outcomes?

In sum, the evidence responding to this question is mixed and often seems context-specific. In 2012, Morton and Montgomery performed a systematic review of the impact of Youth Empowerment Programs (defined as programs that regularly involved youth in decision making) on improving adolescents' self-efficacy and self-esteem. They conclude there **is insufficient evidence of the impacts of such youth empowerment programs** and call for further research, namely "well-implemented models with clear theories of change, larger samples, and rigorous impact study designs complemented by mixed-methods process evaluation."[33]

However, testimonials, survey responses, and interviews from youth involved in a wide variety of programs that **increase youth political representation and voice in public life strongly suggest that such engagement has positive impacts both of the individual young person's development, and on their broader community**.

[33] Morton, Matthew and Montgomery, Paul. *Youth Empowerment Programs for Improving Adolescents' Self-Efficacy and Self-Esteem: A Systematic Review.* Research on Social Work Practice Vol 23, Issue 1, p. 22-23. December 2012. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1049731512459967

Qualitative evidence from a variety of grey literature sources suggests these are some of the top outcomes of youth political inclusion and engagement:

2. How to Promote Youth Political Inclusion?

There are a variety of ways to support youth participation in formal and informal political life. Any practical attempts to promote youth political inclusion should keep this informal/formal distinction in mind.

In some cases, youth may be less engaged in and disillusioned with formal political processes, but seeking to express their voice in other ways. One paper found that African youth vote less than other groups, "raising the questions of whether the electoral process is a legitimate means of conveying young people's concerns and whether political parties are accurately representing younger citizens' interests." The paper also concluded that concerns that "disillusioned African youth will foment instability do not yet appear warranted in many of the region's electoral democracies."[34] Therefore, **youth political inclusion programs must recognize that many youth are engaged in informal political spaces, and at the same time not assume that this engagement (say in protest movements) is necessarily a threat to stability.**

Formal Means of Youth Political Inclusion

This section summarizes findings from initiatives meant to involve young people in formal political processes - mainly as **voters or as elected politicians** themselves. Of course, there is often a relationship between informal and formal youth political engagement. For example, one study of 814 young elected officials across the United States found that they all tended to be civically active - engaging in organized volunteerism and student activities in high school, college and beyond.[35] Still, this informal-formal distinction helps organize relevant findings in this dimension.

Youth can be engaged in formal political life in a variety of ways: including as voters of course, but also as elected representatives themselves, as organizers within political parties in general or in youth wings of political parties in particular.

Youth are **drastically under-represented in formal government/political decision making bodies around the world**. Both **institutional and normative barriers** around the world tend to exclude youth from positions of decision making power, assuming they are not sufficiently mature or experienced to effectively fulfill such roles. Though young people under 30 make up nearly half of the world's

[34] Resnick, D., and Casale, D. *The Political Participation of Africa's Youth: Turnout, Partisanship and Protest*. Working Paper No. 136, Afrobarometer, South Africa. 2011. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/the-political-participation-of-africas-youth-turnout-partisanship-and-protest/

[35] Mandel, Ruth and Katherine Kleeman. *America's Young Elected Leaders*. Rutgers University - Eagleton Institute of Politics. 2003 http://yppp.rutgers.edu/yelp/report-highlights/

population, only 1.9% of MPs around the world are under 30.[36] Even if one were to broaden the definition of what constitutes a young MP, the numbers are still greatly skewed: less than 12% of the world's parliamentarians are in their 30s, and the average age globally of an MP is 53 years old. [37]

How People Are Attempting to Increase Youth Representation in Formal Politics:

Given this glaring absence of young people in political office, there are a wide variety of initiatives designed to address this problem. These initiatives tend to take one of the following approaches:

1. Build the **technical skills and confidence of young people to run for office, and/or facilitate the process of them obtaining positions in formal decision-making bodies.** Some such programs emphasize youth engagement on certain issues (like environmental issues or immigration), while others train youth of particular political persuasion (more liberal versus more progressive), while still others focus on instill a general sense of public service for marginalized and at-risk youth. One example of this is the *Young Elected Officials Network* in the United States.

2. **Civic education programs** designed to offer young people in-depth, inside knowledge of the workings of legislative and other decision making bodies at various levels (local, municipal, national, even international)
    a. **CASE**: "The Lebanese Parliamentary Internship Programme has been expanded to a greater number of Lebanese graduates of all universities in Lebanon, offering them a real opportunity to participate in public policy making. This programme provides them with a training opportunity on public policy making tools; and introduces them to the legislative and oversight functions of the Parliament and its function in the framework of parliamentary diplomacy in regional and national issues." [38]

3. **Mentorship programs** that match promising young people to shadow and learn from existing elected officials

4. Other programs **establish parallel youth decision-making bodies** to monitor, shadow and/or complement the work of government bodies. Though these bodies often have no real ability to influence actual government institutions, they can inspire and empower young people to get involved in formal politics by giving them a more contained, youth-only environment in which they can develop their interests and skills in civic and political issues.

    a. **CASE:** Youth Shadow Local Councils have been set up in Gaza made up of young Palestinians between -20 years old who are elected by peers to positions similar to those in local government. Elected youth are mentored by and work directly with

[36] Inter-Parliamentary Union. IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, Outcome Document. March 2016. http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/youngMP16/outcome.pdf
[37] Ibid.
[38] UNDESA. *Youth, Political Participation and Decision-Making*. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Focal Point on Youth. November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf

their counterparts in city council and are given responsibilities at the local level. Youth councilors directly represent their peers rather than any political party. [39]

Informal Means of Youth Political Inclusion

Young people throughout history tend to be at the vanguard of social change. The Arab Spring uprisings which captured the world's attention starting in late 2010 are only the latest manifestation in a long history of youth-driven movements. The democratic transitions that swept across Eastern Europe in the 1990s were also in many cases led by young people. The same can be true of democratic movements in Latin America in the previous decade and so on. Youth are always at the forefront of political change, and due to being excluded from formal political and other social institutions, youth often channel their activism through informal means, such as decentralized global networks and social movements.

Along with social movement, student activism is an important means of informal youth political participation. From volunteerism to organizing around shared interests and concerns on campus and beyond, students in particular often lead important movements toward social and political change in their countries and beyond. If students (especially at the university and secondary levels) are denied the ability to organize on their campuses, this can breed exclusion and frustrations.[40]

Civic Education and Emerging Understanding of Citizenship

Citizenship is a powerful concept that can help contextualize a variety of efforts to incorporate youth into political life. Citizenship for all – including for youth – is based on both rights and responsibilities. The 2013 UN-Habitat Report on *Advancing Youth Civic Engagement and Human Rights* compiled a list of 35 rights of youth, derived from African and Iberoamerican Youth Charters.

This same report offers a conceptual framework for understanding youth engagement: *the Two Dimensions of Citizenship* - **the normative dimension** (including all social, economic and political rights), and the **performative dimension of citizenship** (including all the social responsibilities). They elaborate, "Think of it (youth citizenship) as a network of rights and responsibilities that relate to each other and to their respective private or public enforcers –what we have called duty bearers. In real life, the way citizenship is effectively exercised is not merely about a set of rights and responsibilities, formally sanctioned or merely articulated as part of the political strategy of a given group of individuals. It is about how these rights and responsibilities, and their enforcers interact with, and relate to each other at different times and in different places.

CASE: "Cambodia: Gearing up for local and national elections The 'Strengthening Democracy Programme/Component: Youth Multimedia Civic Education Initiative' aimed at reaching 3 million young voters. It is a series of TV and radio broadcasts developed in partnership with BBC Media Action, informed by a baseline study on youth knowledge, attitudes and practices in the context of public affairs. The broadcasts used entertaining stories oriented around the experiences of young

[39] UN-Habitat. *Advancing Youth Civic Engagement and Human Rights with Young Women and Young Men.* Nairobi: UN-Habitat. 2013 https://unhabitat.org/books/advancing-youth-civic-engagement-and-human-rights/

[40] Assaad, Ragui and Ghada Barsoum. *Youth Exclusion in Egypt: In Search of "Second Chances."* Middle East Youth Initiative. September 2007. http://www.meyi.org/publication-youth-exclusion-in-egypt-in-search-of-second-chances.html

people to inform them of their civic rights and responsibilities, and break down stereotypes that youth should refrain from active roles in public life. Post-broadcast research found that younger voters felt more positive about democratic participation."[41]

CASE: From 2009-2011 Plan worked with and engaged 900 youth in Sierra Leone. Due to the **increased citizen trust** in government over time, one of the outcomes of this program was a significant increase in the proportion of young people paying taxes, who also in turn helped increase participation of others paying taxes as well.[42]

This **rights-based approach** to understanding youth political engagement and inclusion is complemented by an **accountability-based approach**.

CASE: A powerful example of the development outcomes of political inclusion program (also with cross-sector relevance) comes from the Yes Youth Can! Initiative. This was a large scale USAID-funded and Mercy Corps-implemented project in Kenya that involved 75,000 young people to join local youth-led *bunges* ("parliaments"), which have made decisions leading to outcomes such as organizing small businesses, community service projects, and driving young people to register for ID cards (needed to vote, get a job etc.). The program in total reached nearly **1 million Kenyan youth.**[43] Interestingly, an impact evaluation of this 5-year, $55 million program found that youth participation in *bunges* increased individual participants confidence and self-esteem and fostered some youth engagement with political leaders. In other words, "the experience of coming together and working towards a common goal also led to important benefits for the youth who participated, while the specific purpose or activities of the *bunge* did not have a strong impact on outcomes." [44]

This assessment suggests that **youth political engagement programs can contribute to the positive individual development of the young people involved, but the presence of young people does not necessarily change the nature of political decision making institutions themselves.** This is because youth may be limited to tokenistic, superficial roles, or their contributions to decision making processes likely are not perceived as equally valuable to their adult counterparts.

Thus, for political bodies and institutions themselves to change due to youth participation, adult decision makers and politicians need to be engaged to both 1) address the **implicit biases they likely bring that diminish the perceived value of youth engagement** and 2) to empower them with **practical skills and tools** needed to maximize the opportunities of youth engagement.

---

[41] UNDESA. *Youth, Political Participation and Decision-Making*. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Focal Point on Youth. November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf

[42] Walker, David, Pereznieto, Paola et al. *Restless Development. Partners for Change: Young People and Governance in a Post-2015 World*. September 2014. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/partners-for-change-full-report-amended-pdf

[43] USAID. *Yes Youth Can*. 2013 https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1860/yes-youth-can-central

[44] Carter, Becky. *Development Outcomes of the Political and Social Inclusion of Young People.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1237. 2015., University of Birmingham. http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/HDQ12371.pdf

Another review summarizes the literature in this way: "The literature argues that empowering, organising, capacity-building and partnering with young people can contribute to good governance and improved accountability of governments (DANIDA, 2007; UNDP, 2006; Walton, 2010). To this end, governments, donors and NGOs have supported a variety of interventions that encourage youth participation both formally and informally. The extent to which these interventions have improved the outcomes of young people, or of government accountability, is however open to question.[45]

Despite this uncertainty, a consensus has emerged that increasing youth participation in government accountability mechanisms has both instrumental and intrinsic value and can result in positive outcomes for young people and society in general.

Recommendations for More Meaningful Youth Political Inclusion

1. **Support elected young officials at all levels, but particularly at the national/parliamentary level** - as these rare young leaders are in a prime position to advocate for youth participation in and out of government, and to connect local and national priorities with the global agenda around sustainable development. For example, this is evidenced by this list of commitments from over 100 young parliamentarians under the age of 30 from 50 countries at the 2016 Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians.[46] Another promising set of actors to consider are regional networks like the European Youth Forum.

2. "Effective and meaningful youth political participation has one of three attributes: it can be **consultative**; it can entail **youth-led participation**, where young people have a direct impact on decision-making within their own youth communities; finally it can involve youth **collaborative participation**, where young people effectively take part in regular political decision-making processes. "[47]

3. Keep in mind that young people are often and increasingly engaging in informal political settings, including social movements.[48] Traditional development institutions and other traditional political actors (such as political parties and even civil society NGOs) may not be accustomed to engaging with social movements that are more fluid, decentralized, and in some cases may even appear leaderless. Yet this should not mean that these movements are not engaged. **Follow the paths to where young people are self-organizing in support of development goals and find ways to support these youth-led efforts.**

---

[45] Avis, William. *Increasing Youth Participation in Accountability Mechanisms.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1267: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. August 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/increasing-youth-participation-in-accountability-mechanisms/

[46] Inter-Parliamentary Union. *IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, Outcome Document*. March 2016. http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/youngMP16/outcome.pdf

[47] United Nations. *Youth, Political Participation and Decision-Making*. November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf

[48] Rhize. *The New Global Citizen: Harnessing Youth Leadership to Reshape Civil Society*. 2016. http://www.rhize.org/newglobalcitizen/

"Youth Participation, Voice and Governance" Note

Summary: What can we learn from the complementary body of literature on governance, citizen participation and social accountability to make youth-specific engagement more effective? This stand-alone "Youth and Governance" Note summarizes key insights on good principles and practices of engagement - at both the theoretical and practical levels - to inform and strengthen youth inclusion and engagement efforts.

The concept of governance is of course related, but not limited to, the dimension of political inclusion. Governance ultimately has to do with the relationships between citizens and governments and the rules by which societies operate. Governance helps determine the quality of life and status of development in any country, across all sectors (from health and education to transportation, sanitation, and much more).

As such, the governance literature can offer a wealth of lessons that can be used to improve youth engagement approaches across the board, for more effective youth social, political, economic and cross-sector inclusion in many different contexts.

Theoretical Frameworks of Citizen Participation Frameworks, Compared to the Three Approaches to Youth Engagement

The citizen participation literature offers a wide variety of frameworks to conceptualize and understand the nature of citizen engagement and participation with governments and public policies/public life.

Many different participation frameworks in the civic participation literature identify forms of engagement as existing on **some kind of spectrum (of gradually increase substance and/or intensity of citizen participation)**. These spectrums are somewhat analogous to spectrum of the *three-lenses and asset-based approach to youth engagement,* which guides how this review has attempted to answer the question of "how" to engage youth in development (as described in the Conceptual Framework).

Thus, a variety of citizen participation conceptual frameworks can shed some insights on how to more effectively engage youth at various levels - as beneficiaries, partners, and finally (and most intensively and importantly) as leading agents of their own development and the development of their broader communities and societies.

This table below has been produced based on a close review of an extremely useful compilation of over **30 general citizen participation frameworks** that have been developed over the last 50 years. This is a chronological compendium of numerous models of participation and empowerment available under creative commons license through youthpolicy.org and nonformality.org[49]

After reviewing the full compilation, we identified the following frameworks as having a particularly relevance to help inform the three different types/level of youth engagement.

[49] Karsten, Andreas. *Participation Models: Citizens, Youth, Online.* Youthpolicy.org. Version 2 updated 2012. http://www.youthpolicy.org/library/documents/a-potpourri-of-participation-models/

Key FIGURE 10: Participation Frameworks Compared to Three Approaches of Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement Approach	Relevant Insights from Citizen Participation Frameworks
Youth as Beneficiaries	• ***Jans & de Backer's Triangle of Participation (2002)*** - identifies three conditions that clarify when and why youth participate to begin with (in other words the necessary conditions that enable initial youth participation)
Youth as Partners	● ***Harry Shier's Pathways to Participation (2001)*** - identifies all the progressive stages/questions to asks to help actors determine if they are sufficiently ready and able to *receive/enable* youth participation (helping inform any efforts to build institutional capacity/responsiveness to youth participation) ● ***Phil Treseder's Degrees of Participation (1997)*** - gives nuance to the many different ways youth and adults can partner/collaborate ● ***UNICEF Strategic Approach to Participation (2001)*** - emphasizes the need to create supportive environments necessary to help enable youth to participate effectively and meaningfully ● ***Time Davies - Matrix of Participation (2009)*** - recommends that those interested in youth engagement offer young people a spread of engagement opportunities (not limiting activities to either extreme)
Youth as Agents	● ***Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969***) - emphasizes fundamental importance of power sharing for meaningful participation ● ***Sarah White's Typology of Participation (1996***) - differentiates tokenistic superficial approaches from deeper meaningful participation ● ***Jans & de Backer's Youth Participation in Society (2002)*** - differentiates youth participation on youth affairs versus on other broader affairs in the public domain ● ***Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO)'s Youth Engagement Continuum (2003)*** - identifies several collective empowerment techniques that led youth along a continuum to achieving their full potential as individuals and their greatest potential to enact/lead systemic change ● ***Driskell & Neema - Key Dimensions of Participation (2009)*** - provides guidance on how to *sustain* and create spaces for meaningful youth participation beyond limited "episodes"

Top Takeaways to Apply to Youth Engagement

Each of the highlighted citizen participation frameworks above offers some unique insight that can be applied to efforts that fall within the three different levels of youth engagement. Yet ultimately, **all of the 30 or so citizen participation frameworks reviewed can be boiled down to answering four central, fundamental questions**:

FIGURE 11: Four Key Defining Factors of Citizen Participation Frameworks

1. Who has **access to information**?
2. Who has **agenda-setting power** (decides on the central problem/objective)?
3. Who has **decision making power** (decides on the process and ultimate solution)?
4. Who can **act/implement** the decision(s)?

This simple yet critical list can **serve as a checklist** to help determine the level of meaningful participation in any efforts meant to engage youth.

Figure 12: Applying Four Fundamental Questions from Citizen Participation Frameworks to Three Levels of Youth Engagement

Approach	Access to Info	Agenda-Setting	Decision-making	Implementation
Youth as Beneficiaries	Only adults	Only adults	Only adults	Only adults
Youth as Partners	Adults and youth	Only adults	Adults and youth	Adults and youth
Youth as Agents	Youth	Youth	Youth	Youth (and possibly adults)

What Does the Civic Participation Literature Tell Us About What Works and What Doesn't?

WHAT WORKS:[50]

Lesson 1 – Citizen participation is often associated with improved development outcomes, such as improved service delivery, though such results can be context-specific and sensitive to both government and citizen capacity.

The fundamental argument/justification behind having citizens participate in governance (i.e. in policy and resource allocation decisions) is that communities generally know best what they need, and therefore should be empowered to help address their community concerns.

Findings from the literature review in the World Bank's Framework on Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement suggest **links between citizen engagement in general and development outcomes such as improved service delivery.** "This framework includes a comprehensive review of impact literature, which has found positive links between CE and improved public service delivery, public

[50] Note: Some of these lessons were derived from the author's notes from her participation in the 2014 online course *Citizen Engagement: A Game Changer for Development?* Offered by the World Bank through Coursera.

financial management, governance, and social inclusion/empowerment. Evidence also shows, however, that the outcomes of CE **are highly context-specific and sensitive to governments' and citizens' capacity** and willingness to engage, as well as to social, political, economic, environmental, cultural, geographic, and other factors, such as gender dynamics.[51]"

Another review examined evidence on community monitoring efforts to reduce corruption and improve quality of service delivery. Overall findings across the wide variety of contexts examined (in education, health, etc.) were heterogeneous making it hard to make strong conclusions. However, they found "the **overall effect of CMIs [community monitoring initiatives] on both forensic and perception based measures of corruption to be positive**." These initiatives were not necessarily able to improve access to services, but results were seen that helped improved the quality of some services (presumably due to the greater government accountability through citizen monitoring). The review concluded that these impacts could be strengthened with more accountability to ensure the actual involvement of citizens in these initiatives, and with **provision of adequate information and tools to assist citizens** in effective service delivery monitoring.[52]

Additional supporting evidence comes from significant research that has been done around one of the largest scale community-driven development initiatives ever, Indonesia's long-standing nationwide PNPM program in over 70,000 villages across the country. This program delivers **cash block grants for small scale infrastructure** (and some social and economic development programs). Results indicate some of the benefits of this participant/community-driven development approach. "Feedback from beneficiaries indicates that the **program is an effective approach for community participation and for addressing basic infrastructure at the community level**. Independent assessments of infrastructure quality show it to be high, and community organizations are perceived to be working relatively well." Research on the outcomes of PNPM also identify some areas for improvement: increasing the efficiency of resource utilization; deepening engagement by marginalized groups; increasing the capacity of facilitators; and increasing activities that could more directly address the social and economic needs of households.[53]

Additional evidence supporting the claim that participation can lead to better quality service delivery comes from literature on Brazil's experience with participatory budgeting, John Gaventa's meta-analysis of the literature from 2010, and Mansuri and Rao's investigation of community-driven development.

Lesson 2 - The most promising approaches to citizen engagement tend to combine both "thin" and "thick levels of engagement, and obtaining a "critical mass" of citizens often leads to more effective engagement.

---

[51] World Bank Group. *Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations.* 2014. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/21113 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO

[52] Campbell Collaboration. *Community Monitoring Interventions to Curb Corruption and Increase Access and Quality of Service Delivery in Low-and middle-income Countries*. November 2016. https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/library/corruption-community-monitoring-low-income-communities.html

[53] PNPM-Urban Indonesia: *Evaluation of the Urban Community Driven Development Program*. January 2013. http://psflibrary.org/catalog/repository/Policy%20Note_Evaluation%20of%20the%20Urban%20CDD%20Program_PNPM%20Urban.pdf

Citizen participation experts distinguish between two types of engagement: "thin" and "thick." Thin engagement tends to involves only a minimal amount of citizen effort with very confined resulting impact on government activities (though widespread citizen participation in thin engagement can have significant impact; one example comes from "311" local government reporting hotlines that citizens can use to report potholes or other problems in their community). This contrasts with thick engagement that requires more substantial and ongoing citizen efforts in tandem with ongoing government efforts (for example, participatory budgeting is an involved process that requires several repeat interactions, significant time investment from citizens and their government counterparts, and establishing relationships.

Lesson 3- The most effective participation efforts tend to start with a clearly defined, concrete problem. In other words, participation efforts work best when participation is a means, rather than an end in itself.

Designing participation efforts around solving a concrete, lived problem gives all participants (government and citizen alike) a clear and often compelling reason to come to the table. This significantly contrasts with efforts to increase citizen participation in an abstract sense for its own sake – both government officials and citizens are less likely to see value in investing their time and effort if there is no clearly defined problem, and the few who may participate are likely to be an unrepresentative group of those who are already convinced of the intrinsic value of citizen participation.

Similarly, this suggests that **youth engagement efforts can increase their chances of both large numbers of participants and of tangible outcomes to come from these efforts by staying problem-centric**.

Lesson 4- Targeting/recruiting reform-minded officials within government (at any level) who see the importance of citizen participation can be an effective way to broaden impact.

The citizen participation literature also suggests that engagement and feedback specifically from civil servants can be powerful. For example, some of the greatest impact of open data efforts (to open up data and information about public activities and expenditures to citizens) actually come from increased government efficiency as a result of different government agencies becoming aware of each other's data. This example shows how efforts targeted at more open governance and greater citizen participation can translate into tangible incentives and benefits for civil servants and bureaucrats themselves.

This can be capitalized on to increase the buy-in, and breadth and depth of government involvement in such efforts. Similarly, efforts that celebrate and showcase honest government officials (rather than naming and shaming corrupt ones) can increase the likelihood of government officials viewing such efforts as favorably, and combat public perceptions of pervasive corruption. (For example, the innovative organization Accountability Lab runs a program called *Integrity Idol* that celebrates honest mid-level government officials in high-production TV programs seen by several million viewers in several countries).[54]

[54] Integrity Idol, an initiative of the Accountability Lab. Last accessed May 2017. http://www.integrityidol.org/

Lesson 5 – Because the outcomes of participation are often context-specific, it is vital to learn to experiment with various approaches, and experiment to learn.

It is only logical that we can expect little outcomes from participation efforts driven by a superficial need to "check a box." Yet achieving effective, sustained, deep and rich participation can be a complicated and challenging process. Thus, some of the most effective participation efforts take an innovative approach that allows them to experiment and learn from testing out a wide variety of engagement mechanisms in a variety of settings with a variety of audience/participants.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK

The five lessons above can be translated into youth engagement strategies to increase their effectiveness. At the same time, the citizen participation literature offers some words of caution; this section summarizes what approaches tend to be ineffective and should be generally avoided.

Lesson 1 – Raising citizen voice/engagement without also increasing government engagement and institutional responsiveness in tandem is less effective at best and risky at worst (especially in fragile or conflict-prone environments).

In other words, the literature warns of investing in citizen "demand" for accountability without also investing in government "supply" to be able to provide it (or investing in citizen "voice" without government "teeth."[55]

A comprehensive review of the social accountability evidence and literature found that solely **demand-side voice/participation interventions are relatively unsuccessful** at advancing development outcomes, but more strategic approaches – which engage supply and demand side (the whole ecosystem of voice/participation/accountability) – can yield promising results. The largest barriers to impact of citizen engagement efforts broadly speaking come not from how citizens actually engage, but rather from the other side of the equation: from institutional roadblocks or bureaucratic inertia, or at worst government retaliation on citizens for speaking truth to power.

Therefore, youth engagement initiatives must necessarily not just involve youth! But also involve governments building their capacity to respond to and better engage with increased youth voice and participation. (This is referred to by Jonathan Fox as promoting "voice plus teeth," or vertical plus horizontal engagement). A separate literature review and series of case studies around youth and governance affirmed this finding in a youth-specific context: finding that it is also necessary to work with adults such as powerholders/duty-bearers and government officials to enable young people to engage successfully in participatory governance.[56]

---

[55] Fox, Jonathan. *Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say?* Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) Working Papers Series. World Bank Group. September 2014. http://gpsaknowledge.org/knowledge-repository/social-accountability-what-does-the-evidence-really-say-2/

[56] Walker, David, Pereznieto, Paola et al. *Restless Development. Partners for Change: Young People and Governance in a Post-2015 World*. September 2014. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/partners-for-change-full-report-amended-pdf

Lesson 2 – Providing citizens access to information about government – on its own – does not change behaviors, policies or outcomes. Rather information + participation = accountability

"A variety of literature (including a 2014 literature review from the Global Partnership for Social Accountability[57]) suggests that simply creating accountability tools and equipping citizens with information has mixed results. Greater impact occurs **through strategic approaches that bring together a variety of actors** - citizens, governments, businesses, the media and other formal and informal organizations - to build accountability through an **eco-systems approach.**[58]"

Lesson 3 - Beware of tokenism or seeking feedback or consultations when there is no actual room to change a policy decision; this can lead to great disillusionment with the segment of citizens who are most eager to participate.

It is important to avoid setting up any consultation or participation mechanisms that solicit input from citizens (or youth) on decisions either that have already been decided upon in reality, or on decisions that cannot feasibly be changed. This is dangerous because it makes those young people who are actually eager to participate disillusioned.[59]

*L**esson 4 - Technology on its own cannot solve participation problems.***

In recent years, of course technology has revolutionized many aspects of our lives, and there is great potential in bringing technology tools to strengthen citizen-government interactions. Yet technology should not be seen as a panacea in itself. Rather, technology, along with a clear understanding and acknowledgment of the contextual factors influencing participation on both sides, can help **enhance accountability on demand side** and **responsiveness on the supply side** of citizen participation. It is especially important to keep in mind the potential but also the limitations of tech-driven youth engagement approaches, and avoid the temptation to assume technology can and should drive all engagement efforts with young digital natives.

Lesson 5 – Expect meaningful outcomes and change from participation efforts to occur over the long term.

Evidence suggests that the **most compelling outcomes from citizen participation also tend to occur on longer time horizons**. Given the pervasiveness of projectized development, we may expect shifts in citizen-government relations to occur over the course of only a few years. But across ten cases of citizen engagement efforts that translated into significant pro-poor policies, these all occurred over 10-20 years. Thus, engagement efforts – for citizens in general and for youth in particular – that seek game-changing shifts in governance relationships should be designed, planned for, and invested in over the long-term.

---

[57] Fox, Jonathan. *Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say?* Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) Working Papers Series. World Bank Group. September 2014. http://gpsaknowledge.org/knowledge-repository/social-accountability-what-does-the-evidence-really-say-2/

[58] Accountability Lab 2017-2010 Strategy. http://www.accountabilitylab.org/3243-2/

[59] Warburton, Diane. *Engagement in the Policy Cycle.* Taken from Karsten, Andreas. *Participation Models: Citizens, Youth, Online.* Youthpolicy.org. Version 2 updated 2012. http://www.youthpolicy.org/library/documents/a-potpourri-of-participation-models/

Lesson 6 – Induced/forced (rather than organic or invited) participation can be capture by elite groups or special interests.

Community participation in local development project decision-making, when induced from above (i.e. government), is often captured by local elites. This drives out space for participation from the most marginalized groups.[60]

Practical Guidance on Youth Engagement from the Citizen Participation Literature

In sum, there are several simple yet critical principles and practices that can be derived from this complementary body of governance/citizen participation/social accountability literature, to strengthen youth engagement efforts in particular:

Recommended Guiding Principles

- Take a more "user/citizen/youth-centered" approach – that that realizes that information must be perceived by citizens as useful and actionable and able to have an impact for them to truly engage and change their own behavior; targeted transparency helps identify how information can redistribute power

- Voice needs representation *and* aggregation – technology can help aggregate and crowdsource ideas, but need stable and internally democratic bodies (legitimate CSOs) who can negotiate and represent with power on behalf of those who raised their voice

- Voice can be constrained by the "fear factor – thus the "enabling environment" should take into account the real and perceived costs citizens have of civic participation (ex: possibility of government retaliation), as well as channels for action

- Building government/institutional capacity to respond to voice/participation has two components – both positive incentives and negative sanctions (carrots and sticks)

- Consider both reactive/backward looking accountability mechanisms vs. preventative measures depending on context – this could be especially important in fragile contexts (ex:

[60] Fox, Jonathan. *Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say?* Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) Working Papers Series. World Bank Group. September 2014. **http://gpsaknowledge.org/knowledge-repository/social-accountability-what-does-the-evidence-really-say-2/**

transitional justice) when in some cases it might make more sense to emphasize preventative forward looking measures than to sanction or address past abuses

- Linking vertical and horizon accountabilities can help lead to more virtuous cycles linkages between horizontal/vertical and diagonal accountability can break mutually reinforcing cycles of non-accountable politicians and bureaucrats for voice to really matter; need to strengthen both voice and teeth in tandem to improve enabling environment, which can hopefully lead to more virtuous cycles toward more accountability (instead of vicious cycles of low accountability traps)

- civil society can be more effective with more "vertical integration" - better links between local, regional and national CSOs (including grassroots vs policy ones)

VI. Chapter Two: Costs and Benefits of Youth Economic Exclusion/Inclusion

Summary: This section examines both the costs of youth economic exclusion and benefits of youth economic inclusion. This review found the most research and programs addressing this particular dimension (more than on political or social exclusion/inclusion). There are quantifiable costs and benefits to failing to or successfully integrating youth economically at both the micro and macroeconomic levels (in other words, for the individual and for the society). At the same time, there are a variety of good practices that have developed over the last decade to inform youth economic inclusion approaches – from integrated skills training to certain labor market policies, entrepreneurship programs, and more.

Key Figure 13: Summary Table of "Why" to Promote Youth Economic Inclusion

Assumption	Volume and Type of Evidence	Select Source(s)	Practical Implications
1. Failure to integrate large youth populations into the economy has **significant social macroeconomic costs**.	Significant rigorous, quantitative and academic evidence (especially cost-benefit analyses).	Knowles and Behrman 2003; Cunningham 2008; Chaaban 2008; Sheehan 2017	Integrating youth into the economy does not necessarily require governments to spend *more* but rather to spend *differently* to avert these costs and reap the returns (Chaaban 2008).
2. Youth economic inclusion **can lead to economic growth** and poverty reduction (including the "demographic dividend").	Some quantitative evidence, more qualitative evidence	Dao 2007; USAID 2012; Pereznieto and Harding 2013;	Development organizations seeking poverty reduction should perform audits of how their work engages (or fails to engage)
2. Unemployment has significant costs on individual youth, including on their current health well-being and in the future (**a lifetime "wage penalty"**).	Strong psycho-social and other evidence of the effects on well-being; some quantitative evidence especially on lifetime wage penalty, but mostly using data from developed countries	S4YE 2015; IAVE 2013; Economist 2013.	Programs to combat youth un- or under-employment should also consider how they mitigate its negative effects on the mental, social, and psychological health of youth
3. Countries lose economic productivity when young people	Substantial data on the economic output	UNESCO Youth on the Move Report 2014	Programs should address youth livelihood needs

migrate seeking employment and livelihoods.	of migrants (including remittances, etc.)		before their situation becomes so bad they feel the need to migrate
4. **Idle youth are more likely to engage in risky behaviors** (ex: crime, risky sexual activity, etc.) that have serious costs to themselves and to society as a whole.	Some studies on at-risk youth provide evidence to support this; however just employing youth does not necessarily make them immune from violent ideologies	WDR 2007; Cunningham 2008	Economic inclusion programs should target at-risk youth and those not in education, training, or employment ("NEET")
5. The global **mismatch between education and employment needs is reducing global economic productivity**.	Significant supporting evidence, especially from practical/grey literature.	Education Commission 2016	40% employers globally are having a hard time finding employees with the skills they need, targeted programs can address this (ex: International Youth Foundation's New Employment Opportunities program is working to close the gap between youth skills and employer demand to help employ 1 million youth in Latin America and the Caribbean).[61]

Key Figure 14: Summary Table of "How" to Promote Youth Economic Inclusion

Assumption	Volume and Type of Evidence	Select Source(s)	Typical Approach	Practical Implications
1. **Soft skills** (not only vocational skills) are needed to make youth employable and more successfully employed over time. Integrated trainings	Significant volume and strength	Youth.gov	Youth as beneficiaries	Integrated job trainings (ex: integrated program that combines ICT skills training

[61] International Youth Foundation. *New Employment Opportunities.* Accessed June 2017. http://www.iyfnet.org/initiatives/new-employment-opportunities-neo

that support several aspects of skills and personal development better help youth become employed.				with soft skills development and business acumen)
3. Job programs that **target disadvantaged youth** (especially in contexts with flexible labor market regulations) have high returns on investment.	Relatively significant volume and strength	Puerto 2007	Youth as beneficiaries	More economic inclusion programs tailored to specific needs of at-risk/marginalized youth
4.~ncrease/attract private sector investment in infrastructure and similar costly public investments, to free up more government resources to invest in education and employment training for large (and in some cases, still growing) youth populations.	Little existing evidence, new emerging approach in the field of practice	Edwards 2017	Youth as beneficiaries	More private sector partnerships
5. Safety net programs can help promote youth economic inclusion, especially given high proportions of youth working in the informal sector.	Moderate evidence	-	Youth as beneficiaries	Consider if and how safety nets for informal sector youth could look differently from general safety nets
6. Job skills training, combined with employment placement support/services, can increase likelihood of youth employment.	Strong evidence	Chakravarty et al 2016; ILO Evidence Gap Map	Youth as beneficiaries	Pair trainings with employment services
6. Entrepreneurship and innovation trainings and skill development – especially those that offer 'safe spaces' for youth to experiment/test/fail/learn and develop in the process – can support youth-led job	Some qualitative evidence	ILO Evidence Gap Map	Youth as partners or agents	Follow up entrepreneurship competitions with support that allow youth to experiment and grow

creation and self-employment (but not necessarily increase wages).				

These two "why" and "how" summary tables illustrate a few key findings in this section:

- There is significant evidence – both rigorous academic evidence and applied practitioner qualitative evidence – that underscores the importance of youth economic inclusion;
- There is also much guidance (from the academic and grey literature) on which type of economic inclusion interventions are most effective;
- However, almost all youth economic integration efforts tend to treat youth as passive recipients of services or beneficiaries;
- There is great potential to adapt future economic inclusion efforts to treat youth as partners and agents.
    - For example, a program that employs young people as researchers to help identify the labor market gaps (what skills do youth want? What are employers' needs?) in their own communities; or an employment program inspired by a positive youth development approach which emphasizes individual leadership development in addition to vocational training and allows youth to partner with adult mentors in making employability plans to increase their ability to secure stable livelihoods.

1. Why Promote Youth Economic Inclusion? The Costs of Youth Economic Exclusion, and Returns to Economic Inclusion

Costs of Youth Economic Exclusion – At the Individual Level

It should come as no surprise that unemployed youth often suffer negative consequences on their emotional, mental and physical health and well-being as a result of their unemployment, particularly if it is prolonged.[62] These effects can result not only from being in a state of unemployment but also **chronic underemployment**, particularly when youth have obtained high levels of education. The psychological and psycho-social literature can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the harmful impacts on the individual of being in a long-term state of un- or under-employment.
Youth economic exclusion has profound impacts on their surrounding communities and perhaps even more immediate negative impact on young people's families and communities when their youth are not able to successfully contribute wages to the family and transition to an independent lifestyle.

Evidence (particularly studies using statistics from developed countries) shows that individuals who are unemployed as youth are more likely both to be unemployed in the future *and* to earn lower wages. This "**lifetime wage penalty**" can be very significant: a wage penalty of up to 20%, lasting for

[62] S4YE (Solutions for Youth Employment). 2015. *Toward Solutions for Youth Employment: A Baseline Report.* https://www.s4ye.org/sites/default/files/Toward_Solutions_for_Youth_Employment_Full.pdf.

about 20 years.[63] Those who begin working at a later age feel the economic consequences throughout their lifetimes.[64]

Furthermore, without a secure livelihood, a young person is more like to continue living with their family even as they grow older. They can become an economic burden on the family as their **transition to independent adulthood is delayed**; and this delayed transition can also generate significant feelings of frustration that may push the young person toward engaging in harmful behaviors – from drugs or crime to the rare but possible path of adopting extremist ideology or violent behavior (see the Fragility and Conflict Note for more discussion on the link between unemployment and other forms of youth exclusion with violence).

Costs of Youth Economic Exclusion – At the Societal Level

These and many more types of individual-level costs of youth unemployment and other forms of economic exclusion aggregate up to serious societal costs, such that "there are high social and economic opportunity costs when investments are not made in the transition of youth into adulthood."[65]

For example, **risky youth behaviors – such as dropping out of school, engaging in crime, and early sexual activity - was found to reduce economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean by up to 2% GDP annually**.[66]

"If today's 15- to 24-year-old school dropouts had completed secondary school, they would earn more over their working lives than if they had not left school prematurely. This **"lost" income, or foregone output**, over their lifetime is equivalent to 6 to 58 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) measured in today's terms, depending on the country analyzed and the rate of return to schooling assumed… Youth unemployment, violence, unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and substance abuse can each reduce a country's output by up to 1.4 percent of GDP annually." (Cunningham et al 2008).

---

[63] The Economist. *Generation Jobless.* The Economist, April 2013. http://www.economist.com/news/international/21576657-around-world-almost-300m-15-24-year-olds-are-not-working-what-has-caused

[64] IAVE (International Association for Volunteer Effort). 2013. *Youth, Volunteering, and Employment.* http://iave.org/iavewp/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Youth-Volunteering-Employment-Report-English-web.pdf

[65] Knowles, James C.; Behrman, Jere R. *A Practical Guide to Economic Analysis of Youth Projects.* World Bank HNP Discussion paper.2004. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13620 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

[66] Cunningham, Wendy; McGinnis, Linda; Verdu, Rodrigo García; Tesliuc, Cornelia; and Verner, Dorte. 2008. *Youth at risk in Latin America and the Caribbean: understanding the causes, realizing the potential.* Directions in development human development. Washington, DC: World Bank. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/245731468276337697/Youth-at-risk-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean-understanding-the-causes-realizing-the-potential

A second quantitative analysis from 2008 found even higher costs of youth economic exclusion (mainly unemployment) on economic output and productivity in the Middle East. Chaaban found significant costs to youth exclusion in the Middle East, on average nearly 3% GDP, with **costs as high as 17.5% lost GDP (the equivalent of $53 billion lost) for certain countries such as Egypt**.[67]

Economic Returns to Youth Economic Inclusion

While some research has been done to quantify the economic costs of youth exclusion, other evidence helps quantify the economic returns.

In 2003, Knowles and Behrman determined certain types of investments in young people as having major economic benefits to society. They used a cost-benefit analysis and determined that economic returns vary widely based on the underlying assumptions. Still, their literature review concluded that certain investments in youth – such as investments in school-based health programs and formal schooling – "yield economic returns that are at least as high as are those for many investments in other sectors."[68] [69]

(More information about the methodologies used by Knowles, Cunningham, and Chaaban to reach these striking conclusions can be found in the Appendix.)

Youth inclusion can translate into significant economic returns ("demographic dividends.") Perhaps nowhere is this more obvious than in Africa, where the majority (over 60%) of the continent's current population is under the age of 25 and growing.[70] **Not only is Africa's population increasingly young, but it is also increasingly urbanizing**. These trends in combination will increasingly yield economic growth as countries with large urban populations can begin to take advantage of economies of scale, access to urban physical infrastructure and growing urban consumer population.[71]

Following up on the WDR 2007. Dao took data from the WDR 2007 report and performed a statistical comparison of 43 countries and found a **strong correlation between poverty and several youth inclusion variables**. He concluded that poverty is a function of: youth enrollment rate; youth unemployment rate; youth labor force participation rate; and probability a young person will die before age 60. For example, a 1% reduction in the unemployment rate of young females is expected

[67] Chaaban, Jad, *The Costs of Youth Exclusion in the Middle East*. Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper No. 7. May 2008. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1139172 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1139172

[68] Knowles, James C.; Behrman, Jere R. *The Economic Returns to Investing in Youth in Developing Countries : A Review of the Literature*. Health, Nutrition and Population (HNP) discussion paper; 2006 World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13709 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

[70] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). *World Population Prospects.* 2015 Revision. https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/files/key_findings_wpp_2015.pdf

[71] Atlantic Council. *Embracing Impact: How Africa Can Overcome the Emerging Market Downturn.* April 2016. http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Embracing_Impact_web_0406.pdf

to increase per capita income by $276; while a 1% increase in male youth school enrollment is expected to lead to a 0.8% decrease in poverty rate. This statistical analysis found a very strong correlation (58% of all variability in per capita income of the countries studied could be explained "by its linear dependency on these 4 youth variables.") [72]

2. How to Promote Youth Economic Inclusion?

The previous section summarized some of the findings that justify the importance of youth economic inclusion, as youth engagement can translate into significant macroeconomic benefits related to poverty reduction and economic growth; at the same time, lack of investing in young people can produce negative outcomes that create economic and other costs on society. This section now offers a summary of some of the evidence about how to best economically integrate youth.

Reallocate Investments in Youth

As mentioned above, the Chaaban 2008 paper for very significant costs to youth economic exclusion in the Middle East in terms of lost GDP. Yet encouragingly, this paper also found that level of resource endowments did not impact the relative abilities of countries to mitigate the costs of youth exclusion. In other words, "performance in achieving youth inclusion is mostly connected with the efficiency by which countries use their resources to obtain better outcomes." Countries do not need to spend *more* on youth, but rather invest differently and more efficiently in order to avoid the significant economic losses that come with youth exclusion (particularly youth exclusion economically). **Encouragingly, the study found that most Middle Eastern countries could decrease their youth exclusion by 20-80% while maintaining their exact same current level of public spending.**

Figure 15 – General Challenges and Opportunities of Youth Economic Inclusion

Challenges	Demographic bulge – rapidly creating millions of new jobs to meet growing cohorts.	Many youth are vulnerably employed in the informal sector (lack of benefits, social protections).	Insufficient availability and quality of employment to match youth interests/skills/education.
Opportunities	Modifying labor policies (ex: public sector employment); gap match programs; job training at scale.	Job programs that target at-risk disadvantaged youth tend to have even higher return on	Integrating vocational with life/soft skills and other support for individual youth development promotes

[72] Dao, Minh Quang. *Youth, Poverty Reduction, and Economic Growth in Developing Countries.* Journal of International Economics 7(2). 2007. http://www.freepatentsonline.com/article/Journal-International-Business-Economics/178945902.html

		investment than regular job programs.	not only youth economic but also social and political integration and averts costs.

Effective Labor Market Intervention Programs

Around the world, the largest financial investments that governments make in their youth are in their education followed by their employment. This scan of the literature aggregates some guidance on what youth employment interventions work. **There is a tremendous amount of resources that have been invested both in implementing youth economic inclusion programs, and in researching the impacts of them.**

A systematic review of youth employment interventions from the ILO in 2016 found that "**investing in young people through active labour market programmes (ALMPs) pays off with positive impacts particularly on employment and earnings outcomes.** This impact does not take effect immediately and is **more pronounced among low- and middle-income countries** than among high-income countries.[73]" (See more details on this review in the Annotated Bibliography in the Appendix).

Life Skills/Integrated Training

There is a growing consensus around the need to integrate "soft-skills" or life skills development into any youth employment interventions, rather than rely solely on technical or vocational skills development.[74] Despite this, there is a **concerning disconnect between where the majority of resources are allocated for youth economic inclusion, and where there is great potential for impact**. An analysis of all the support for youth economic opportunity that came from multilateral agencies, foundations, private companies and bilateral donors found that over **$1.8 billion was invested worldwide in youth economic opportunity** (slightly over $1 per young person in the world)**.** However, over 60% of these resources went to traditional vocational training, with only 7% toward life skills.[75]

The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation also **completed a comprehensive review of 90 impact evaluation studies** coded across 24 intervention categories and 15 outcome categories, all around the topic of **training youth on transferable skills** (also known as soft or life skills). The prevalent finding of this meta-analysis suggests that **skills courses at school**, which are limited-time, special topic additions to the school day are most effective at generating desired employment outcomes. (There are also impact evaluations for a wide range of alternative learning pathways, such

[73]Kluve, Jochen, Puerto, Susana et al. *Interventions to Improve the Labour Market Outcomes of Youth.* International Labor Organization (ILO). August 2016. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_508938.pdf

[74] Nourse, Tim. *Preparing Youth for the Future of Work.* PYXERA Global Blog and Making Cents International. 2017 https://www.pyxeraglobal.org/preparing-youth-future-work/

[75] Sharma, Ritu and Rohan Naik. *Measuring Investments in Youth Economic Opportunity.* International Youth Foundation, and Center for Strategic and International Studies. April 2017. http://www.iyfnet.org/sites/default/files/library/MeasuringInvestments_YEO_0.pdf

as **peer-to-peer approaches.)** The most common outcomes measured are related to improved individual learning and behavior. Only one study measures outcomes at the institutional level.[76]

Meanwhile, another study – this one examining youth employment in the US – concluded that "the evidence on effective employment and training-related programs for youth, particularly the most disadvantaged youth, is less extensive than for adults, and there are fewer positive findings from evaluations." Still they identified some important themes and findings:

- **Early exposure to variety of professional opportunities** is associated with better post-secondary education outcomes.
- **Work-based learning** (ex: internships) allow low-income youth to be more successful when they can receive wages.
- Disconnected, at-risk youth face serious challenges but evidence suggests they can benefit from **comprehensive and integrated programs** that include education, skills development and support services.[77]

This compares with a World Bank meta regression analysis of entrepreneurship training programs (for youth and adults) across several African countries published in 2012 found that **providing access to credit** produced the greatest outcomes for youth compared to other types of interventions, while **business training** also contributed to increased youth earnings. [78]

When it comes to understanding the state of the research and literature on this topic of what works for youth employment, the ILO produced a powerful and comprehensive Evidence Gap Map summarizing 107 Youth Employment Interventions. It illustrates that that **technical and soft skills training rank as the two interventions with the most evidence to support their ability to increase probability of employment** (followed by job placement and other efforts).[79]

Another study ran a large-scale randomized controlled trial of a youth training program in Latin America and was the first long-term, experimental evaluation of a youth training program outside the US. It found mixed results: "**on the one hand, we document significant impacts on the formality of employment, particularly for men, and impacts for both men and women** in Santo Domingo, the capital. The long-term analysis shows that these **impacts are sustained and growing over time. On the other hand, there are no significant impacts on average employment**; which appears consistent with the low unemployment in countries with high informality and no unemployment insurance.

---

[76] Rankin, Kristen et al. *Youth and Transferable Skills: An Evidence Gap Map.* International Initiative for Impact Evaluation. September 2015. http://www.3ieimpact.org/media/filer_public/2016/07/05/egm2-youth_and_transferable_skills.pdf

[77] US Departments of Labor, Commerce, Education and Health and Human Services. *What Works in Job Training: A Synthesis of the Evidence.* July 2014. https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/jdt/jdt.pdf

[78] Cho, Yoonyoung; Honorati, Maddalena. *Entrepreneurship Programs in Developing Countries: A Meta Regression Analysis.* Policy Research Working Paper; No. 6402. 2013. *World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13199 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.*

[79] International Labor Organization (ILO). *What Works in Youth Employment: Evidence Gap Map.* http://www.wwinye.org/wwinye/evidence-gap-map

Looking at the local labor market context, **the analysis suggests that skills training programs work better in more dynamic local context**s, where there is actual demand for the skills provided." [80]

Card et al also examined a youth training program in the Dominican Republic and found little indication of a positive effect on employment outcomes but some evidence of a modest effect on earnings, conditional on working.[81]

What Labor Policies May Support or Hinder Youth Employment?

The evidence suggests that **minimum wage policies tend to cause employment losses for youth.** An early study from the US in 1992 on this topic did not find that a national minimum wage produced losses in teen employment. [82] However more recent studies indicate this is often the case, though this impact can significantly vary across countries. Contexts with more restrictive labor standards and more unions tend to experience this dis-employment effect more strongly, employment protections and active labor market help to offset these effects. "Overall, the dis-employment effects of minimum wages are strongest in the countries with the least regulated labor markets."[83]

Figure 16: Select Practical Resources to Help Guide Youth Employment/Economic Opportunity Efforts

Name	Description	Source
Youth Economic Strategy (YES) Index	evaluates the economic environment for youth in 35 cities across the world by measuring the drivers and enablers which promote youth economic opportunities- that is, the prospect that a young person can improve his/her economic situation	Citi Foundation and the Economist Intelligence Unit

[80] Ibarraran, Pablo and Kluve, Jochen and Ripani, Laura and Rosas, David, *Experimental Evidence on the Long-Term Impacts of a Youth Training Program*. IZA Discussion Paper No. 9136. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2655085

[81] Card, David and Ibarraran, Pablo et al. *The Labor Market Impacts of Youth Training in the Dominican Republic*. Journal of Labor Economics. Vol. 29. No. 2. 2011. http://davidcard.berkeley.edu/papers/labor-impact-youth.pdf

[82] Card, David. *Using Regional Variation in Wages to Measure the Effects of the Federal Minimum Wage.* Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Cornell University. Vol. 46 No. 1 pg 22-37. Oct. 1992. http://unionstats.gsu.edu/9220/Card(1992)_ILRR_Using%20Regional%20Variation%20in%20Wages%20to%20Measure%20the%20Effects%20of%20the%20Federal%20Minimum%20Wage.pdf

[83] Neumark, David and William Wascher Minimum Wages, Labor Market Institutions, and Youth Employment: A Cross-National Analysis. Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Cornell University Vol.: 57 No. 2, page(s): 223-248.: January 1, 2004. https://doi.org/10.1177/001979390405700204

Youth Employment Inventory	a database of around 1,000 youth-oriented jobs and employment programs worldwide,	World Bank
Evidence Gap Map on What Works in Youth Employment	Map summarizing 107 Youth Employment Interventions and the relative strength of evidence on the relationship between different interventions and outcomes	ILO

VII. Chapter Three: Costs and Benefits of Youth Social Exclusion/Inclusion

Summary: This section summarizes findings from the literature on the costs of youth social exclusion and benefits/outcomes of youth social inclusion. This includes a variety of sectors, including education, health and other aspects of human development. Social inclusion efforts demonstrate some of the highest benefit-cost ratios of all forms of youth inclusion, and informing social inclusion efforts with a positive youth development approach is a promising way to increase their effectiveness and impact.

Key FIGURE 17 - Summary Table of "Why" Promote Youth Social Inclusion

Assumption	Volume and Type of Evidence	Findings, or Select Source(s)	Practical Implications
1. Investments in youth social inclusion yield as least 2x the returns compared to their costs, if not much more.	Nascent but growing body of empirical evidence supported by grey literature outcomes; strongest evidence from **health** programs; investments in **girls education,** and returns on programs with **positive youth development** approach.	Sheehan et al 2017	Great untapped potential to further justify and promote youth social inclusion programs through this economic, cost-benefit lens
2. Social exclusion and isolation seems to be a strong driver for youth engagement in risky behaviors including extremism or political violence.	Small body of impact evaluations; affirmed by other literature reviews that do not find any proof of causal link between unemployment and violence, and instead suggest social and political factors	Mercy Corps 2015; Idriss 2016	Mitigate youth experiences of social isolation, discrimination and injustice in order to reduce likelihood that a small number of youth will engage in violent extremism
3. Access to quality education can help break cycles of intergenerational	Moderate body of empirical work, though mostly based on correlations (not	WDR 2007; Education Commission 2016	Education initiatives should consider both quality and access

poverty, while education inequality is associated with increased likelihood for conflict	necessarily causation)		

Key Figure 18 - Summary Table of "How" to Promote Youth Social Inclusion

Assumption	Volume and Type of Evidence	Select Sources	Typical Approach	Practical Implications
1. Positive youth development promotes the healthy holistic development of young people and helps them fulfill their greatest potential to become positive contributors to society.	Significant empirical and practical evidence to support, but mostly from developed countries.	USAID PYD Report 2017.	Youth as partners and agents	Invest in translating lessons about PYD from developed to developing countries
2. Investments in improved quality and access to schooling and/or health to generate significant social returns.	Significant body of literature with strong empirical findings		Youth as beneficiaries	Consider cross-sector engagement that could efficiently improve youth quality and access to numerous basic services at once (ex: school-based health services, etc.)

1. Why Promote Youth Social Inclusion?

Costs of Youth Social Exclusion

Social exclusion can come in many forms. It can manifest as unequal access to basic, quality social services (such as education, transportation and health). It can also involve marginalization and discrimination certain groups face on the basis of ethnicity or other identity markers. These forms of discrimination can compound given the **intersectionality** of identities. Youth in general in all societies face various forms of ageism and social perceptions that can disadvantage them from leading, and these barriers become even more significant for young women, for example, or disabled or HIV-affected youth.

Somewhat similar to the review of the costs of youth political exclusion, this review found that the single greatest justification to avoid youth social exclusion – in other words, to promote youth social

inclusion – is to **avoid serious cost of instability** (including the potential for political instability and especially for youth involvement in violence and extremism). The literature on this topic suggests that social exclusion and isolation tends to drive the few youth who choose to engage in violence, much more than experiences of economic exclusion such as unemployment. (This will be discussed in more detail in the next section)

Returns to Youth Social Inclusion

At the same time, **societies as a whole experience great losses when their youth are social excluded, beyond just the increased risk of instability**.

A recent extensive studied that utilized a benefit-cost approach quantified the benefits of investing in youth health; school; combating child marriage; violence against women; and road traffic injury. The study found that investments in these **programs for adolescents ranged from yielding 5 times to 17 times** the return on investment/benefits compared to amount spent, with the **benefit-cost ratios being highest in low and middle income countries, and highest for health-related interventions.** Even after making significant changes to the underlying assumptions, extremely high dividends were found. "These findings indicate that investments in adolescents, particularly girls and young women, should be prioritized in national and international policies."

Thus, while there are serious costs to youth social exclusion, there are also numerous benefits and outcomes to be gained from proactive youth social inclusion. Throughout this review, we came across evidence of a variety of positive outcomes occurring at different levels. Nowhere was this more evident than in skimming the literature specifically about the social dimension of youth exclusion and inclusion. The five primary levels of impact we found are visualized below.

FIGURE 18: Five Levels of Youth Engagement Outcomes/Impact

Improved Health Outcomes

As mentioned above, the literature indicates that investments in youth health have yield some of the greatest returns. This is encouraging, as youth often face health challenges in a unique manner compared to any other demographic. For example, young people aged 15-24 are more likely than any other age group to contract HIV/AIDS, and most of the millions of young people living with HIV/AIDS

today are female.[84] The rate of HIV/AIDS contract has decline for all age groups except young people in recent years. This puts an imperative for increase investments in adolescent health that build upon existing good practices – for example, the use of peer educators has led to significant positive outcomes that have helped limit the spread of sexually transmitted diseases[85], and reduce the incidence of child marriage.[86]

The process of starting a family is a critical youth transition that can also have direct impacts on the health and well-being of youth, and is often a highly-gendered experience. As one source notes, "Delayed marriage functions as a form of social exclusion because it prevents young people from leading independent adult lives and, thus, completing their transitions to adulthood. Generally, unmarried females live with their parents and are considered the responsibility of their male family members, who exercise a significant amount of control over them."[87]

Returns to Investments in Education Quality and Equal Access/Equality

There are two key dimensions to education that significant shape youth social inclusion: education access and education quality. Increased education can help promote young women's economic empowerment and health[88]. At the same time, education especially for young women can **break intergenerational cycles of poverty**.[89] However it is important to note that less education parents in poor families are often unable to provide the support their children need to help them study and to give the right advice about pursuing the best education tracks.[90] This underscores the need for mentors – or an ecosystem of support – that can help offer role models and encouragement to young people as they advance in their schooling.

---

[84] International Center for Research on Women. *The Critical Role of Youth in Global Development.* December 2001. http://www.youthmetro.org/uploads/4/7/6/5/47654969/the-critical-role-of-youth-in-global-development-issue-brief-1.pdf

[85] Buhari Abu-Saeed, Muhammad and Kamaldeen Abu-Saeed. *Attitudinal Changes Using Peer Education Training in Prevention of HIV/AIDS: A Case Study of Youths in North Central Nigeria.* Advanced Pharmaceutical Bulletin. February 2013. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3846034/

[86] USAID. *Ending Child Marriage & Meeting the Needs of Married Children: The USAID Vision for Action.* October 2012. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdacu300.pdf

[87] Assaad, Ragui and Ghada Barsoum. *Youth Exclusion in Egypt: In Search of "Second Chances."* Middle East Youth Initiative. September 2007. http://www.meyi.org/publication-youth-exclusion-in-egypt-in-search-of-second-chances.html

[88] Youth Power. *Out of School Youth.* Accessed April 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/youthpower-issues/topics/out-school-youth

[89] World Bank. *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation. P. 28. World Bank. 2006.. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5989 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO*

[90] Assaad, Ragui and Ghada Barsoum. *Youth Exclusion in Egypt: In Search of "Second Chances."* Middle East Youth Initiative. September 2007. http://www.meyi.org/publication-youth-exclusion-in-egypt-in-search-of-second-chances.html

Education can help promote stability if there are equal opportunities to access. On the other hand, **when education inequality doubles, the probability of conflict also more than doubles**.[91]

Investments in education – especially offering secondary education to more youth - can support investments in economic growth. Every dollar invested in an additional year of schooling, particularly for girls, generates earnings and health benefits of $10 in low-income countries and nearly $4 in lower middle-income countries.[92]

Finally, more educated young people are also more likely to be civically engaged. Education has long been conventionally seen as the great equalizer of opportunity. So, the value of education is increasing over time, because ultimately it is education quality and access that will help determine whether the defining trends of this century – technological, economic, and demographic – will create opportunity or entrench inequality.[93]

Returns on Investments in Social Emotional Learning

Finally, as the previous section illustrates that there are clearly outsized/multiplied returns on investments to youth social inclusion in general, this section illustrates that there are both compelling **social returns/benefits to holistic positive youth development** (supporting the argument of why engage youth), and that **positive youth development is an instructive and effective approach** to also address how to best engage some youth.

For example, one study found that every dollar invested in social and emotional learning programs for youth yielded $11 in long-term benefits. Some of these benefits included higher lifetime earnings for participating youth; better mental and physical health and wellbeing; and reduced juvenile crime rates.[94]

2. How to Promote Youth Social Inclusion?

[91] The Education Commission. *The Learning Generation Report.* 2016.
http://report.educationcommission.org/report/
[92] Jamison, Dean, and Marco Schäferhoff. *Estimating the Economic Returns of Education from a Health Perspective*. Background Paper for the Education Commission. SEEK Development. 2016.
http://www.resultsfordevelopment.org/sites/resultsfordevelopment.org/files/resources/SEEK.pdf

[93] The Education Commission. *The Learning Generation Report.* 2016.
http://report.educationcommission.org/report/
[94] Belfield, Clive, et al. *The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning.* Center for Benefit-Cost Studies in Education, Teachers College at Columbia University. February 2015.
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/SEL-Revised.pdf

Life Skills, Social Emotional Learning, and Positive Youth Development

One of the most notable trends in the youth engagement literature this review found was the emergence of **support over the last decade on both the theory and practice of positive youth development, and similar approaches**, which emphasize the holistic social, emotional, and cognitive development of young individuals.

This approach is outlined in the Introduction section, and some examples of positive youth development approaches were found across programs seeking political, social, and economic inclusion of youth, though **PYD programs most commonly addressed issues of social inclusion. PYD programs also tend to involve youth either as partners or agents, not as passive beneficiaries.**

Why might it be the case that a consensus has formed around the benefits of PYD, at least in developed contexts? Organizations such as Ashoka emphasize the fundamentally different world that young people grow up in today compared to previous generations to justify the need for building critical skills such as empathy and the ability to deal with and adapt to regular change.

"In other words, young people need fundamentally different strengths to succeed in an ever-changing world today. To be successful today, young people need to be adept in change management, skilled in cognitive empathy as global citizens, able to work in teams of teams vs. siloed approaches, collaborative in leadership vs. hierarchies and top down management and consistently problem-solve to implement solutions to ever shifting issues… In this new reality where change is the new constant and solving problems is equated more with evolving solutions that are continually redefined."[95]

This description of the fundamentally different environment in which youth are now emerging gives additional context to understand why a consensus has emerged around the need for life/soft skills in addition to technical skills when it comes to promoting youth economic inclusion.

CASE: The MasterCard Foundation and Restless Development ran a "Youth Think Tank" program that is a research group made up of young people who are recruited to conduct research in their communities, make recommendations based on their findings, and advise the Foundation. The 2015-2016 Youth Think Tank conducted research into economic opportunities for youth in East Africa and found that young people across the region face similar aspirations and challenges. The young researchers conducted more than 400 interviews across four countries, and found that: young people in East Africa are committed to developing their skills, have a positive attitude towards self-employment, are utilizing technology and especially mobile technology, recognize the attempts of government to develop youth employment programs and are eager to participate in the policy decisions that impact their lives. Youth who participated in this form of participatory action research were able to build their individual capacities, networks and knowledge (promoting their self-efficacy

[95] Clinton Initiative. Ensuring Your Kids are Changemakers. Site accessed May 2017. https://www.clintonfoundation.org/clinton-global-initiative/commitments/ensuring-your-kids-are-changemakers

and other measures of PYD), while at the same time contributing the improve understanding of their community needs and evidence of the broader development field. [96]

[96] Mastercard Foundation and Restless Development. *2015-16 Youth Think Tank Report: Insights into Youth Economic Opportunities in East Africa.* http://www.mastercardfdn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MCF12013-Youth-ThinkTank-Report-digital-final.pdf

VIII. Snapshot Stories: What Are the Outcomes of Youth-Driven Development?

Summary: This section highlights select ways that young people are driving meaningful social change, across regions and issues. It is broken down into four brief sections: examining the outcome and /impacts of youth-led work for the SDGs (especially at scale); considering youth as "infomediaries," social entrepreneurs, and peacebuilders.

Youth as Agents Fulfilling the SDGs

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals agreed upon by 193 countries at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 represent the **new universal agenda for global development** from now until the year 2030. Today's youth will bear the brunt of whether or not the global community can effectively come together to combat these looming challenges around climate, inequality and poverty reduction. There are tremendous opportunities to leverage the SDGs to advance youth inclusion. What's more, many youth around the world are already proactively engaging as catalysts in support of the SDGs.

Sixty-five of the 169 targets under 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals explicitly or implicitly refer to youth, with a focus on empowerment, participation, and/or well-being. There are 20 youth-specific targets spread under six key Sustainable Development Goals (UNDP 2016)' The goals are hunger (goal 2), education (goal 4), gender equality (goal 5), decent work (goal 8), inequality (goal 10), and climate change (goal 13). [97]

In late 2015, Restless Development produced a report with three practical recommendations ("on a sliding scale of ambition") to integrate youth in formal and informal review and monitoring of implementation of the SDGs:

- the first level representing practical recommendations on **how young people can be invited to monitor progress toward fulfilling SDGs** (top-down);
- the second level on **how young people can create their own spaces** to hold governments to account to fulfilling the SDGs, (bottom-up);
- The final and most ambitious level representing **a youth-led shift toward seeing accountability the continuous role of all citizens everyday** (paradigm shift)

The asset-based approach also taken in that report encourages youth to lead not only on issues traditionally seen as youth issues (such as education), but rather to lead across all issues and sector.[98]

---

[97] UN 6th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum. *Concept Note: Youth engagement in eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity: Voices from the field*. January 2017 Trusteeship Council Chamber. UN EcoSoc Youth Forum. https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2017doc/Youth-engagement-in-eradicating-poverty-and-promoting-prosperity-Voices-from-the-field.pdf

[98] *Follow-Up and Review: How to Scale Up Ambition on Youth-Led Accountability for the SDGs.* Restless Development. November 2015. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/follow-up-and-review-how-to-scale-up-ambition-on-youth-led-accountability-for-the-sdgs-pdf

Therefore, youth should be seen as leaders for the SDGs. **Development institutions should find and support existing youth-led initiatives working toward the SDGs and other global development goals, while at the same time focus on creating supportive ecosystems and environments that enable more youth to become activated and engaged in global development.**

The Restless Development report also cautions against tokenistic forms of invited youth engagement, when being at the table may not be a meaningful indicator of participation. Rather, it compels development actors to involve youth in a systematic and sustained way across all goals and contexts.

This figure summarizes a few snapshots of youth-led SDGs initiatives.

Figure 19- Select Youth-Led Initiatives to Fulfill the SDGs/Global Goals

Name	Led By	Description	Impact to date
Youth Power Campaign	Restless Development	A campaign to leverage youth collective power to turn the promise of the SDGs into reality, by connecting youth to knowledge, skills and confidence to influence global leaders; a network of solidarity; and	• Youth Power builds on the achievements of the worldwide youth movement which influenced the creation of the Global Goals, in particular the action/2015 coalition of 2,200 organisations worldwide which pressured world leaders to make those Goals ambitious. • Restless Development was a global youth co-chair of the campaign throughout the year, and on International Youth Day 115,000 young activists from 80 countries joined in to show their Youth Power.
ActionAid Activista Network	ActionAid	ActionAids global youth network that emphasizes the central role of youth in the development process	• It involves more than 50 ActionAid partners and thousands of volunteers in more than 25 countries • Together they have produced countless stories (on their blog and elsewhere) of youth-led development
Youth 4 Global Goals	AIESEC	The first fully youth-run initiative on the SDGs; designed to recruit 1 million	• In 2016 the AIESEC network reached over 12.5 million people

		youth leaders to raise awareness and take action for eradicating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, and climate action (the SDGs).	with SDG-relates messaging and activities - ● YouthSpeak Survey in 2015 to identify youth priorities received 180,000 responses from 126 countries ● One social media campaign in China alone received 10 million impressions ("#DimpleChallenge that required taking a selfie with the SDG they supported and sharing on Weibo) ● 200+ YouthSpeak Forums in 2016 with 56,000 young people ● Over 32,000 young people taking action in SDG projects in 2016 ● Gathering 1 million youth pledges to support SDGs on Youth Day August 12th 2017 to deliver to UN General Assembly September 2017[99]

In addition to being catalysts for fulfilling the SDGs, youth can also uniquely contribute to global development outcomes in the unique ways in which they can serve as infomediaries; social entrepreneurs; and peacebuilders.

Youth as Infomediaries

As the most technologically-savvy demographic, **young people are digital natives and therefore well-positioned to serve as "infomediaries" for the SDGs and for development goals more broadly**- connecting data producers and data users in order to help ensure that data can be used to monitor progress and accountability toward fulfilling the SDGs.[100] Transparent information on its own is not enough to lead to accountability; yet, youth leaders can help drive broader civic participation in using data to hold national and local governments to account for achieving the SDGs and other development plans and goals to which country governments commit.

The open data and open government movements that have emerged over the last decade have seen active participation from young people. But the unique way in which youth can leverage their

[99] *Youth 4 Global Goals Annual Report 2016.* AIESEC International. https://issuu.com/aiesecinternational/docs/youth_4_global_goals_report_2016

[100] Restless De elopement. Follow-Up and Review: How to Scale e up Ambition on Youth-Led Accountability for the SGDS. November 2015. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/follow-up-and-review-how-to-scale-up-ambition-on-youth-led-accountability-for-the-sdgs-pdf

technological competencies to advance development remains untapped. One way to increase young people's ability to serve in this role could be to establish partnerships between National Statistical Offices and youth infomediaries to enable youth access to fundamental demographic information in their countries that they can help disseminate and help mobilize citizen action in response.

Youth as Social Entrepreneurs

Social entrepreneurship is a powerful means by which young people of various ages, backgrounds and interests are driving positive social change in a variety of contexts and at a variety of levels. In the Introduction we briefly discussed the approach to promoting youth social entrepreneurship. Here we share briefly some inspiring examples, particularly those of **youth-led efforts that have achieved notable development outcomes at scale**. It is important to note that while social entrepreneurs in general are helping fulfill development goals worldwide and filling gaps left by governments and the private sector, **social entrepreneurship is a particularly powerful outlet for full expression of youth creativity and energy.**

CASE: One example is Injaz (translated "Achievement"). With this program, Soraya Salti has successfully adapted the model of U.S.-based Junior Achievement Worldwide to the Arab world. When Salti launched Injaz in Jordan in 1999, the Injaz model was based on a partnership with private sector volunteers and the Ministry of Education to provide Jordanian children with life skills such as teamwork, entrepreneurial thinking, and work-readiness training.

To date, Injaz al-Arab has directly benefited over 165,000 Arab youth. Similarly, M'hammed Andaloussi, an Ashoka fellow in Morocco, was inspired to develop a holistic model for comprehensive partnership in education. This model was incorporated into Andaloussi's organization Al Jisr (translated "the Bridge"), which administers community "adoption" programs for public schools in Casablanca. In this program, businesses form partnerships with public schools wherein they commit their time, expertise, and resources to a school for a period of two to five years. School support committees engage sponsoring business leaders, parents, school principals and teachers to determine the needs of each school and the resources that businesses can realistically offer in a participatory manner. Al Jisr now reaches over 170 public schools, and it is beginning to expand to other cities in Morocco. Andaloussi was able to expand his model by tapping into the largest business association in Morocco, La Confédération Générale des Enterprises du Maroc. Furthermore, he received the support of the king of Morocco, who is the honorary chairman of the board, and the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and local governance agencies. [101]

[101] Abdou, Ehaab, Fahmy, Amina et al.*Social Entrepreneurship in the Middle East*. Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings. April 2010. http://www.meyi.org/uploads/3/2/0/1/32012989/abdou_fahmy_greenwald_and_nelson_-_social_entrepreneurship_in_the_middle_east_-_toward_sustainable_development_for_the_next_generation.pdf

CASE: The World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders Network[102] is a leadership support community of over 800 young social entrepreneurs around the world tackling some of the greatest challenges of our time. Here are a few examples of the impact at scale of their initiatives[103]:

- *DeWorm the World* is an that support simple, safe and cost-effect, school-based deworming solutions for **200 million children annually** around the world.
- *Global Dignity* is an annual action day emphasizing our shared human dignity across cultures and generations. Since it launched a decade ago in Canada, the movement has engaged **over 1.5 million students in learning initiatives** and campaigns around the world.
- *IamtheCODE* is a new African-led movement to educate **1 million women and girls** to code and become digital leaders by 2030 that has already impacted over 4,200 people through its digital clubs (creating a safe space to innovate and learn a variety of tech skills), mentoring program, and hackathons focused on the SDGs.

This review came across countless **youth fellowship programs** similar to the one above that are targeted at building capabilities and opportunities of exceptional youth leaders in a wide variety of ways, including fellowships that support youth social entrepreneurs (such as Ashoka, Echoing Green, Skoll, Clinton Initiative, Accountability Lab and others).

We were unable to aggregate the impact at scale that these various cohorts of young leaders are having on a variety of issues and sectors, because there is no consistent standard by which each of these fellowship organizations and initiatives report their impact. Most impact reported is offered in very anecdotal ways with very limited data. **This inconsistency in reporting limits our ability to tell a cohort story of the impact of young social entrepreneurs on development at scale, even though this is already happening.** Thus, we recommend in the next phase of this work to focus on addressing this challenge in order to weave a more coherent narrative about youth contributions to development, through social entrepreneurship as well as other means.

One final caveat to offer with regards to support youth social entrepreneurs is that these fellowship programs often tend to engage youth who are **privileged in many ways** (highly educated, relatively affluent, etc.) Indeed, some (though certainly not all) catalytic youth leaders often come from backgrounds that give them the privilege of not needing to worry about securing a basic income and livelihood and thus are able to devote their time toward working for social change. **So any programs that seek to invest in youth social entrepreneurs should be cautious against replicating inequalities amongst youth and target youth from marginalized groups.** As with all other forms of youth engagement, programs should strike a balance between supporting existing youth leaders, and cultivating new ones.

Youth as Peacebuilders

Many youth are also involved in critical and creative efforts to promote peace and combat destructive ideologies in their societies. One example of this is a powerful global youth-led campaign to combat hate and bigotry called the Peer to Peer Initiative run by EdVenture Partners, which has

[102] Note: This program defines young leaders as those under the age of 40.
[103] World Economic Forum. *Young Global Leaders Impact.* Site accessed June 2017. https://www.weforum.org/pages/ygl-impact

engaged young people to help change narratives and perceptions in their community, and has had impact at scale. Between 2015-2017 this initiative has engaged 10,000+ university students from over 350 universities in 65 countries to produce projects and campaigns that promote inclusion and peacebuilding over hate and extremism. Collectively, these student initiatives have reached over **20 million people** through social campaigns, campus movements, mobile apps, cultural activities, and more. [104]

[104] EdVenture Partners. Peer to Peer Brochure. Accessed June 2017. https://edventurepartners.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/P2P_Facebook_Brochure.pdf

IX. Brief Examples of Cross-Sector Youth Engagement

Summary: This brief section highlights why and how to take intentionally cross-sector approaches to youth engagement. "Cross-sector" approach refers to any attempt to engage youth that addresses more than one aspect of their development and inclusion – such as an employment program that also focuses on providing life skills or integrated diverse social groups together to promote social cohesion; or a program that promotes reproductive health and mitigating HIV spread while also encouraging youth to raise their voice and participate in local political processes that shape the health policies that affect their lives. Throughout this report, we analyzed cross-findings across the political, social and economic dimensions of inclusion. Yet it still bears briefly touching here on the rationale for explicitly cross-sector approaches and offering a few practical examples.

Why Use Cross-Sector Approaches to Engage Youth in Development?

- On one hand, extremely little academic research has been done to determine the outcomes of explicitly cross-sector approaches to youth engagement. On the other hand, the grey literature indicates promising early outcomes from these integrated (and often innovative) approaches. A few cross-sector examples are highlighted to help inform practitioners in further developing these approaches.

- **Little academic research has been done to explore the outcomes of deliberately/intentionally/explicitly cross-sector approaches to youth engagement, yet the world of practice indicates promising early outcomes from these integrated (and often innovative) programs**. Cross-sector approaches can include programs that adopt an integrated approach to emphasizing the holistic development of the *individual* young person (such as positive youth development and the growing consensus on the strength of that approach). They can also include programs that are designed for, with or by youth to address more than one type of youth exclusion at *the societal level*.

- When on looks at specific development goals across sectors, there are numerous justifications for the need of cross-sector approaches, given the overlapping way in which development occurs. For example, when educational inequality doubles, the probability of conflict also more than doubles (Learning Generation report).

- Many Positive Youth Development programs are cross-sectoral in nature, but few have developed measurement frameworks that fully track cross-sectoral outcomes and that measure. The vast majority of literature (~95%) examining PYD programs also come from

high-income countries.[105] So there is great potential to invest in more work to apply PYD-inspired approaches in developing contexts to promote and measure cross-sector outcomes.

- Cross-sector approaches are most promising because they following what we learn from human development literature about all transitions being linked and interrelated (bring that source here). Thus, it doesn't make sense to focus on employing youth in isolation from raising their civic education and helping them establish healthy families. Rather, **cross-sector programs that integrate aspects of youth political, social and economic inclusion seem to offer some of the most promising results**. Furthermore, **cross-sector approaches are especially necessary for any attempts to prevent at-risk or marginalized youth from adopting harmful behaviors**.[106]

How to Use Cross-Sector Approaches to Engage Youth in Development?

The overall recommended guiding principles offered in the Recommendations section certainly can and should be applied to explicitly cross-sector engagements. In addition, cross-sector programs face the challenge of how to measure the outcomes and impact of their work. Therefore, any explicit cross-sector engagements should **thoughtfully consider a monitoring and evaluation plan in advance**, before any programs are implemented. It is also likely easier to begin integrating youth programs across sectors that take the same **basic *approach* to youth development** (youth as beneficiaries, partners, or agents).

Snapshot Examples of Cross Sector Programs

- "In 2016, Children International (CI) committed to provide opportunities for young people in Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Mexico, Philippines, and Zambia to gain the skills, knowledge, and practical experience they need to become agents of change in their communities, and work their way out of poverty. Through this commitment, CI will work with youth to build 21st century life skills by engaging community volunteers to conduct activities with youth, establishing a variety of youth clubs focused on leadership, financial literacy, and the arts, and incorporating a service learning component into the program. CI will also provide young people with scholarships, technical job training, and on-the-job learning opportunities in order to strengthen their career readiness skills, while supporting them in their transition into the workforce. The majority of these activities will be offered through CI's community centers and six centers will be remodeled or built to

[105] Alvarado, G. and Skinner, M., et al . *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Brief*.: Youth Power Learning, Making Cents International. 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics

[106] Cunningham, Wendy; McGinnis, Linda; Verdu, Rodrigo García; Tesliuc, Cornelia; and Verner, Dorte. 2008. *Youth at risk in Latin America and the Caribbean: understanding the causes, realizing the potential*. Directions in development human development. Washington, DC: World Bank. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/245731468276337697/Youth-at-risk-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean-understanding-the-causes-realizing-the-potential

support CI's work efforts. Ultimately, this commitment will directly impact 362,875 young people in life skills and career readiness training and will engage 14,424 community volunteers."[107]

- With support from the World Bank, Thailand for example has invested in youth as agents of peacebuilding and at the same time improving governance/relations between citizens and local government.

- The World Bank's Macedonia Children and Youth Development Project is an early example of the enhanced social integration of marginalized youth from various ethnic communities through locally managed, integrated youth services, including profiling, creating socioeconomic profiles, soft skills, ICT training, language training, referrals, business development skills, and community engagement activities. The impact evaluation pointed to an increase in youth employment effect of 16 percent among the treatment group compared with the control group, among other positive results.[108]

[107] Clinton Foundation. *Youth Empowered, Engaged and Employed*. Site accessed May 2016. https://www.clintonfoundation.org/clinton-global-initiative/commitments/youth-empowered-engaged-and-employed

[108] World Bank. Children & Youth Project Development in Macedonia. Last accessed May 2017. http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P073483/children-youth-development-project-lil?lang=en&tab=overview

IX. Note on Youth and Conflict, Violence, Fragility, and Migration

Chapter Summary: This section summarizes a skim of the existing literature on the relationship between young people and peacebuilding, fragility, conflict and various forms of violence (including political violence, extremism, ethnic violence, and violent criminal behavior). It explores answers to two guiding questions:

- *"Why" and under what conditions do small minorities of young people engage in violent behavior?*
- *"How can young people uniquely contribute to peacebuilding efforts in fragile or conflict-affected environments?*

Summary

- Many fear that youth bulges and lack of economic opportunity drive youth toward destructive behaviors, including petty crime, and violence
- However even the strongest evidence examining the relationship between youth unemployment and violence finds only a correlation – not causal – relationship
- Recent literature suggests more and more that experiences of *social and political exclusion* – rather than or in addition to economic exclusion – seem to be more significant drivers that explain why a minority of youth engage in extremism and violence
- At the same time, several organizations are engaging youth as unique agents of peacebuilding, and are finding that they have great potential as contributors. They may be less rooted in long-standing ideologies that pit groups against one another; they can bring their energy, creativity and technological competency to act as mediators, community organizers, humanitarian workers, and in other ways.[109]

Why do a Minority of Youth Engage in Violence?

One of the most common concerns associated with a growing youth population is the possible increased likelihood of social instability through youth engagement in violence.

Indeed, there is statistical evidence of a *correlative* link between high relative youth populations and an increased risk of armed conflict. At the same time, countries with high educated people are less prone to political violence. The opportunity cost for an unemployed young person with low levels of education to be involved in a rebellion or a riot is too high is lower than for an unemployed young person with higher education.

There is also positive effect of **inequality on political violence**. Tensions between youth of different classes can lead to the outbreak of conflict. In general, countries with good economic outcomes

[109] Ozerdem, Alpaslan. *The Role of Youth in Peacebuilding: Challenges and Opportunities.* Sustainable Security. October 2016. https://sustainablesecurity.org/2016/10/26/the-role-of-youth-in-peacebuilding-challenges-and-opportunities/

have a lower risk of armed conflict outbreak. The effect of democratic institutions is weak, democracy does not necessarily imply stability.[110]

Despite these broad trends, the literature often does not match with common understandings regarding the relationships of youth people with violence and conflict. While there are numerous justifications found in the literature for why young people engage in violence, it is important to first note that **the vast majority of young people that do experience some form of exclusion do not, in fact, engage in violence**. It is detrimental to view massive youth populations as a threat to be mitigated. This section elucidates how it is far more productive to perceive youth as contributed assets to be taken advantage of and strengthened, even in difficult environments.

It is commonly thought that being unemployed drives youth to engage in violence. However, the literature does not substantiate this claim. **Even the strongest evidence examining the relationship between youth unemployment and violence demonstrates correlation, not causation.** The GSDRC Rapid Literature Review on Youth Unemployment and Violence found that "the strongest correlation between youth unemployment and violence comes from a report on Latin America's so-called *ninis* (Young people who are neither in school nor working)."[111] Yet even so, this identified unemployment as a contributing factor to violence but no evidence of a causal link.

This article argues that the practice of using youth employment projects for peacebuilding is rooted in untested, problematic and possibly flawed assumptions, and this fundamentally affects the chance of success for such interventions."[112]

Thus, **despite the widely-assumed link between unemployment and youth violence, there is no data to prove a causal link**. Instead, recent research and practice increasingly suggests that a **mix of factors contribute to driving youth to violence**, including weak governance, availability of weapons, social isolation and lack of belonging, family dysfunction and more.[113]

Relatedly, many people also often **assume a causal link between youth unemployment and political instability**. However, a study examining data from 40 developing countries across the period from 1991-2009 concluded that "youth unemployment is a symptom rather than a cause of political instability; there is a positive effect of youth unemployment on political violence but this relationship is not robust."[114]

---

[110] Azeng, T.F., & Thierry, U.G. *Youth unemployment, education and political instability: evidence from selected developing countries 1991-20091.* Households in Conflict Network (HiCN) Working Paper 200. Brighton: The Institute of Development Studies. 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-unemployment-education-and-political-instability-evidence-from-selected-developing-countries-1991-2009/

[111] Idris, Iffat. *Rapid Literature Review: Youth Unemployment and Violence.* November 2016. GSDRC Applied Knowledge Services. http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/youth-unemployment-and-violence/

[112] Izzi, Valeria. *Just Keeping Them Busy? Youth Employment Projects as a Peacebuilding Tool.* International Development Planning Review. Jan 2013, Vol. 35, Issue 2, pp. 103-117. https://doi.org/10.3828/idpr.2013.8 Accessed via YouthPower.

[113] Idris, Iffat. *Rapid Literature Review: Youth Unemployment and Violence.* November 2016. GSDRC Applied Knowledge Services. http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/youth-unemployment-and-violence/

[114] Azeng, T.F., & Thierry, U.G. *Youth unemployment, education and political instability: evidence from selected developing countries 1991-20091.* Households in Conflict Network (HiCN) Working Paper 200. Brighton: The

Another common assumption is that less educated youth are more likely to be susceptible to extremist ideologies and engage in violence. However again this literature scan did not find evidence to support this claim. "E**ducation by itself does not address the underlying drivers of potentially destabilizing actions** such as support for political violence. Education is important, but just the first step. What matters to youth is not just having an opportunity to learn but also being able to use their skills to influence their lives, their communities and their nation. Hence, the study concludes that to reduce violence, youth development programs must address both the lack of skills and the lack of opportunities that hinder youth from succeeding."[115]

Based on the above findings, it is important to address youth "lack of opportunities" as being more than just lack of economic opportunities. Indeed, any programs aimed at decreasing the chances of youth participation in violence must take promote their social and political inclusion, not only opportunities for economic advancement.

Jobs are Not Enough

Literature also indicates that youth jobs programs intended to occupy youth and keep them away from political violence activities is not a proven strategy. This is an untested and flawed approach, even if it is a relatively common practice.[116]

If unemployment and lack of education cannot fully explain why a minority of youth engage in violence, what can? A key factor driving youth involvement in violence is the **structural exclusion** and lack of opportunities faced by many young people.

One review distinguishes between structural and proximate factors that help explain why some youth do engage in violence. "A key factor driving youth involvement in violence is the structural exclusion and lack of opportunities faced by many young people. These block the transition to adulthood and can lead to frustration, disillusionment and, in some cases, participation in violence."[117]

Because clearly not all youth who are excluded (socially, politically, and/or economically) do engage in such behavior, this begs the question of what additional, proximate factors determine which excluded youth do and do not participate in violence. A 2009 DFID report outlined common theories:

Institute of Development Studies. 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-unemployment-education-and-political-instability-evidence-from-selected-developing-countries-1991-2009/

[115] Mercy Corps. Critical Choices: Assessing the Effects of Education and Civic Engagement on Somali Youths' Propensity Towards Violence. November 2016. https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/CRITICAL_CHOICES_REPORT_FINAL_DIGITAL.pdf

[116] Izzi, Valeria. *Just Keeping Them Busy? Youth Employment Projects as a Peacebuilding Tool.* International Development Planning Review. Jan 2013, Vol. 35, Issue 2, pp. 103-117. https://doi.org/10.3828/idpr.2013.8

[117] Hilker, L. M., Fraser E. M. *Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States*. Report prepared for DFID by Social Development Direct, London. 2009 http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-exclusion-violence-conflict-and-fragile-states/

Figure 20: Common Theories for Why Young People Engage in Violence[118]

Type	Summary/Assumption	Underlying Driver(s)
Greed or opportunity perspectives	Young people engage in violence because of the material benefits that may come with joining violent forces	Un or underemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities; insufficient education and skills
Grievance perspectives	Young people engage in violence because of the accumulated frustration from experienced social, political and/or economic exclusion	Political and other exclusion
Developmental reasons	Young people engage in violence because adolescents are more susceptible to being persuaded due to their stage of biological, social and psychological development	Cognitive state of development
Structural exclusion and lack of opportunities (overall dominant theory in the literature, which somewhat overlaps with above theories)	Young people engage in violence because structural exclusion and lack of opportunities block or prolong their transition to adulthood and can lead to frustration, disillusionment, and in some cases, their engagement in violence	All of the above; plus gender inequalities and socialized norms; legacy of past violence and protracted armed conflict

The same report then outlined **four proximate factors** found in the literature:

- Recruitment, coercion and indoctrination;
- Identity politics and ideology (which can be particularly persuasive for more educated youth);
- Leadership and organizational dynamics;
- Trigger events (including events at either the individual or societal level, from experiencing individual abuse by security forces or personal loss to sudden societal economic crisis).

[118] Adapted from Ibid.

In other words, youth who are socially, politically and economically excluded *and* who are subject to one or more of these proximate factors are most likely to engage in violence.

On the other hand, what factors might help other excluded youth be "resilient" to invitations to violence and avoid such engagement even if they experience the structural and proximate factors outlined above? In some cases, the following seem to protect youth from violent engagement:

- Migration;
- Strong social capital or supportive communities (which offer support networks and a sense of belonging and agency).

How to Steer Vulnerable Youth Away from Violence?

This same assessment recommends warns against "employing a security framework towards youth" and instead recommends to "balance efforts to prevent involvement in violence with a focus on the positive role of youth. Work towards the inclusion of youth, rather than containment or appeasement."[119] This recommended approach aligns with the more general **asset-based approach to youth engagement** outlined at the start of this report, which is recommended for application in all settings of engaging with youth, including in conflict-prone or difficult environments.

One promising Mercy Corps program found that providing youth opportunities for political participation was not enough – but results were seen when this was combined with structured social inclusion through schools and in other environments, *and* engagement to change government power-holders in tandem. "Yet, from a peace-building perspective, civic engagement programs yield unpredictable dividends. **When not paired with meaningful governance reforms, such programs may simply stoke youth frustrations with exclusive, elder-dominated formal institutions**. This may explain why we found civically engaged youth to be more supportive of armed opposition groups, not less. Confident, outspoken and politically conscious young people, it turns out, are not the types to sit quietly by when the society around them disappoints."

Furthermore, "Giving youth in schools the ability to participate in civic engagement activities alongside formal education, it seems, **fulfills a common desire among youth—the desire to do something positive, meaningful and impactful**. **Addressing this need, our research indicates, is one way to steer youth away from a path towards violence**. Creating a sense of empowerment for youth and giving them hope in the possibility of making a difference through nonviolent actions are pathways through which civic engagement activities can support stability-related outcomes."[120]

[119] Ibid

[120] Mercy Corps. Critical Choices: Assessing the Effects of Education and Civic Engagement on Somali Youths' Propensity Towards Violence. November 2016. https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/CRITICAL_CHOICES_REPORT_FINAL_DIGITAL.pdf

In other words, both in and out of peacebuilding settings, "For maximum impact, it is also necessary to work with adults such as powerholders/duty-bearers and government officials to enable young people to engage successfully in participatory governance."[121]

How does Migration Affect Young People?

According to the seminal 2013 *Youth on the Move* UN World Youth report, young people (aged 15-24) make up over **30% of the 230 million migrant**s in the world. The report explores the complex dynamics and **two**-sided nature of youth migration.

On one hand, as highlighted above, migration can indeed provide **a necessary outlet for excluded youth that mitigates some pressure of exclusion**[122] **and helps them seek new opportunities for livelihoods and successful transitions to adulthood more broadly.** Yet at the same time **migrant youth often find themselves highly socially vulnerable in new environments**.[123] They can be subject to discrimination, isolation and other challenges that come with voluntary or forced displacement.

Issues in Youth and Migration:

- seeking independent stable livelihood
- staying connected to family, and sending support back home (remittances can play a significant role in reducing the burden of poverty
- cultural transition and identity challenges due to needing to adapt to a new environment
    - ecosystem of support in new environment

In sum, social, political, and/or economic youth exclusion can be both a significant driver *and* a result of youth migration. Excluded youth may naturally be driven to leave their homelands in pursuit of opportunity and integration, and at the same time youth who do settle in a new land may face the same challenges of social, political and/or economic exclusion that any immigrant can be subject to as they seek to establish new lives for themselves, their families and their communities.

How does Living in Conflict/Fragile Environments Affect Youth? Youth Role in Peacebuilding

Living in fragile environments that are prone to or ridden with conflict can of course be damaging to all affected populations, but often has unique impacts on young people. Due to this reality, any

---

[121] Walker, David et al. *Partners for change: Young people and governance in a post- 2015 world.* Overseas Development Institute, Plan and Restless Development. September 2014. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/partners-for-change-full-report-amended-pdf

[122] Assaad, Ragui and Ghada Barsoum. *Youth Exclusion in Egypt: In Search of "Second Chances."* Middle East Youth Initiative. September 2007. http://www.meyi.org/publication-youth-exclusion-in-egypt-in-search-of-second-chances.html

[123] UNESCO. *Youth on the Move: the UN World Youth Report 2013 on Youth Migration.* 2014. http://en.unesco.org/news/youth-move-world-youth-report-2013-youth-migration

efforts to engage youth in fragile or conflict environments must take the unique situation of young people into account.

There have been a number of lessons learned and programs developed in the practice of working with young people in these difficult environments that help increase the likelihood of their successful transition to safe and productive adulthood. This literature skim indicates that " the key to positive growth for youth and their communities in a post-crisis/conflict environment seems to be keeping young people engaged in safe and productive activities so that they avoid violent, anti-social, destructive behavior and have hope for the future."[124]

There are a number of ways in which **traditional development activities can be adapted to working with youth in these specific settings**. For example, informal, flexible and/or accelerated education programs can in some cases more effectively meet the unique needs of youth in conflict environments than traditional formal education delivery.

Interestingly, some reviewers of the literatures "concur that majorities of young people are not actually severely impacted by their experiences with political conflict," so the **magnitude of this challenge may in some cases in fact be overstated**. Nonetheless, research in this field is nascent and more is needed to clarify the exact impacts of conflict on youth development. "Better research is required to more precisely understand which youth who experience political conflict are at risk for substantial challenges to their onward development… .We would also better be able to understand the psychological and developmental effects of conflict on young people through further research and more precise assessments of the type and context of political conflict, and of youth cognitive engagement with the conflict on overall levels of functioning, and on the longer-term effects of conflict on young people as they transition to and live out adulthood.125

In addition, the research and practice around youth and peacebuilding suggests that youth should **not only be perceived as a vulnerable community in need of unique services (though this is undoubtedly true in many cases), but also as a distinct societal asse**t capable of uniquely contributing to peacebuilding and conflict mitigation.

UNDP's approach, for example, recognizes that young people can play a key role in managing conflict and promoting peace.[126] Indeed, much of the potential value of youth to help lead and support peacebuilding efforts is relatively unexplored – there is sparse academic research on this

[124] USAID. *State of the Field Report: Examining the Evidence in Youth Education in Crisis and Conflict.* USAID Youth Research, Evaluation and Learning Project. February 2013. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USAID%20state%20of%20the%20field%20youth%20education%20in%20conflict%20final%202_11.pdf

[125] Barber, Brian. *Political Conflict and Youth.* British Psychological Society. May 2013. https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-26/edition-5/political-conflict-and-youth

[126] United Nations. *Youth, Political Participation and Decision-Making*. November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf

topic, and the world of implementing organizations are just beginning to uncover lessons. Youth are underappreciated in their potential capacity as peacebuilders.[127]

One rapid review of youth involvement in peacebuilding concluded that evidence of the impact specifically on youth political participation is mixed and context specific.[128] For example, political parties and other social movements have often used young people to intimidate and destabilise opponents and to collect money for campaigns. **This is often the only form of political participation open to young people.**

Thus, programs seeking to engage youth in supporting effective peacebuilding **should provide opportunity for political and social inclusion.** Programs should identify, but do not isolate, at-risk youth. Then they can identify the mix of institutions and opportunities that are missing. Programmes must integrate at-risk youth into society, not just compensate for disadvantages.[129]
http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-unemployment-education-and-political-instability-evidence-from-selected-developing-countries-1991-2009/

[127] Del Felice, Celina and Andria Wisler. *The Unexplored Power and Potential of Youth as Peace-builders*. Journal of Peace Conflict & Development Issue 11, November 2007 available from www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk and via YouthPower http://www.youthpower.org/resources/unexplored-power-and-potential-youth-peacebuilders
[128] Haider, H. Helpdesk Research Report: *Youth Statebuilding and peacebuilding interventions.* Birmingham, UK: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, University of Birmingham. 2011. http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Helpdesk&id=771
[129] USAID. *Youth and Conflict: A Toolkit for Intervention.* United States Agency for International Development, Washington, DC. 2005 http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-and-conflict-a-toolkit-for-intervention/

X. Recommendations: Toward More Effective Youth Engagement and Youth-Driven Development

Summary: We recognize that a youth-led approach is not necessarily the right fit for every intervention or program in every context and at every time. However, this review has found that there are far more youth engagement efforts that treat youth as beneficiaries or recipients rather than agents or drivers themselves. Thus, there is a need for more guidance on how to effectively and meaningfully engage youth as leaders when this is an appropriate approach. What are good practices for effective youth-led development? This section summarizes good emerging practices in the literature from a variety of practitioners.

Based on the top findings of this review (in the Executive Summary and Findings sections), we recommend emphasizing the following types of work across the three approaches to youth engagement:

FIGURE 21 - Summary of Overall Recommendations Across Three Youth Engagement Approaches

Approach	Overall Recommendations
Youth as Beneficiaries ("for youth")	• **Health-related activities** (and some other aspects of youth social inclusion) **show the highest overall returns on investment**, so programs that involve youth as beneficiaries should prioritize youth social inclusion; • at the same time, they can experiment with moving more toward engaging youth as partners and youth as leaders (one example program would be peer education programs targeted to mitigation HIV/AIDS)
Youth as Partners ("with youth")	• There are a variety of programs involving youth and adults as partners that work toward the same goal. One of the most promising mechanisms to adopt this approach is through promoting some form of **youth participatory action research (explained below) to promote all three types of youth inclusion (social, political and economic);** • this model of engagement allows youth to help define the priorities for their communities while simultaneously promoting their individual development; youth as partners initiatives must also take seriously into account how they increase **institutional capacity** (from government or other adult decision-makers) **to respond to youth voice**
Youth as Leaders ("by youth")	• Authentically **engaging youth as leaders of development is by far the least utilized and most untapped approach** found in the literature; • Efforts to engage youth as leaders should start by **identifying existing youth leaders** wherever they may be organizing (including in less traditional or informal political spaces)

	• This approach should also increase the likelihood of cultivating new youth leaders by promoting supportive networks of parents, teachers, and others that help build youth capacity and agency to lead.

In addition to these approach-specific recommendations, we offer the following dozen guiding principles to broadly help improve youth engagement efforts across dimensions, approaches, and contexts.

Recommended Guiding Principles – How to Effectively Engage Youth in Development

I. **Adopt a 'lifecycle' approach and provide more holistic skill development.**
   a. Literature over the last decade has developed a notable consensus around the need to help youth not only develop technical, academic and vocational skills, but also life skills (or 'soft skills') including but not limited to: problem solving, leadership, self-awareness, interpersonal relations, and others.[130]

II. **Recognize and Engage youth as true leaders and agents of change.**
   a. There is also a growing yet still relatively new consensus on the need to focus on youth-led and youth-driven engagement.[131] Provide pathways for ramping up responsibility and participation.

III. **Break silos and coordinate across multiple sectors** for higher returns on investments and greater impact.
   a. The challenges that youth around the world face to make a successful transition to adulthood are clearly multi-dimensional and inter-related. Social, political, and economic exclusion and inclusion overlap in many ways. Thus, any programs targeted to promote comprehensive youth inclusion increase their chances of success through taking a multi-sectoral approach.

IV. **Look for youth-led development already happening, including scalable approaches.**
   a. Traditional ways of doing business, ageism, and other factors may inhibit development institutions from recognizing promising examples of youth-led initiatives that are already contributing to global development (including but not limited to the SDGs framework). Youth are increasingly connecting with one another across boundaries through decentralized (and in some cases virtual) networks, and engaging in social movements. These less formal, more fluid forms of civic engagement and social action may be less familiar to development institutions, but they are often bastions of creativity, energy and dynamism, and are already leading change in many cases.

[130] Alvarado, G. and Skinner, M., et al . *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Brief*.: Youth Power Learning, Making Cents International. 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics
[131] Ibid.

V. **Identify, support and uplift truly youth-led organizations.**
   a. Showcase and share stories of their work
   b. Help them better evaluate their impact, to help drive additional resources to their work, etc.
   c. Create opportunities to unleash youth creativity when designing programs - This review found inspiring examples of young people creatively advocating for and organizing around their causes utilizing pop culture and other vehicles for artistic and creative expression (from hip hop to street art to a mainstream TV program and more). These avenues of creative expression can be particularly useful for youth-led efforts to hold governments to account, including in restrictive or fragile environments.

VI. **Invest in ongoing evidence gap-filling, knowledge generation.**
   a. Despite the comprehensiveness of this literature review, there is clearly much we still do not know about engaging youth in development. The myriad lessons on "how" to engage youth that fill this report should be applied and adapted and experimented with in a variety of settings, while at the same time contributed to building the evidence base to continually better inform this work.

VII. **Engaging and supporting the people/communities around youth.**
   a. Literature across a wide variety of sources – from developed and developing contexts, from psychological and economic perspectives, from youth organizing, positive youth development and other approaches – all point to the fundamental importance of engaging the individuals and communities surrounding youth in order to maximize their own individual and societal development.
      i. "reassign roles of young people and those around them based on their *competitive advantage*" (Cunningham) – youth are best positioned to truly engage/bring in other young people, while national governments are best positioned in defining and funding overall strategies and monitoring outcomes
         a) Engage teachers, parents, families and others around young people to create a supportive enabling environment that helps young people act upon their rights and fulfill their potential. This helps mitigate the forming of stereotypes and societal attitudes that discourage youth participation.[132]
         b) This approach is supported/aligned with the prominent Ecological Systems Theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in the psychology literature, which contends that in order to understand the human development process of any individual, one must consider the impact of a set of nested ecosystems, moving from the immediate surroundings of the child to the indirect and more macro environments.[133]

---

[132] Youth Policy Labs. *From Rhetoric to Action: Towards an Enabling Environment in the Sustainable Development Goals*. The Case for Space Initiative. Berlin: Youth Policy Press. 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/from-rhetoric-to-action-towards-an-enabling-environment-for-child-and-youth-development-in-the-sdgs/

[133] Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). *Ecological Models of Human Development.* In International Encyclopedia of Education, Vol. 3 2nd Ed. Oxford: Elsevier: Reprinted in: Gauvain, M. & Cole, M. (Eds.), Readings on the development of children, 2nd Ed. (1993, pp.37-43). NY: Freeman. http://www.psy.cmu.edu/~siegler/35bronfebrenner94.pdf

a. The most effective positive youth development programs in developing countries engage numerous stakeholders in the lives of young people, and also meet youth in multiple settings (ex: school, home, community centers, etc.).[134]

VIII. **Ensure there is sufficient civic space for more youth representation/participation in traditional civil society**

a. Making sure CSO-driven participation efforts are not themselves subject to elite capture and that they do not replicate societal biases (for example against young people as decision makers) in their own civic participation work. As youth are now the majority of the population in many developing countries, now is the time to move beyond ageism and old models of citizen-government participation and embrace youth as fully having a seat at the table.

IX. **Build Capacity of Adults and Governments to Better Hear, Partner with and Support Young People "Voice plus teeth" (Fox)** – making sure that any efforts to elevate the voice of youth are paralleled by efforts to improve their government's ability to hear and respond to their voice (overcoming government biases against youth as well, etc.)

a. Of course not all organizations are positioned to drastically change their authority and decision making structures. However, steps can be taken to move toward more meaningful youth representation and participation no matter where the organization currently stands vis-a-vis its youth engagement. In other words, no matter the results of a youth audit or scorecard, there will always be additional opportunities to better integrate and include youth. As one USAID report notes, "Depending on the context, it may be important to move toward greater youth engagement through incremental implementation, testing and trust-building."[135]

X. **Support youth as researchers/investigators to best identify the needs of their peers and build the evidence base, especially to monitor local progress toward the SDGs**

a. This is a "two birds with one stone" type solution that simultaneously supports the individual development of participating youth also generating much-needed authentic evidence to inform future efforts.

b. Two limitations often noted in the literature are the inconsistent ways in which outcomes and impact are defined across youth engagement approaches; and the frequent lack of age-disaggregated data. Both of these challenges should be addressed in any youth-led research initiatives, and any future research on youth engagement more broadly.

XI. **Invest sufficient resources in youth engagement to avoid eroding trust and unfulfilled expectations** - One off engagements or limited short term support of youth development risks

[134] Alvarado, G. and Skinner, M., et al . *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Brief*.: Youth Power Learning, Making Cents International. 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics

[135] French, Matthew, Sharika Bhattacharya and Christina Olenik. *Youth Engagement in Development: Effective Approaches and Action-Oriented Recommendations for the Field*. USAID. January 2014. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00JP6S.pdf

eroding trust and disillusioning the most recruitable and interested youth and can make it even more difficult to perform more meaningful engagement after that than had nothing been done.

For example, because Positive Youth Development approach emphasizes engaging several actors surrounding youth (parents, peers, teachers, etc.), PYD are necessarily more intensive than approaches than just engage youth.

XII. **Create clear pathways for youth, if they choose, to increase their level of responsibility and deepen engagement** in any initiative over time. By investing in longer-term relationships and clearly illustrating to youth how they can grow in their engagement over time, organizations can recognize youth agency and support their individual development.

What to Avoid in Youth Engagement

The literature also consistently pointed to a few pitfalls of youth engagement that should be avoided:

- **Tokenistic "check-box" engagement -** in which the youth who are most interested in engaging often become disaffected if they feel their participation is not taken seriously
- **One-off initiatives without follow up** - for example, competitions, challenges, innovation competitions etc. can establish momentum and identify promising emerging young leaders; however only doing these types of engagements will mean there is little substance, depth, and possibility sustainability from the work that results. Rather, there is greater promise in sustained engagements.

Spotlight on One Promising Approach: Youth Participatory Action Research

As highlighted above, the approach of engaging youth (as partners and as leaders) through participatory action research emerged from this review as one of the most promising approaches. This approach give youth both the responsibility and capability of shaping the needs and priorities of their communities.

As an approach, it overlaps with youth participatory research overlaps with the related concepts of: action research, critical youth engagement; community development, empowerment evaluation, and positive youth development.

There are many different reasons to engage youth in this capacity (elaborated in Figure 22 below), but perhaps the most compelling is simply that youth are the experts of their own lives, and this affords them the opportunity to discern issues from their peers and community members. The process also forges an idea environment for individual development: "in essence, these research roles offered young people optimal conditions for development."

1. **Youth engaged in participatory/action research benefit in seven different ways**[136]:
    a. Leadership skills as change agents
    b. Critical thinking ability
    c. Building a diverse social network and broad base of knowledge
    d. Valuable skills development such as writing, analysis, presentation and advocacy
    e. Opportunities to take new roles and responsibilities involving decision making
    f. Form new relationships with adults and members of the broader community
    g. Serve as role models to other youth and as experts possessing local knowledge about issues that affect young people

2. **Good Practices for successfully engaging youth in action research on youth issues:**
    a. Combine "maximum support with maximum challenge"
    b. Offer numerous levels of engagement for youth people, and clear pathways that youth can choose to follow for increasing engagement and responsibilities (from consultation to partnership to leadership in the process)
    c. Build in adequate time for participants to learn and practice their new research skills - this helps ensure positive impact on the participating young people, but also helps mitigate the risk that the quality of research may be adversely impact by having 'non-experts' (non-traditional researchers) lead and participate in the research process

"Youth-led monitoring and evaluation (M&E) facilitates the design of realistic and practical tools, as well as building transferable skills and ensuring that young people's input to decision-making is informed and consistent."[137]

As the global agenda for development from now until 2030, youth-led participatory action research particularly to monitor progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represents a powerful opportunity to meaningfully increase youth agency in priority development processes. More research is needed, especially at national and subnational levels, to sufficiently hold governments to account for their commitment to the SDGs. This represents an ideal, mutually beneficial opportunity to advance the development of participating youth themselves as well as their broader societies.

FIGURE 22: Benefits of Engaging Young People Across Stages of Research

Design	Data Collection	Interpretation & Analysis	Publication & Dissemination
• Helps ensure researchers are	• Young people more likely to	• Bringing more diverse voices	• Integrating youth as messengers of

[136] Powers, Jane and Tiffany, Jennifer. *Engaging Youth in Participatory Research and Evaluation*. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Journal of Public Health Management Practice, 2006. November (Suppl), S79-S87. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17035908

[137] DFID-CSO Youth Working Group. *Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policymakers*. 2010. UK Department for International Development. http://www.restlessassets.org/wl/?id=umaETRcmVyn2VEpSrxu7JWWkHom5RYli

asking questions and focusing scope of work on issues that are actually pressing/priority for young people • Creates opportunity to introduce diverse methodologies	gain trust/access to their peers, helping ensure wider data collection and validity (in particularly in qualitative methods such as surveys, interviews, etc.)	that can help uncover hidden findings and lead to more robust interpretation (particularly if youth researchers receive sufficient support and ongoing training)	research findings and/or complementing findings with compelling real-life stories helps mobilize and increases likelihood of communities to act to improve the issue under investigation • Sharing findings with broader community of young people and those around them provides additional opportunity to validate findings and brainstorm solutions to implement

Example of Youth Action Research in Action: Save the Children Norway found that when they trained young people to administer needs assessments and collect information from their peers, the results differed from when adults served as researchers.[138]

Synthesis of Quick Practical Tips from the Literature

Finally, in this Recommendations section we offer a brief synthesis of several general tips from a variety of actors in this field on how to meaningfully and effectively engage youth.

Source: JBS International – 5 Steps to More Meaningful Youth Engagement[139]

1. Include youth from the start
2. Develop a clear purpose and implementation plan
3. Identify and secure resources
4. Provide young people with meaningful roles
5. Provide the right support and training

[138] French, Matthew, Sharika Bhattacharya and Christina Olenik. *Youth Engagement in Development: Effective Approaches and Action-Oriented Recommendations for the Field"* USAID January 2014. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00JP6S.pdf

[139] JBS International. *Five Steps to More Meaningful Youth Engagement.* Making Cents International. **http://www.youtheconomicopportunities.org/blog/2089/five-steps-more-meaningful-youth-engagement**

Source: Five Ways to Integrate Youth into Local Value Chain Development Projects[140]

1. Be youth inclusive while maintaining a multi-generational focus
2. Engage and empower youth throughout the project cycle
3. Acknowledge youth specific barriers in value chain selection and analysis
4. Meet youth where they are: identify specific entry points for youth
5. Identify and engage the support networks of the youth participants

Source: UN Habitat Report on Youth Civic Engagement[141]

Key Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation

1. transparent and informative
2. inclusive
3. supportive of youth-led organizations and networks
4. voluntary
5. respectful
6. relevant
7. youth-friendly
8. given enough time and resources
9. supported by capacity development
10. accountable

Source: Devex - Youth Economic Development Programs: A Formula for Success.[142]

1. The selection process matters.
2. Engage family and community.
3. Be clear about expectations
4. Design for "your" youth

Source: USAID and PEPFAR, Six Tips for Increasing Meaningful Youth Engagement in Programs[143]

1. Define what meaningful youth engagement looks like for your program
2. Plan Short- and Long-Term Engagement Opportunities
3. Include Changes for Skills and Leadership Development
4. Engage Parents, Families and Communities
5. Invest Sufficient Resources and Time
6. Measure Results and Youth Engagement

---

[140] Richardson, Ingrid. *Applying a Youth-Lens to the Value Chain Approach.* February 2015. http://lvcd.projectmodel.org/applying-a-youth-lens-to-the-value-chain-approach-five-ways-to-integrate-youth-into-lvcd-projects/

[141] UN-Habitat. *Advancing Youth Civic Engagement and Human Rights with Young Women and Young Men.* Nairobi: UN-Habitat. 2013 https://unhabitat.org/books/advancing-youth-civic-engagement-and-human-rights/

[142] Hoffman, Eileen. Youth economic development programs: A formula for success. Devex. March 2015. https://www.devex.com/news/youth-economic-development-programs-a-formula-for-success-85686

[143] USAID and PEPFAR. *Six Tips for Increasing Meaningful Youth Engagement in Programs.* USAID and PEPFAR Youth Power, 2016. http://www.youthpower.org/resources/six-tips-increasing-meaningful-youth-engagement-programs

XI. Conclusion

There has never been a more critical time to seriously consider how nearly half the world's population of young people must be critically engaged in tackling the global development challenges of our time.

This review sought to shed light on **both the why and how of engaging youth in development**, toward more comprehensive youth inclusion in all societies, including their social, political and economic inclusion.

In the last decade since the release of the seminal World Development Report 2007 on youth, **much research has been done – and even more importantly, many lessons have been learned by practitioners** – that offer insights on how to most effectively engage youth, whether as beneficiaries, partners, and especially as leaders and agents.

There are certainly some **challenge**s to this work – from the last of consistent usage of terms and ways to measure the impact of youth engagement, to the delayed transition to adulthood many young people in both the developing and developed world face.

Yet there are tremendous **opportunitie**s also to be taken advantage of – from the emerging consensuses on the value of positive youth development and importance of cross-sector engagement, to the rise of youth-led, transnational social movements working together across borders to address the SDGs/global challenges.

Although this review revealed that the existing body of literature does not yet offer answers to every possible question we may inquire about related to engaging youth in development, **there is a more well-established body of literature on youth engagement (including with marginalized or at-risk youth) in developed countries that can be adapted and applied to developing contexts in promising ways.**

This review also found that much of the existing work on youth engagement is limited to a narrow focus on youth economic inclusion, and a narrow focus on treating youth as mere recipients or beneficiaries of services. Therefore, **there is great opportunity for promoting more integrated, cross-sector inclusion** (including youth political and social inclusion, not only economic), and more **enabling more authentically youth-led engagement** – including both programs that support existing youth leaders, and those that seek to change the enabling environment and empower new youth leaders to emerge.

Ultimately, all youth engagement efforts that thoughtfully promote holistic youth inclusion - helping young people be healthy, educated, integration, employed, and empowered in their societies – not only mitigates major societal costs but is also for their benefit and for the benefit of their communities, societies, and the world.

XII. Sources

1. Abdou, Ehaab and Fahmy, Amina et al. *Social Entrepreneurship in the Middle East*. Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings. April 2010. http://www.meyi.org/uploads/3/2/0/1/32012989/abdou_fahmy_greenwald_and_nelson_-_social_entrepreneurship_in_the_middle_east_-_toward_sustainable_development_for_the_next_generation.pdf
2. Accountability Lab 2017-2010 Strategy. http://www.accountabilitylab.org/3243-2/
3. Advocates for Youth. *Youth Participation Guide Assessment Planning and Implementation.* Site accessed May 2017. http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/publications-a-z/1652-youth-participation-guide-assessment-planning-and-implementation
4. Alvarado, G. and Skinner, M., et al . *Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Brief*.: Youth Power Learning, Making Cents International. 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics
5. Assaad, Ragui and Ghada Barsoum. *Youth Exclusion in Egypt: In Search of "Second Chances."* Middle East Youth Initiative. September 2007. http://www.meyi.org/publication-youth-exclusion-in-egypt-in-search-of-second-chances.html
6. Atlantic Council. *Embracing Impact: How Africa Can Overcome the Emerging Market Downturn.* April 2016. http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Embracing_Impact_web_0406.pdf
7. Avis, William. *Increasing Youth Participation in Accountability Mechanisms.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1267: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. August 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/increasing-youth-participation-in-accountability-mechanisms/
8. Azeng, T.F., & Thierry, U.G. *Youth unemployment, education and political instability: evidence from selected developing countries 1991-20091.* Households in Conflict Network (HiCN) Working Paper 200. Brighton: The Institute of Development Studies. 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-unemployment-education-and-political-instability-evidence-from-selected-developing-countries-1991-2009/
9. Barber, Brian. *Political Conflict and Youth.* British Psychological Society. May 2013. https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-26/edition-5/political-conflict-and-youth
10. Belfield, Clive, et al. *The Economic Value of Social and Emotional Learning.* Center for Benefit-Cost Studies in Education, Teachers College at Columbia University. February 2015. http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/SEL-Revised.pdf
11. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). *Ecological Models of Human Development.* In International Encyclopedia of Education, Vol. 3 2nd Ed. Oxford: Elsevier: Reprinted in: Gauvain, M. & Cole, M. (Eds.), Readings on the development of children, 2nd Ed. (1993, pp.37-43). NY: Freeman. http://www.psy.cmu.edu/~siegler/35bronfebrenner94.pdf
12. Buhari Abu-Saeed, Muhammad and Kamaldeen Abu-Saeed. *Attitudinal Changes Using Peer Education Training in Prevention of HIV/AIDS: A Case Study of Youths in North Central Nigeria.* Advanced Pharmaceutical Bulletin. February 2013. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3846034/
13. Campbell Collaboration. *Community Monitoring Interventions to Curb Corruption and Increase Access and Quality of Service Delivery in Low-and middle-income*

Countries. November 2016. https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/library/corruption-community-monitoring-low-income-communities.html

14. Card, David and Ibarraran, Pablo et al. *The Labor Market Impacts of Youth Training in the Dominican Republic*. Journal of Labor Economics. Vol. 29. No. 2. 2011. http://davidcard.berkeley.edu/papers/labor-impact-youth.pdf

15. Card, David. *Using Regional Variation in Wages to Measure the Effects of the Federal Minimum Wage.* Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Cornell University. Vol. 46 No. 1 pg 22-37. Oct. 1992. http://unionstats.gsu.edu/9220/Card(1992)_ILRR_Using%20Regional%20Variation%20in%20Wages%20to%20Measure%20the%20Effects%20of%20the%20Federal%20Minimum%20Wage.pdf

16. Carter, B. *Development Outcomes of the Political and Social Inclusion of Young People.* GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report 1237. 2015. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham. http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/development-outcomes-of-the-political-and-social-inclusion-of-young-people/

17. Chaaban, Jad, *The Costs of Youth Exclusion in the Middle East*. Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper No. 7. May 2008. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1139172 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1139172

18. Cho, Yoonyoung; Honorati, Maddalena. *Entrepreneurship Programs in Developing Countries: A Meta Regression Analysis.* Policy Research Working Paper; No. 6402. *2013. World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13199 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.*

19. Clinton Foundation. *Youth Empowered, Engaged and Employed*. Site accessed May 2016. https://www.clintonfoundation.org/clinton-global-initiative/commitments/youth-empowered-engaged-and-employed

20. Clinton Initiative. Ensuring Your Kids are Changemakers. Site accessed May 2017. https://www.clintonfoundation.org/clinton-global-initiative/commitments/ensuring-your-kids-are-changemakers

21. Cunningham, Wendy; McGinnis, Linda; Verdu, Rodrigo García; Tesliuc, Cornelia; and Verner, Dorte. 2008. *Youth at risk in Latin America and the Caribbean: understanding the causes, realizing the potential*. Directions in development human development. Washington, DC: World Bank. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/245731468276337697/Youth-at-risk-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean-understanding-the-causes-realizing-the-potential

22. Dao, Minh Quang. *Youth, Poverty Reduction, and Economic Growth in Developing Countries.* Journal of International Economics 7(2). 2007. http://www.freepatentsonline.com/article/Journal-International-Business-Economics/178945902.html

23. Del Felice, Celina and Andria Wisler. *The Unexplored Power and Potential of Youth as Peace-builders*. Journal of Peace Conflict & Development Issue 11, November 2007 available from www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk and via YouthPower http://www.youthpower.org/resources/unexplored-power-and-potential-youth-peacebuilders

24. DFID-CSO Youth Working Group. *Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policymakers*. 2010. UK Department for International Development. http://www.restlessassets.org/wl/?id=umaETRcmVyn2VEpSrxu7JWWkHom5RYli

25. Dhillon, Navtej and Tarik Yousef. *Inclusion: Meeting the 100 Million Youth Challenge.* Middle East Youth Initiative. December 2007 http://www.meyi.org/uploads/3/2/0/1/32012989/dhillon_and_yousef_-_inclusion-meeting_the_100_million_youth_challenge.pdf

26. EdVenture Partners. Peer to Peer Brochure. Accessed June 2017. https://edventurepartners.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/P2P_Facebook_Brochure.pdf

27. Euromonitor International. *Special Report: The World's Youngest Populations.* February 2012. http://blog.euromonitor.com/2012/02/special-report-the-worlds-youngest-populations.html

28. *Follow-Up and Review: How to Scale Up Ambition on Youth-Led Accountability for the SDGs.* Restless Development. November 2015. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/follow-up-and-review-how-to-scale-up-ambition-on-youth-led-accountability-for-the-sdgs-pdf

29. Fox, Jonathan. *Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say?* Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) Working Papers Series. World Bank Group. September 2014. http://gpsaknowledge.org/knowledge-repository/social-accountability-what-does-the-evidence-really-say-2/

30. French, Matthew, Sharika Bhattacharya and Christina Olenik. *Youth Engagement in Development: Effective Approaches and Action-Oriented Recommendations for the Field"* USAID January 2014. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00JP6S.pdf

31. Ginwright, Shawn and James, Taj. *From assets to agents of change: Social justice, organizing, and youth development*. New Directions for Youth Development. Vol. 2002, Issue 96
Winter 2002. Pages 27–46.
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/53cb/b086381ef1e58d380a5f6020dae85c523494.pdf

32. GTZ. *Get Youth on Board!: A Toolkit for Stakeholder Collaboration and Youth Promotion.* 2008. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Eschborn, Germany. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/get-youth-on-board-a-toolkit-for-stakeholder-collaboration-and-youth-promotion/

33. Haider, H. Helpdesk Research Report: *Youth Statebuilding and peacebuilding interventions.* Birmingham, UK: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, University of Birmingham. 2011. http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Helpdesk&id=771

34. Hanna Skalli, Loubna and M.A. Thomas. *What We Know about "What Works" in Youth Civic Engagement and Voice, Youth Organizations, Youth Leadership, and Civic Education.*

35. Hilker, L. M., Fraser E. M. *Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States.* Report prepared for DFID by Social Development Direct, London. 2009 http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-exclusion-violence-conflict-and-fragile-states/

36. IAVE (International Association for Volunteer Effort). 2013. *Youth, Volunteering, and Employment.* http://iave.org/iavewp/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Youth-Volunteering-Employment-Report-English-web.pdf

37. Ibarraran, Pablo and Kluve, Jochen and Ripani, Laura and Rosas, David, *Experimental Evidence on the Long-Term Impacts of a Youth Training Program*. IZA Discussion Paper No. 9136. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2655085

38. Idris, Iffat. *Rapid Literature Review: Youth Unemployment and Violence.* November 2016. GSDRC Applied Knowledge Services. http://www.gsdrc.org/publications/youth-unemployment-and-violence/

39. Integrity Idol, an initiative of the Accountability Lab. Last accessed May 2017. http://www.integrityidol.org/

40. International Center for Research on Women. *The Critical Role of Youth in Global Development.* December 2001. http://www.youthmetro.org/uploads/4/7/6/5/47654969/the-critical-role-of-youth-in-global-development-issue-brief-1.pdf

41. International Labor Organization (ILO). *What Works in Youth Employment: Evidence Gap Map.* http://www.wwinye.org/wwinye/evidence-gap-map

42. International Youth Foundation. *New Employment Opportunities.* Accessed June 2017. http://www.iyfnet.org/initiatives/new-employment-opportunities-neo

43. Inter-Parliamentary Union. IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, Outcome Document. March 2016. http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/youngMP16/outcome.pdf

44. Izzi, Valeria. *Just Keeping Them Busy? Youth Employment Projects as a Peacebuilding Tool.* International Development Planning Review. Jan 2013, Vol. 35, Issue 2, pp. 103-117. https://doi.org/10.3828/idpr.2013.8 Accessed via YouthPower.

45. Jamison, Dean, and Marco Schäferhoff. *Estimating the Economic Returns of Education from a Health Perspective*. Background Paper for the Education Commission. SEEK Development. 2016. http://www.resultsfordevelopment.org/sites/resultsfordevelopment.org/files/resources/SEEK.pdf

46. June 2015. Counterpart International. https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/summary_of_findings_from_youth_and_drg_research_project.pdf

47. Karsten, Andreas. *Participation Models: Citizens, Youth, Online.* Youthpolicy.org. Version 2 updated 2012. http://www.youthpolicy.org/library/documents/a-potpourri-of-participation-models/

48. Kluve, Jochen, Puerto, Susana et al. *Interventions to Improve the Labour Market Outcomes of Youth.* International Labor Organization (ILO). August 2016. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_508938.pdf

49. Knowles, James C.; Behrman, Jere R. *The Economic Returns to Investing in Youth in Developing Countries : A Review of the Literature.* Health, Nutrition and Population (HNP) discussion paper; 2006 World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13709 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

50. Knowles, James C.; Behrman, Jere R. *A Practical Guide to Economic Analysis of Youth Projects.* World Bank HNP Discussion paper.2004. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/13620 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

51. Ledford, Meredith King and Lucas, Bronwyn. *Youth Empowerment: The Theory and Its Implementation.* Youth Empowerment Solutions. 2013. http://www.youthempoweredsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Youth_Empowerment_The_Theory_and_Its_Implementation_YES-11-13-13.pdf

52. Mastercard Foundation and Restless Development. *2015-16 Youth Think Tank Report: Insights into Youth Economic Opportunities in East Africa.*

http://www.mastercardfdn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/MCF12013-Youth-ThinkTank-Report-digital-final.pdf

53. Mandel, Ruth and Katherine Kleeman. *America's Young Elected Leaders*. Rutgers University - Eagleton Institute of Politics. 2003 http://yppp.rutgers.edu/yelp/report-highlights/

54. Mercy Corps. Critical Choices: Assessing the Effects of Education and Civic Engagement on Somali Youths' Propensity Towards Violence. November 2016. https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/CRITICAL_CHOICES_REPORT_FINAL_DIGITAL.pdf

55. Mercy Corps. *Youth and Consequences: Unemployment, Injustice and Violence.* February 2015. https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/youth-consequences-unemployment-injustice-and-violence

56. Morton, Matthew and Montgomery, Paul. *Youth Empowerment Programs for Improving Adolescents' Self-Efficacy and Self-Esteem: A Systematic Review.* Research on Social Work Practice Vol 23, Issue 1, p. 22-23. December 2012. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1049731512459967

57. National Youth Agency UK. Site accessed May 2017. http://www.nya.org.uk/about-us/

58. Neumark, David and William Wascher Minimum Wages, Labor Market Institutions, and Youth Employment: A Cross-National Analysis. Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Cornell University. Vol.: 57 No. 2, page(s): 223-248. January 1, 2004. https://doi.org/10.1177/001979390405700204

59. Notes from Interviews conducted by World Bank consultant Steve Commins on 10-year anniversary of WDR 2007 in mid-2017.

60. Nourse, Tim. *Preparing Youth for the Future of Work.* PYXERA Global Blog and Making Cents International. 2017 https://www.pyxeraglobal.org/preparing-youth-future-work/

61. Ozerdem, Alpaslan. *The Role of Youth in Peacebuilding: Challenges and Opportunities.* Sustainable Security. October 2016. https://sustainablesecurity.org/2016/10/26/the-role-of-youth-in-peacebuilding-challenges-and-opportunities/

62. Pew Research Center. *Young People and Political Engagement.* September 2012. http://www.pewresearch.org/2012/07/16/ask-the-expert-young-people-and-political-engagement/

63. Richardson, Ingrid. *Applying a Youth-Lens to the Value Chain Approach.* February 2015. http://lvcd.projectmodel.org/applying-a-youth-lens-to-the-value-chain-approach-five-ways-to-integrate-youth-into-lvcd-projects/

64. PNPM-Urban Indonesia: *Evaluation of the Urban Community Driven Development Program*. January 2013. http://psflibrary.org/catalog/repository/Policy%20Note_Evaluation%20of%20the%20Urban%20CDD%20Program_PNPM%20Urban.pdf

65. Powers, Jane and Tiffany, Jennifer. *Engaging Youth in Participatory Research and Evaluation*. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Journal of Public Health Management Practice, 2006. November (Suppl), S79-S87. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17035908

66. Rankin, Kristen et al. *Youth and Transferable Skills: An Evidence Gap Map.* International Initiative for Impact Evaluation. September 2015.

http://www.3ieimpact.org/media/filer_public/2016/07/05/egm2-youth_and_transferable_skills.pdf

67. Resnick, D., and Casale, D. *The Political Participation of Africa's Youth: Turnout, Partisanship and Protest*. Working Paper No. 136, Afrobarometer, South Africa. 2011. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/the-political-participation-of-africas-youth-turnout-partisanship-and-protest/

68. Restless Development. *Follow-Up and Review: How to Scale e up Ambition on Youth-Led Accountability for the SGDS*. November 2015. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/follow-up-and-review-how-to-scale-up-ambition-on-youth-led-accountability-for-the-sdgs-pdf

69. Restless Development. *How to Scale Up Ambition on Youth-led Accountability for the SDGs.* November 2015. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/follow-up-and-review-how-to-scale-up-ambition-on-youth-led-accountability-for-the-sdgs-pdf

70. Rhize. *The New Global Citizen: Harnessing Youth Leadership to Reshape Civil Society.* 2016. http://www.rhize.org/newglobalcitizen/

71. S4YE (Solutions for Youth Employment). 2015. *Toward Solutions for Youth Employment: A Baseline Report.* https://www.s4ye.org/sites/default/files/Toward_Solutions_for_Youth_Employment_Full.pdf.

72. Sharma, Ritu and Rohan Naik. *Measuring Investments in Youth Economic Opportunity.* International Youth Foundation, and Center for Strategic and International Studies. April 2017. http://www.iyfnet.org/sites/default/files/library/MeasuringInvestments_YEO_0.pdf

73. Sheehan, Peter et al. *Building the Foundations for Sustainable Development: A Case for Global Investment in the Capabilities of Adolescents.* The Lancet. April 2017. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30872-3

74. The Economist. *Generation Jobless.* The Economist, April 2013. http://www.economist.com/news/international/21576657-around-world-almost-300m-15-24-year-olds-are-not-working-what-has-caused

75. The Education Commission. *The Learning Generation Report.* 2016. http://report.educationcommission.org/report/

76. The Freechild Project. *Youth-Adult Partnerships Tip Sheet*. 2002. https://web.archive.org/web/20070701120947/http://freechild.org/YAPtips.htm

77. UN 6th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum. *Concept Note: Youth engagement in eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity: Voices from the field*. January 2017 Trusteeship Council Chamber. UN EcoSoc Youth Forum. https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/2017doc/Youth-engagement-in-eradicating-poverty-and-promoting-prosperity-Voices-from-the-field.pdf

78. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). *World Population Prospects.* 2015 Revision. https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/publications/files/key_findings_wpp_2015.pdf

79. UN Interagency Network on Youth Development. *Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note.* http://www.youthpower.org/resources/young-peoples-participation-peacebuilding-practice-note-0

80. UNDESA. *Youth, Political Participation and Decision-Making*. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Focal Point on Youth. November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf

81. UNESCO. *Social Inclusion, Democracy and Youth in the Arab Region.* 2013. Beirut: UNESCO. http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/SHS/Social_Inclusion_Democracy_Youth_Background_Paper.pdf

82. UNESCO. *World Radio Day, Statistics on Youth*. 2013. http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/prizes-and-celebrations/celebrations/international-days/world-radio-day-2013/statistics-on-youth/

83. UNESCO. *Youth on the Move: the UN World Youth Report 2013 on Youth Migration.* 2014. http://en.unesco.org/news/youth-move-world-youth-report-2013-youth-migration

84. UN-Habitat. *Advancing Youth Civic Engagement and Human Rights with Young Women and Young Men.* Nairobi: UN-Habitat. 2013 https://unhabitat.org/books/advancing-youth-civic-engagement-and-human-rights/

85. UNICEF Evaluation Report: *2015 Thailand: Evaluation of the Thailand National Child and Youth Development Plan 2012-2015*. 2015. https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_90379.html

86. United Nations. *Youth, Political Participation and Decision-Making*. November 2013. https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-political-participation.pdf

87. US Departments of Labor, Commerce, Education and Health and Human Services. *What Works in Job Training: A Synthesis of the Evidence.* July 2014. https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/jdt/jdt.pdf

88. USAID. *Ending Child Marriage & Meeting the Needs of Married Children: The USAID Vision for Action.* October 2012. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdacu300.pdf

89. USAID. *Positive Youth Development in Low and Middle Income countries.* May 2017. https://www.icrw.org/publications/pyd-measurement-toolkit/

90. USAID. *State of the Field Report: Examining the Evidence in Youth Education in Crisis and Conflict.* USAID Youth Research, Evaluation and Learning Project. February 2013. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/USAID%20state%20of%20the%20field%20youth%20education%20in%20conflict%20final%202_11.pdf

91. USAID. *What We Know about "What Works" in Youth Civic Engagement and Voice, Youth Organizations, Youth Leadership, and Civic Education*. June 2015. https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/summary_of_findings_from_youth_and_drg_research_project.pdf

92. USAID. *Yes Youth Can*. 2013 https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1860/yes-youth-can-central

93. USAID. *Youth and Conflict: A Toolkit for Intervention.* United States Agency for International Development, Washington, DC. 2005 http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/youth-and-conflict-a-toolkit-for-intervention/

94. Walker, David, Pereznieto, Paola et al. *Restless Development. Partners for Change: Young People and Governance in a Post-2015 World*. September 2014. http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/partners-for-change-full-report-amended-pdf

95. Warburton, Diane. *Engagement in the Policy Cycle.* Taken from Karsten, Andreas. *Participation Models: Citizens, Youth, Online.* Youthpolicy.org. Version 2 updated 2012. http://www.youthpolicy.org/library/documents/a-potpourri-of-participation-models/

96. World Bank Group. *Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations.* 2014. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/21113 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO

97. World Bank. Children & Youth Project Development in Macedonia. Last accessed May 2017. http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P073483/children-youth-development-project-lil?lang=en&tab=overview

98. World Bank. *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation. P. 28. World Bank. 2006..* *https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5989 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO*

99. World Economic Forum. *Young Global Leaders Impact.* Site accessed June 2017. https://www.weforum.org/pages/ygl-impact

100. *Youth 4 Global Goals Annual Report 2016.* AIESEC International. https://issuu.com/aiesecinternational/docs/youth_4_global_goals_report_2016

101. Youth Policy Labs. *From Rhetoric to Action: Towards an Enabling Environment in the Sustainable Development Goals*. The Case for Space Initiative. Berlin: Youth Policy Press. 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/from-rhetoric-to-action-towards-an-enabling-environment-for-child-and-youth-development-in-the-sdgs/

102. Youth Policy Labs. *From Rhetoric to Action: Towards an Enabling Environment in the Sustainable Development Goals*. The Case for Space Initiative. Berlin: Youth Policy Press. 2015. http://www.gsdrc.org/document-library/from-rhetoric-to-action-towards-an-enabling-environment-for-child-and-youth-development-in-the-sdgs/

103. Youth Power. *Out of School Youth.* Accessed April 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/youthpower-issues/topics/out-school-youth

104. Youth Power. *Positive Youth Development*. Site accessed May 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development

105. Youth Power. *Youth Engagement Community of Practice*. Site accessed May 2017. http://www.youthpower.org/youth-engagement-cop

106. Youth.Gov (US Government website). *Positive Youth Development*. Site accessed May 2017. http://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development

XIII. Appendices

Appendix 1 – How to Engage: Cataloging 30 Common Tools of Youth Engagement

In the course of scanning the great breadth of youth engagement literature, we identified approximately 25 common mechanisms or tools that are used to engage youth at various levels. Most of these tools have to potential to be applied in a variety of contexts and in a variety of ways – treating young people as beneficiaries, partners, or as agents. In this way, it may be helpful to think of these **tools as issue and approach-agonistic**. Rather than having their application limited to certain settings and approaches, they are largely versatile.

Thus, the **outcomes of these tools will only be as strong as the underlying engagement approach.** Generally speaking, the more these tools are applied in a way that truly empowers youth as leaders, agents and catalysts of their own development, the more likely the impact when using the three-lens framework and asset-based approach identified above).

Many of these tools were identified from cases in the DFID 2010 CSO Youth Working Group Report, and from the 2017 YouthPower Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development.

The evidence found suggests that the tools in bold generally seem to be the most promising.

Key Figure: Cataloging 30 Common Tools of Youth Engagement

1. **Providing integrated youth development services** (including technical plus life skills development)
2. **Youth audits/scorecards** (taking stock of how organizations currently deal with youth, and integrate them in the process of taking stock)
3. Youth Fellowships
4. Alumni Networks
5. **Vocational skills training**
6. Job Matching Programs
7. Internship/apprenticeship programs
8. Safety net services (ex: insurance) for youth in informal sector
9. Youth consultations
10. Youth participatory budgeting (or other youth involvement in resource allocation)
11. **Youth participatory action research**
12. Voluntary service, civic service and service-learning programs
13. Peer education programs
14. **Soft skills/life skills training and development**
15. Productive safety nets (offered in times of stress or transition)
16. Home-based youth services
17. School-based youth services
18. Leadership development programs
19. Youth surveys
20. Youth cultural exchange/travel immersion programs (ex: gap year programs)
21. Youth advisory boards
22. Youth engagement policies or strategies
23. Youth entrepreneurship competitions or funds
24. Youth monitoring of the SDGs or other national development goals
25. **Capacity building and professionalization support for youth-led organizations**
26. **Supporting (through funding, capacity building, etc.) transnational youth movements**
27. Mentorship
28. Youth wings of political parties
29. Virtual youth networks
30. Youth Centers
31. Youth Councils

Appendix 2 - Different Methodologies for Quantifying the Costs of Youth Exclusion and Returns of Youth Inclusion

Here we highlight the four primary sources that emerged from this review that present rigorous quantitative analysis of the costs/benefits of youth exclusion and inclusion. Each source has a methodological note that can be reviewed for more details.

1. Knowles and Behrman 2005
2. Cunningham 2008
3. Chaaban 2008
4. Sheehan 2017

Appendix 3 - Select Annotated Bibliography of Key Sources

This short annotated bibliography provides additional information about ten key sources that were used throughout this review.

1. **Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low and Middle Income Countries (USAID, 2017)**

- Examined 108 peer-reviewed articles or grey literature reports (from an initial list of 24,961), which reported on 97 positive youth development programs being implemented across 60 low and middle-income countries
- "The evidence base regarding the effectiveness of PYD programs in LMICs is rather thin, with **little data comparing effectiveness of PYD programs against those that are not** using a PYD approach, and **infrequent measurement** of PYD outcomes. The existing literature also does not capture the **long-term effects** of PYD approaches on young people themselves."

2. **DFID-CSO Youth Working Group. Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policymakers. 2010 Dfid Youth Working Group Report 2010.**

This report identifies lessons on effective youth engagement from 20 different case studies in total (mostly from Africa and Asia), across four key themes:

   a. *governance voice and accountability;
   b. *post-conflict transitions and livelihoods;
   c. sexual and reproductive health and rights
   d. *social exclusion

3. It is perhaps the only report of its kind (filled with policy recommendations for development institutions) that was written with significant youth involvement. The report categorizes these case studies according to the "asset based approach to youth development" - engaging youth as beneficiaries, agents, and partners
4. There are three main sections of the report: a conceptual overview, the cases, and then a discussion about how to mainstream youth development. The report makes a significant

contribution to the literature by helping categorize many different tools/mechanisms for youth engagement (across diverse cases in many geographic contexts). One of its key recommendations is for development organizations to first start with increasing meaningful youth participation in their own work, before advocating that governments also increase their youth engagement.

3. World Development Report 2007 on Youth

- Defines youth as ages 12-24
- 5 key life transitions for young people: learning, working, staying healthy, forming families, and exercising citizenship
- 3 lenses that help assess priorities:
    - **expanding opportunities** - increasing the quality (not just quantity) of education, smoothing the transition to work, and providing young people with a platform for civic engagement.
    - **enhancing capabilities** - involves making young people aware of the consequences of their actions, especially consequences that will affect them much later in life; building their decision-making skills; and giving them the right incentives.
    - **Providing second chances** - helping young people recover from missed opportunities through remedial education, retraining, treatment, and rehabilitation

4. Interventions to Improve the Labor Market Outcomes of Youth: A Systematic Review of Training, Entrepreneurship Promotion, Employment Services, and Subsidized Employment Interventions (ILO 2016)[144]

This systematic review assessed the literature on the relationship between interventions for youth employment and labor market outcomes. Specifically, it focused on four types of interventions:

- Skills training
- Entrepreneurship promotion
- Employment services
- Subsidized employment

And three types of outcomes:

- Employment
- Earnings
- Business performance

The primary and complementary searches identified 32,117 records, of which a total of 1,141 records were selected for full text screening. The subsequent selection process led to a sample of 113 reports which were considered to be of adequate content and methodological rigour for inclusion in the meta-analysis.

Initial searches identified 32, 117 records, of which 1,141 were identified for full text review. Then records were based on four search criteria for inclusion:

- Evaluated a program with at least one of the four eligible interventions (above)
- Programs targeted to young people aged 15-35
- Had completed experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations

[144] Kluve, Jochen, Puerto, Susana et al. *Interventions to Improve the Labour Market Outcomes of Youth.* International Labor Organization (ILO). August 2016. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_508938.pdf

- Reported at least one eligible outcome variable measuring employment (e.g., probability of employment, hours worked, duration in unemployment), earnings (e.g., reported earnings, wages, consumption) or business performance (e.g., profits, sales).

"Overall, empirical results indicate positive treatment effects that are statistically different from zero on labour market outcomes. In other words, **investing in young people through active labour market programmes (ALMPs) pays off with positive impacts particularly on employment and earnings outcomes.** This impact does not take effect immediately and is **more pronounced among low- and middle-income countries** than among high-income countries."
Multi-pronged measures are shown to be effective in tackling the many barriers to success facing youth in the labour market, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, where skills training and entrepreneurship interventions have prompted significant improvements in youth employment and earnings outcomes

5. Gelpke, Sarah. Literature Review: What evidence is there to suggest that engaging young people in development enhances or limits development outcomes across different contexts and in different geographical locations?" Restless Development (2012).

Method and structure: This 75-page review assessed over 250 sources, many from grey literature and some from academic sources. This includes "academic and institutional documents from international development journals, books and key texts, policy documents, web resources, NGO and INGO publications and online resources at University and Policy institution sites.

The review primarily explored literature in the fields of Governance, Livelihoods and Sexual and Reproductive Health, as well as related documents and texts on youth engagement. A scoping study of UK universities, institutions and think-tanks identified those individuals and research centres that are involved in research in the development and youth sector. Face-to-face and telephone interviews were conducted with a number of scholars to gain greater insight into their work.

Key findings:

6. Development outcomes of the political and social inclusion of young people Becky Carter 17.07.2015

- This rapid review examines the evidence of development outcomes of the political and social inclusion of young people?
- It finds that qualitative case studies provide evidence – albeit limited, mixed, and context-specific – of a wide range of development outcomes from the political and social inclusion of young people
- Additional findings include:
    - case study evidence shows how, under the right conditions, inclusive social initiatives – such as peer groups and peer educators – can help change harmful practices such as child marriage.
    - Young people report the benefits from greater civic engagement of increased social capital through enhanced skills, confidence and self-esteem, and greater awareness of their rights. In turn parents report improved capacities and the positive benefits to local communities

- The literature highlights the potential costs for social stability of not involving young people in political and social processes. There is a small literature on the positive contribution of children and young people to peacebuilding, although findings tend to be mixed and context specific.
- The literature reviewed consistently highlights that the desired impacts of youth inclusion are not automatic. There are significant barriers to meaningful participation. Outcomes can be negatively affected in particular if support for inclusive initiatives do not actively seek and support the participation of marginalised and excluded young people."

7. Hilker, Lyndsay McLean and Erika Fraser. Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States. Report Prepared for DFID's Equity and Rights Team. Social Development Direct. April 2009.

This review examined the literature on the relationship between youth exclusion, violence and conflict. It identified four types of explanations from the literature about why some young people engage in violence

- Greed or opportunity perspectives
- Grievance perspectives
- Developmental reasons
- Structural exclusion and lack of opportunities that block or prolong the transition to adult

It then identified five drivers.

- Un or underemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities
- Insufficient or unequal access to education and skills
- Poor governance and weak political participation
- Socialization of gender roles and gender inequalities
- Legacy of past violence

Then four proximate factors that seem to help explain why some excluded youth do ultimately engage in violent behavior while other youth that experience the same forms of social, political and/or economic exclusion do not:

- Recruitment, coercion and indoctrination
- Identity politics and ideology
- Leadership and organizational dynamics
- Trigger events

Finally, it identifies a number of policy and programmatic recommendations in general and for DFID in particular, and concludes by highlighting areas for further research.

7. Sheehan, Peter et al. Building the foundations for sustainable development: a case for global investment in the capabilities of adolescents. The Lancet. April 2017.

Using benefit-cost analysis, this study quantified the benefits of investments in low income, lower-middle incomes, and upper-middle income, five types of interventions for adolescents: physical, mental and sexual health; secondary schooling; child marriage; violence against women; and road traffic injury.

These interventions, all to varying degrees help save lives, increase human capital, avoid disease and disability, increase ability to control fertility, and improve family and community relationships. In

turn, these translate into significant economic and social benefits (increased GDP and averted social costs) more broadly.

The benefit-cost ratios were high for all intervention areas, and were generally highest for low income countries. These BCRs ranged from 5.7 for child marriage up to 11.8 for education interventions and 17.0 for HPV vaccination programmes.

The authors conclude that dividends from adolescent investment could be very large, even after significant variations in underlying assumptions, with effects across health and well being and many other areas. These findings indicate that investments in adolescents, particularly girls and young women, should be prioritized in national and international policies.

A methodological note: the authors also observe that "in none of the areas studied was the basic literature on the cost and impact of interventions or the modelling tools as well developing as for sexual, reproductive, maternal and child health." This suggests that more evidence building and knowledge generation is needed to further quantify the impacts of investing in adolescent social, economic, and political integration and well being, beyond just investing in their health.