

KENYA CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

August 2020

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KENYA YOUTH ASSESSMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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By:

Diana Rutherford, Independent Consultant for Making Cents International
Dr. Anastasia Mirzoyants, Head of Knowledge and Learning, Shujaaz Inc.

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

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

In February 2020, USAID/Kenya and East Africa (USAID/KEA) commissioned the USAID YouthPower Learning team to conduct a cross-sectoral youth assessment (CSYA). The CSYA uses a Positive Youth Development (PYD) lens to capture the challenges and opportunities facing Kenyan youth, focusing on those 15–34 years and reporting on younger adolescents (10–14 years) where feasible. The assessment identifies opportunities to optimally support youth and guide USAID/KEA toward a strategic engagement with youth as: a) beneficiaries and participants of sustainable, Kenyan-owned development solutions that can be brought to scale over time, and b) key actors empowered to identify and prioritize challenges and propose local- and youth-based innovative solutions.

The findings and recommendations outlined here are based on 1) desk review findings of more than 100 sources; 2) 18 focus-group discussions with 130 youth; 3) key informant interviews with six youth role models, three adults who champion youth, and nine youth-focused stakeholders including businesses, program leaders, NGOs, and donors; 4) six SMS surveys with youth; 5) analysis of social media with thousands of youth, and 6) five youth-led Design Thinking sessions with 41 youth.

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary question the assessment will answer is:

“What are the specific sources of vulnerability, marginalization, and disaffection among Kenyan youth, and how can they be countered?”

The following questions guide the assessment:

- What are the main subgroups of marginalized/vulnerable Kenyan youth? What are the defining characteristics separating these groups?
- What are the routine challenges for youth in each subgroup? What are the common challenges all youth face? What are the unique challenges for selected subgroups?
- What products/services do youth need to help them overcome the mentioned challenges faster and more effectively?
- How can these products/services be best presented to youth: What would be the unique selling point or a unique value proposition for each?
- What are youth's solutions to address these sources of vulnerabilities and disaffection or solutions that reflect youth's perspectives and priorities?

C. FINDINGS

We break down the research questions into components to present a summary of the findings. For more detail, please see the report.

Sources of vulnerability, marginalization, and disaffection

Sources of vulnerability, marginalization, and disaffection are poverty, disease/illness, violence/abuse threatening physical and psychological safety, and ethnicity/religion, as they affect relative power and access to opportunities and services. Sources of vulnerability described by youth emerged during this assessment as:

- | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------|
| ▪ Physical | ▪ Social | ▪ Psychological | ▪ Digital |
| ▪ Financial | ▪ Locational | ▪ Demographic | |
| ▪ Educational | ▪ Occupational | ▪ Legal | |

Young Kenyans see vulnerability as a forced dependency on other people. The source of the dependency comes from a young person's inability to cover their basic needs by themselves, and results in a person choosing to allow somebody else to control their life and decision making in return for food, shelter, and possibly other benefits, material or otherwise. According to youth, vulnerability is not a homogeneous concept—it is multilayered and complex.

This report provides information on youth perspectives of vulnerability along with data collected from adult key informants and secondary sources.

Poverty

Most Kenyans live in poverty, which is multidimensional: a combination of monetary poverty and deprivation of basic needs. Youth are no different than adults, but they suffer more from poverty due to much higher unemployment and underemployment. Poverty is a source of other vulnerabilities, e.g., health and education services are not affordable for the poorest youth.

Youth defined financial vulnerability as a consistent lack of money to cover their basic needs: food, shelter/rent, transport, medical care, and education. Lack of money was a result of joblessness and the inability to either find a formal job or raise capital to start a business. Their families and caregivers lacking money was another root of youth financial vulnerability.

Beyond basic needs, poverty/lack of financial wherewithal means little or no access to capital to start or grow a business. Lack of funds means looking poor, possibly poorly dressed and ill, which negatively affects a young person's ability to find work or hustle on the street. Having no money also means not being able to bribe a police officer to forgo arrest or a beating, or paying someone to interview you for a job.

Education

Youth defined educational vulnerability as a condition or a context in which a young person is denied opportunities or abused (financially or emotionally), because they lack the right educational experience, such as education lacking an appropriate balance of practical and theoretical skills. Youth feel they are denied opportunities for which they are qualified when they lack recognized certificates/diplomas to verify their educational experiences. School access and retention are challenges for youth. While most adolescents attend some school, one out of 10 has never been to school. Across the country, school enrollment rates vary tremendously as the overall rate nears 90 percent across Kenya areas like the North Eastern Province (primary enrollment is less than 30 percent) and Marsabit County (secondary enrollment is less than 5 percent) are left behind. Orphaned and disabled children suffer the most from

educational vulnerability, despite free and compulsory education, but public secondary school fees are still beyond the reach of the most vulnerable families.

Other vulnerabilities that impact girls' education are early marriage and pregnancy, which often result in dropping out of school. Lack of sanitary pads, safe and appropriate sanitation facilities also reduce girls' school attendance. Boys are more likely to drop out of school because of work: either to help on the family farm or with livestock, or to earn income to help support the family, often younger siblings.

Youth have mixed feelings about Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Those who recognize the lack of formal employment, realize they need practical, marketable skills that they can use to work for others or for themselves. TVET and polytechnics are sources of market-relevant training, but many youth feel they lack access to them, sometimes because of location or poverty.

There is a mismatch between the education system and the job market. Older youth who completed secondary school and may have some tertiary school (or a tertiary degree) are less satisfied with the education system than younger youth who feel the quality of education is improving. Being hired as an employee requires a form 4 certificate (high school diploma), as there are far more youth available for work than there are opportunities. Youth also require a national identity card, which is difficult to obtain without a birth certificate: something many youth lack.

Education offers youth an opportunity to reduce their social vulnerability as it offers opportunities to build new and more varied social networks especially away from one's home community.

Social

Social vulnerability was one of the most important to youth who participated in the assessment. They defined social vulnerability as the lack of access to a large, high-quality network that connects them to opportunities and protects them from psychological, physical, financial, or other abuse and manipulation. Youth recognized that their peers can influence their behavior, such as trying drugs or alcohol.

Lack of family is a tremendous social vulnerability. Family can either accelerate or hinder a young person's effort to achieve: an abusive or neglectful family is a hindrance, while a supportive, loving family is an asset. A strong family network can be a source of opportunities if, for example, the family's clan or tribe has influence over who gets a job.

Health, physical and psychological

A young person's health can affect every aspect of their lives, from how well they perform in school or work to their ability to attend school, or how they are perceived by others. Youth with poor health face social rejection and the inability to work. Causes of poor health include malnutrition, various infections, HIV/AIDS and STIs, early and unintended pregnancy, unsafe abortion, child marriage, SGBV and FGM, among others. The sources of some illnesses are poor housing, water and sanitation facilities, while others are cultural (e.g., FGM). Substance abuse is on the rise, typically as a means of coping with painful life situations; also on the rise are teenage pregnancy, depression, and suicidal ideation. Youth talked about psychological health as a mental state, a stress so debilitating that it prevents young people from making the right choices in life, forcing them to give up trying to succeed. It can result in a deep depression and/or self-harm.

Youth focus group participants' first description of someone with a physical health vulnerability was a person with a disability, followed by street children and the homeless. Physical vulnerability covers the very basic needs of young people for food and shelter/safety; it also addresses disability, whether innate

or acquired through a sickness or an accident (i.e., health). For some, how a person looks (e.g., clothes, cleanliness, signs of fatigue or sickness) can also be a physical vulnerability.

Work and occupation

Unemployment and underemployment affect youth more than older Kenyans: youth unemployment is 35 percent compared with national unemployment (10 percent). It affects youth ages 20-24 and those in urban areas, especially women, more than those in rural areas. Underemployment¹ affects adolescents, ages 15-19 more than older youth. In speaking about earning a living, youth said they need mentors, peers, and adults who “were like them,” but successful. Their definition of success is modest: a good mentor may be someone who has just a little more than they have, like his/her own microenterprise (or hustle).

Barriers to youth employment differ very little between formal and informal sectors. Work is gendered, however, where women primarily work in sectors such as education, accommodation and food, and other service areas. Youth who took part in the assessment held some gender-based stereotypes, such as women having inadequate physical strength or natural balance, which appeared disempowering for both boys and girls because they limited themselves to what they thought of as “gender appropriate” opportunities.

Demographic and locational

Where we were born, what sex or gender we are, our age, and where we live help to define us. Some issues that most negatively affect youth are universal such as poverty and corruption, and being marginalized by elders, family, community, and government. Other issues, such as unemployment and underemployment, may be experienced differently depending on rural or urban living and gender.

Demographic vulnerability encompasses all the diverse experiences of various demographic groups that make it difficult for them to achieve their potential; for example, girls experience sexual harassment throughout all stages of their lives, boys feel judged and neglected, and youth are dragged into tribal and religious disputes, etc. Locational vulnerability revealed strong differences among youth by county and urban/rural contexts such as young people feeling that living in the “wrong” area reflects on how they are perceived by others and what opportunities they are afforded.

Legal

Legal vulnerabilities were experienced very similarly by young people across demographic subgroups with youth saying that they lack supportive legal structures to be able to reach their potential (e.g., grievance system, supportive business structures). In the marketplace, working as a “hustla” or doing informal work, offers no institutionalized social protection mechanisms to which youth can turn. So youth are easy targets of gangs, theft, and crime.

Digital access and behavior

Digital vulnerability seems to rely heavily on age, with access to the digital space dependent on the amount of money they could spend, with youth under 18 years being at a disadvantage. There is also a

¹ Underemployment is a state of not having enough paid work and/or doing work that does not make full use of one’s skills.

gender gap, as noted by *The Mobile Gender Gap Report 2020* that shows that one in every three internet users in Kenya is a woman, giving a gender gap of 34 percent.

In summary, young people have their own perspective on what vulnerability means and who is vulnerable. Their perspective reflects the complexity of their lives and the nuances of their experiences across age, gender, and location.

Characteristics of youth subgroups or personas

The second research question focuses on youth subgroups and their characteristics, as effective programming requires deep understanding of the target population. This report illustrates how heterogeneous are young Kenyans. Youth subgroups are typically based on cross-sections by age, gender, where they live, years in school, at what age they married and/or had first child, etc. The desk review yielded the following cross-section of age, gender, and location (rural/urban). The table presents a summary of subgroups of youth who are most negatively affected by each issue, e.g., schooling, teenage pregnancy, by age, gender, and whether they live in rural or urban areas. For some issues, the desk review did not result in conclusions about a specific demographic—rural versus urban, for example—while for others, a specific demographic was a clear differentiator.

From the vantage point of youth assets: the necessary resources, skills, and competencies to achieve desired outcomes, the results show that *youth with considerable assets* are most likely to be men older than 25 years who:

- Can rely on network, clan/tribe, and family support
- Completed tertiary education
- Work full-time in the formal sector
- Live in an urban setting with greater access to resources

Those with the least assets are most likely to be young women, 15-24 years, who:

- Lack work or engage in sex work (possibly unprotected)
- Lack schooling (altogether or did not complete form 4)
- Lack family or other social support
- Live in a rural setting with less access to resources
- Have multiple children
- Suffer from poor health, including HIV/AIDS and/or STIs

Table 1. Youth most negatively affected by issue by age, gender, location

	10-14 years		15-19 years		20-24 years		25-29 years		30-34 years		Rural		Urban	
Issue	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Early marriage														
Teenage pregnancy														
HIV/STIs														
Substance abuse														
SGBV/sexual harassment: especially among transgender; sex workers; house girls														
FGM														
Youth with disabilities														
WASH: worse in rural than urban														
Poverty														
Unemployment: more women														
Underemployment														
Lack of job experience														
Corruption & favoritism														
Access to health services														
Schooling: 10% no formal; disabled, child labor; orphans; adolescent mothers & sibling minders; children discriminated against due to culture, religion and/or gender; Northern Kenya														
Voice: especially lower socioeconomic, disabilities														
Civic engagement														
Marginalized by elders, family, community, government														

Most negatively affected by the issue Less negatively affected

Another way of describing youth cohorts is to create a composite youth who represents a subgroup. The concept of vulnerability and the impact of various layers of vulnerability are presented in a collection of illustrative personas to be used as practical tools to reference when designing youth-focused development interventions.

Each of these composite youth (or personas) are represented below. For each subgroup, we provide a short story highlighting the characteristics of the subgroup. For more details of the personas, please see the report.

Subgroup 1: Extreme poverty, single-parent household in rural area, several children, firstborn male


SEGMENT 1

MEET PETER

HE IS 20 YEARS OLD. THE FIRST-BORN BOY IN A RURAL SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLD.

HE WAS BORN IN RURAL KAKAMEGA. RAISED BY RELATIVES WHO HE WORKED FOR IN RETURN FOR FOOD & LODGING.

HE MOVED TO THE CITY LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES. RECRUITED BY A GANG AND BECAME INVOLVED IN DRUG-TRAFFICKING & CRIME.



Peter is the eldest of seven children in a single-mother household. Unable to take care of all her children, the mother sends Peter to live with a relative and work for the family business. In his relatives' home, Peter is neglected and denied school. He runs away to Mombasa in search of a better life only to find himself homeless and hungry. Peter is approached by a gang, who recruits him into their drug-trafficking business. He starts working with the gang, eventually using drugs. Some months later, Peter disappears; rumors suggest he was recruited by Al-Shabaab and left with them to Somalia.

Subgroup 2: Extreme poverty, single-parent household in rural area, several children, firstborn female

SEGMENT 2

MEET WISDOM

SHE IS 18 YEARS OLD. SECOND-BORN GIRL FROM A SINGLE PARENT FAMILY.

SHE WAS BORN IN RURAL KAKAMEGA. MOVED TO URBAN MOMBASA.

SHE WAS MARRIED OFF AS A TEENAGER INTO A POLYGAMOUS HOME.



Wisdom represents Subgroup 2. She is Peter's younger sister. Wisdom is two years younger than Peter. Once she reached 14, her mother married her off to a polygamous household in exchange for a cow and milk for the younger children. Her husband's first wife helped her through puberty; her husband allowed Wisdom to hustle so she could contribute to the household. Wisdom saves a bit of money and follows her brother to Mombasa. She goes through a similar experience as Peter with hunger and homelessness. Seeing that she is running out of money, Wisdom starts making simple shell jewelry to sell to tourists. One of her clients hires her to take care of her grandmother. The grandmother teaches Wisdom how to sew and leaves her a bit of money to start her own small business.

Subgroup 3: Extreme poverty, broken family, rural, abusive father, teacher as sponsor, personal perseverance

SEGMENT 3

MEET JOYCE

SHE IS 18 YEARS OLD. LIVES IN RURAL HOMABAY, WHERE SHE WAS BORN.

SHE WAS BORN INTO A TROUBLED FAMILY AND EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FROM AN EARLY AGE.

SHE LEFT HOME TO BE WITH A MAN, WHO LEFT HER WHEN SHE GOT PREGNANT.



Joyce comes from a broken abusive home. Once her period starts, she starts skipping school because there is no money for pads. A teacher comes to check on her and helps her with pads, food, and money. Eventually, they have sex and move to a different city as husband and wife. Joyce enjoys the escape from her abusive home, but once she gets pregnant, the teacher abandons her. She is squatting until childbirth, and then taken in with the newborn for a short while by the clinic's cleaning lady. She starts selling vegetables at the market but cannot make ends meet, so she resorts to transactional sex in several locations. Slowly, her business grows; she becomes independent and meets new peers through a women's savings group.

Subgroup 4: Large agricultural family, cash poor, child labor, second oldest

SEGMENT 4

MEET ANTHONY

HE IS 24 YEARS OLD. BORN ON A FARM IN ISIOLO THAT GRAZED CATTLE AND GREW CABBAGES.

HE COMES FROM A FAMILY THAT WAS SPLIT APART BY A LAND DISPUTE, SO HE MOVED TO THE CITY TO FIND WORK.

HE HAS SURVIVED MANY CHALLENGES TO BECOME A BODABODA RIDER, AND NOW LOOKS AFTER HIS SISTER, PAYING FOR HER SCHOOL FEES.



Anthony was the second born of seven children. Following a disagreement between father and first-born son, the son disappeared making Anthony the oldest son. His father insisted he leave school to work as the family needed money. Anthony was persistent and determined to finish form 4, which he did, saving a little bit for himself to finance leaving home for the city. There he got bit jobs, was taken advantage of by a group of boda boda (bicycle and motorcycle taxis) riders thereby losing his savings. Feeling low, he started drinking: one day at a bar, he told his story to another boda boda rider who told him about a chama (an informal cooperative society), which he eventually joined. One of his sisters joined him and he takes care of her while she attends school. They work together in the evenings. He is exhausted with two jobs but determined.

Subgroup 5: Daughter of single mother who was always working, SGBV, poor enabling environment

SEGMENT 5

MEET LEYLA

SHE IS 26 YEARS OLD. GREW UP IN KOROGOCHO IN NAIROBI WITH HER SINGLE MOTHER.

SHE WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI TO PURSUE A CAREER IN MARKETING BUT IS NOW A CARPENTER SELLING WOODEN PRODUCTS .

SHE IS A SINGLE MOTHER AND HAS TWO CHILDREN, WHO SHE PROVIDES FOR ON HER OWN.



Leyla became a mother at 19 while studying at university after a lonely adolescence with her mother living and working elsewhere, though they enjoyed each other when they were together. Despite an internship, she struggled to get work. Following a rape and theft by a group, she reported the theft, but could not report the rape to the male officers. She never heard from the police. Eventually, she persuaded a carpenter to train her in exchange for him selling her goods and taking most of the proceeds. She was rejected by a bank for a loan and saved up on her phone to get enough to rent her own stall and buy her own materials. Leyla finds being a woman in this business to be hard: police ask for bribes all the time, competitors spoil her things, clients often cheat her of money. There is no one to complain to. Sometimes she wishes she had not bothered with going to university and instead spent that money to start her business much sooner.

Subgroup 6: Urban son of 2-income family


SEGMENT 6

MEET SHADRACK

HE IS 22 YEARS OLD. BORN IN A RURAL AREA BUT NOW LIVES IN NAKURU.

HE HAS A GOOD EDUCATION AND WAS HEADBOY OF HIS SCHOOL.

HE IS POLITICALLY ENGAGED AND EAGER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF HIS PEERS.



Shadrack comes from a relatively stable two-parent family that settles in Naivasha; both his parents are working, so he completes high school and the college of his choice (BuruBru art school) without having to hustle and support himself. Nevertheless, he engages in art exhibits and sells his work to pay his parents back for his education. A natural leader, Shadrack always engages in youth networks and activities, through which he meets many public officials and community leaders. However, as much as he likes being part of the youth network, he feels youth leaders are not fully connected and they are achieving less than they could if they were working closely together.

Pathways for reaching youth

Youth are familiar with youth networks, especially the bunge network. These networks need to be strengthened and expanded to make them accessible for vulnerable young Kenyans. In addition to reaching youth through youth networks, youth should also be reached through:

- Social media, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, influencers and celebrities on social media,
- Youth leaders, including youth representatives, and
- Social events focused on youth, such as sport events and concerts, which youth watch or in which they participate.

Local pathways are critical to reaching youth, such as through local influencers, radio and TV stations, etc. Young people emphasized connections and exchanges between localities through the social events mentioned above.

Solutions to youth vulnerability

This section includes youth-provided solutions and recommendations by the assessment team. Solutions from youth, and youth leaders, who participated were:

- *Young people believe they can address challenges through a variety of individual and group engagements, such as peer-to-peer counseling, peer role models, peer mentors, and group activities (sports and/or community clean-ups and patrolling, etc.). The centrality and leadership of youth in youth-focused programming is critical to program success.*
- *Mentorship*—young people looking for mentors to guide them and young people looking for opportunities to mentor somebody—can be a positive, reciprocal relationship. While the mentee gains a role model and guidance, the mentor’s social status grows, as youth perceive part of life’s success as one’s ability to lift others. A peer mentor network can effectively engage youth, increase their self-esteem and agency, and mitigate vulnerabilities.
- Team competitions (sports, games) were described as both a pathway to reaching youth and a solution to several vulnerabilities, especially psychological. Inter-county and national competitions among youth teams mitigate the negative aspects of youth sabotaging one another due to competition for opportunities. These activities teach youth the value of teamwork and allow them to improve their soft skills. Competition is perceived as entertainment, which is important to young people.
- In the absence of a supportive, engaged family, youth suggested that schools and religious institutions have to play a bigger role in supporting youth. Specifically, youth suggested addressing the following issues in vulnerable communities: career counseling, comprehensive sexual education, menstrual hygiene and management for girls, criminal and extremist activity awareness and prevention. Youth and those supporting youth believe that young people can be (and sometimes are) pillars in their communities, but some youth lack guidance and are abused and manipulated.
- *Developing their talent is a red-hot issue among young Kenyans, especially vulnerable ones.* It might be the case that talent is seen as the shortest path to achieving wealth. Yet for young people’s self-esteem and confidence, it is important to encourage them and create an environment where they can develop and showcase their talent, bond with other young people, and have a sense of accomplishment.

Based on the assessment, we recommend using a PYD-based approach to design holistic, cross-sectoral youth-focused programs that take into account youth assets, agency, contribution, and enabling environment. The layered view of vulnerability provides a clear, detailed, and actionable view of how to improve the experience of young Kenyans. It also makes it possible to structure interventions to address as few (or as many) layers as an intervention framework permits (i.e., in terms of locations, timelines, and budget) and still achieve measurable positive impact. Design should be locally led so that programs are tailored to youth and their communities. Programs should be implemented by local organizations and public-private partnerships so that they are locally owned, incentivizing youth, organizations and communities to succeed and sustain positive outcomes.

Put young people at the center of designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating youth programs to create strong ownership, helping to address vulnerabilities in relevant and authentic ways thereby launching a positive ripple effect among Kenyan youth. Young people are the best “destiny helpers” (mentors/guides). Young people would like to learn from each other, but most importantly they see “uplifting others” and “giving back” as a sign of personal success.

Solutions and interventions must be local to youth, meeting youth where they live. Youth networks, leaders, and local young influencers and celebrities would likely be effective program champions, endorsers or advocates.

Support more widespread, inclusive, effective networks for youth. One of the critical gaps highlighted by the findings is the lack of meaningful networks that 1) support young people through sharing knowledge and experiences, and 2) link them to opportunities, e.g., financial services, how to apply for government funds, how to submit a proposal for goods or services in response to County needs.

Develop trust between youth across physical boundaries. While young people have positive experiences working in groups, they are also acutely aware of peer competition for opportunities. The negative effects, such as mistrust, of competition for limited opportunities are the main hindrances to forming effective peer networks and to successful peer cooperation. Networks like the National Youth Bunge Association and YALI need to include all youth in their areas and/or expand to reach more youth. They also need to coordinate and improve their capacity for outreach. That's a challenge among people whose lives may be uprooted (e.g., by COVID-19) and whose contact information may frequently change. Yet in developing peer networks, young people can be linked with members across different communities using mechanisms for establishing trust, such as sports, games, and facilitated groups.

Create locally designed and trusted mentor networks. The need for peer and adult mentors was clearly expressed by youth and their effectiveness in PYD is supported by evidence. Working with and training local NGOs, CSOs/CBOs already working in sub-counties is a feasible approach to starting networks and vetting and training mentors. **Identify local youth and adult champions** to support the network's ongoing processes; design reporting systems and databases to maintain information; create cloud-based databases for easy tracking and reporting, and provide the technology and airtime as an incentive for the champions to continue to volunteer for the job.

Use reciprocity to support sustainability and social network building. The aspiration to do for others what has not been done for them (mentorship, financial and social support), is a striking but very important clue as to how potential youth-focused programs can be scaled successfully and in a cost-effective manner. An example of this is the Global Give Back Circle program. Young Kenyans can be a pillar in the community and positively impact the lives of others. However, as young people highlighted in FGDs, those who go to sleep hungry every day cannot even help themselves.

Conduct a youth-led national identity card campaign. Despite progress, only about half of youth have a national identity card and they need it to seek formal work, apply for funds, seek capital, and engage in civic activities. The process is difficult, but not impossible. Once people have been vaccinated for COVID-19, consider a public service campaign announcing the goal to provide every Kenyan youth who does not yet have government identification with a national identity card. Decide on a process that includes some of the existing vetting, but that includes youth in designing the process. Youth believe the process is rigged so that some young Kenyans are denied an ID due to discrimination or corruption.

Prioritize education, financial, and social vulnerabilities. They are the core layers and addressing them first will help to effectively magnify the impact of a youth-focused program. Such a program would include building skills and knowledge: workforce technical and vocational training, financial literacy, soft skills, and family planning/sex education. Integrating this knowledge recognizes that youth work and health are interconnected: teenage pregnancy negatively affects the ability of young women and men to

get an education and engage in work,² and youth looking forward to good livelihoods are more likely to take care of their health.³ The program would foster healthy relationships with peers and adults and include peer and adult mentors. Safe spaces are needed for safe and engaging learning environments that include multiple means of learning, such as games, role-playing, and learning materials. A supportive enabling environment engages families, communities, and policymakers. The program would link youth with youth-friendly health services and financial services. Prior to program development, the project would consult with employers and conduct market analyses to identify appropriate sectors, partners, linkages, and market-driven training.

Evaluate youth programs to know what works well, for whom and how much it costs. Many USAID youth-inclusive programs while not youth-focused programs, are described in reports and by informants as positively affecting youth wellbeing. Few, however, have been evaluated. This is an area requiring coordination. One implementing partner mentioned having funds from multiple organizations, sharing evaluations with the funder requesting them, but not with all funders or the public. This leads to another recommendation: conduct impact evaluations, make program monitoring and evaluation data, and analyses public. Build capacity among stakeholders including implementers, universities, and users so that findings are reliable, valuable, and used.

Applying the CSYA findings requires **coordination among stakeholders** to maximize outcomes of youth-focused activities for young Kenyans. Donors, NGOs, implementing partners, and youth agree that the funding in Kenya is tremendous, and that there is little coordination among those who control and use the funds to facilitate youth development.

² Bailey MJ. More power to the pill: the impact of contraceptive freedom on women's life cycle labor supply. The Quarterly Journal of Economics. 2006 Feb;289-320. <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/121.1.289>; Canning D, Schultz TP. The economic consequences of reproductive health and family planning. The Lancet. 2012;380(9837):165-171. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(12\)60827-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(12)60827-7); Jensen R. Do labor market opportunities affect young women's work and family decisions? Experimental evidence from India. The Quarterly Journal of Economics. 2012;127:753-792.

³ Smith P, Buzi R, Abacan A. Workforce development as a promising approach to improving health disparities among young males. The Journal of Men's Studies. 2014;22(1):3-11. <https://doi.org/10.3149/jms.2201.3>; Jensen R. Do labor market opportunities affect young women's work and family decisions? Experimental evidence from India. The Quarterly Journal of Economics. 2012;127:753-792; Arcand JL, Wouabe ED. Teacher training and HIV/AIDS prevention in West Africa: regression discontinuity design evidence from the Cameroon. Health Economics. 2010;19(S1):36-54. DOI: 10.1002/hec.1643; Bailey MJ. More power to the pill: the impact of contraceptive freedom on women's life cycle labor supply. The Quarterly Journal of Economics. 2006 Feb;289-320.