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A Ganar & Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program Mid-Term Performance Evaluation

September 2013

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A GANAR & CARIBBEAN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM MID-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

September 2013

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by Ramon Balestino, Mark Bardini, and Lindsay North.

Cover page: A USAID-supported young man working in an attachment construction worksite in Grenada.

A GANAR & CARIBBEAN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM MID-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION



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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID / Barbados and Eastern Caribbean (USAID/BEC) requested a mid-term performance evaluation of two youth programs: A Ganar and Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program. An independent external team, led by Dexis Consulting Group and Management Systems International (MSI), conducted the evaluation. The Dexis/MSI Team rolled out the evaluation via two teams: one responsible for the Eastern Caribbean's northern countries (i.e., St. Kitts, Antigua and Dominica) and the second responsible for the southern countries (St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada). Each team also had a project emphasis as two of three countries visited corresponded to one specific project: Team 1 ~ A Ganar; Team 2 ~ CYEP.

The evaluation approach was based on two arms: (1) a utilization-focused, participatory design that employed qualitative and quantitative methods to draw out perceptions corresponding to before, during and after contexts; and (2) leveraging Eastern Caribbean know-how and resources through local management, Eastern Caribbean evaluation experts, and country-based youth volunteer research teams. Across the evaluation fieldwork, the following was realized: 281 program youth surveyed; 101 non-program youth surveyed; 28 youth focus groups (16 A Ganar; 12 CYEP); 16 IO interviews; 26 private sector interviews (partnering companies); 15 public sector interviews; and 13 program officer interviews.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The USAID/BEC statement of work identified five key questions to be answered through the performance evaluation. A summary of the major findings will be listed under each question as follows:

1. To what extent does participation and completion of the workforce development programs contribute to the likelihood that youth who are beneficiaries of the program will obtain and maintain jobs, return to school, start their own business or reduce risky behavior as compared to non-program participants? What are the major factors that contributed to the achievement of (or failure to achieve) these results?

- ✓ The A Ganar and CYEP Programs are seen to have the most positive effect on the self-confidence, self-awareness and outlook of graduated project youth.
- ✓ A Ganar and CYEP have a positive, yet emerging effect on life skills of participants and graduates as viewed by private sector informants.
- ✓ Program participation produces positive effects on the employment status of a select number of graduating youth. This potential effect on employment status rises when youth become graduates.
- ✓ Despite a comparison group that was older, more educated, more likely to be employed and more rigorously selected to their program, A Ganar / CYEP youth reported higher gains on the majority of workforce characteristics surveyed.

2. Does the use of sports in the A Ganar workforce development curriculum versus the non-sports CYEP program increase the retention rate, the job insertion rate, and the effectiveness of the program to teach life skills, language, math, IT, and other complimentary activities among beneficiaries of the program?

- ✓ In the Eastern Caribbean, the sports emphasis of the A Ganar curriculum does not appear to produce a stronger positive effect on retention, job insertion or the transfer of skills versus the non-sports curriculum of CYEP.
- ✓ CYEP maintains a higher retention rate range versus A Ganar. Each program's self-reported dropout rates also point to similar trends.

- ✓ A Ganar graduates reported higher employment rates than CYEP graduates. Employment rates between A Ganar trainees and graduates showed higher increases versus the same from CYEP.
- ✓ Self-reported life skills gains of CYEP graduates and trainees are higher in nearly every characteristic, versus the self-reported gains of A Ganar graduates and trainees.

3. What are the essential components for workforce development programs to be successful?

Before addressing essential elements for workforce development programs (WDP), a simple four-step strategic process was first offered up to best inform the feasibility and utility of adapting such:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Step 1. (Re) Assess Youth & Market (Supply/Demand) | Step 3. Review Available Resources |
| Step 2. Develop Solid Monitoring & Evaluation Plan | Step 4. Identify WDP Success Components & Tailor |

Informed by the above-mentioned four-step process, the following comprises a ‘toolbox’ of essential WDP components, which can be selected as deemed relevant and necessary.

- ✓ **Phased, Comprehensive & Private Sector-Driven Approach to Training:** WDPs should avoid focusing on program length, and instead focus on: (i) depth of curriculum; (ii) periodicity of training and complementary practice; and (iii) flexible, yet consistent, content and pedagogy.
- ✓ **Multiply Practical Learning & Job Placements:** Partnership strategies should be continued and enhanced through: (a) securing internship and placement opportunities via international as well as national and local partnership models; (b) establishing alliances with ‘competing programs’ in-country and broaden potential labor pool to partner companies; and (c) scaling-up entrepreneurship programs and emphasizing alliances with financial institutions.
- ✓ **Staff Incentives:** Incentivizing facilitators and administrative staff is important to combating challenges all WDPs face such as high turnover, teacher and participant absenteeism, and demotivated youth participants.
- ✓ **Policy Focus:** The evaluation views two important policy opportunities to pursue in the EC region. The first is partnering with youth-focused ministries (i.e., labor, education or youth) in order to build capacity via: strengthening internal policies or systems; enhancing capacity to better understand a certain context or issue and take action accordingly; or support strategies to develop or implement a specific policy / law. The second opportunity is seeking to validate WDP curricula and boost young people’s educational status via a nationally recognized certificate.
- ✓ **Capacity Building:** Although there is some overlap with the policy component, building the human and institutional capacity of organizations to support young people’s transition into the workforce is seen as critical to enable effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.
- ✓ **Manage for Results:** Establishing a set of causally linked outcome-level results is critical for the planning, management and reporting of any WDP program.

4. What benefits have accrued to the development of the local IOs since the introduction of the CYEP and A Ganar programs?

- ✓ Generally, A Ganar and CYEP IOs report low to moderate levels of benefits accrued since the introduction of the CYEP and A Ganar programs.
- ✓ The two areas in which benefits accrued by IOs was reported as moderate to high were: (i) partnerships ~ leveraging resources and/or services through collaborative partnerships; and (ii) employer engagement ~ engaging public/private sector employers to strengthen program activities.
- ✓ All IOs expressed desire to continue programs; however, only select IOs are seen to possess the ability to continue with aspects of their corresponding program absent financial support from POA or IYF.

5. Are the benefits to youth serving organizations provided under the two programs sustainable?

- ✓ A Ganar IOs considered moderate → high in organizational sustainability: Her Majesty's Prison (Dominica); NSTP (St. Kitts & Nevis); CASMAC and Green Hill Sports & Culture (St. Vincent & Grenadines).
- ✓ CYEP IOs considered moderate → high in organizational sustainability: GARD (Antigua); GIDC and NEWLO (Grenada); BELfund and CARE (St. Lucia).
- ✓ CYEP IOs considered moderate → high in financial sustainability: BELfund and NSDC (St. Lucia).

Rapid Gender Analysis

At the request of the Mission, a 'rapid gender analysis', in which a gender-lens was utilized to analyze all secondary and primary information collected, was conducted and yielded the following major findings:

- ✓ Within A Ganar and CYEP, there was a balance between surveyed males and females reporting status as employed.
- ✓ Both programs lack gender-specific indicators and do not appear to be disaggregating and tracking gender-specific outcomes beyond enrollment levels.
- ✓ Both programs are aware that female participants drop out due to pregnancy and/or lack of childcare options; yet, programmatic provisions made to accommodate appear to be limited to non-existent.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation's major findings consist of successes to leverage and challenges to be overcome. Appropriately, the following overarching recommendations are provided to further enhance the positive effect on the A Ganar and CYEP youth cohort:

- ✓ **Tighter Targeting of Beneficiary Youth:** At this stage in the life cycle of both programs, a key message of the evaluation is to emphasize quality over quantity. It is recommended that both programs work with the Mission to select a tighter age range of youth beneficiaries and a more specific educational profile.
- ✓ **Ramp-up Capacity Building Efforts:** While both programs have different end-dates (CYEP in Dec 2013 and A Ganar in FY 2015), IO capacity building efforts should be targeted, tailored and prioritized.
- ✓ **Improve Reporting & Evidence of Success:** The following consist of quick-fix options to improve reporting quality of both programs: (i) identify USAID indicators and define key terms; (ii) disaggregate data by female/male; and, (iii) measure learning and behavior change.
- ✓ **Develop Activity Level M&E Plans:** Following the new USAID guidance, it is recommended that each program update their M&E plan in order to facilitate stronger performance monitoring efforts.
- ✓ **Strengthen Programming:** The following options can bolster the positive effect both programs are currently achieving: (a) implement a 'piggyback' approach to entrepreneurship development; and (b) deepen theoretical and practical emphasis of the life skills curriculum.
- ✓ **Increase Partnerships:** Moving from both programs' strengths, A Ganar and CYEP IOs should continue developing partnerships aimed at leveraging additional resources and improving the sustainability of the programs. These partnerships include public private partnerships, intra-program country partnerships; and intra-program regional partnerships.
- ✓ **Incorporate Gender into Programming:** Three key recommendations should be undertaken to better integrate gender into programming and practice: (a) Inclusion of a "Gender Action Plan" in

planning and reporting mechanism; (b) maintain a balance of males and females in mentor cohorts; and (c) address childcare issues among female youth.

With the USAID program cycle as the primary point of reference, the following recommendations aspire to add value to two key USAID/BEC efforts: (1) maximizing A Ganar and CYEP success; and (2) enhancing future programming efforts in the youth workforce arena.

Maximizing A Ganar and CYEP Success

- ✓ **Guide the Definition of Desired Outcomes:** Identify / develop key indicators that will illuminate the definition of the key outcomes sought by the Mission (i.e., business start-ups, school re-insertion, reduction of risky behavior).
- ✓ **Data Quality Assessment(s) (DQA):** Conducting a DQA on one or both programs is recommended. The purpose will be to ensure that USAID/BEC is fully aware of data strengths and weaknesses and the validity of data when making management decisions and reporting as programs close out.
- ✓ **Strengthen Reporting Requirements:** Overall, it is recommended that the Mission require a number of ‘standardized elements’ to improve program reporting, which include: (i) reporting on identified standard / custom indicators that the Mission has linked to the DO1 results framework; (ii) reporting on gender-specific information (i.e., issues, results and/or interventions); (iii) reporting on IO capacity building efforts and results; and (iv) developing a more standard reporting template.
- ✓ **Deepen Relationships with Key Private Sector Partners:** The Mission should further leverage and multiply the private sector’s positive sentiment in a manner that can have deeper positive effects on current and future at-risk youth programming.

Enhancing USAID/BEC Youth Workforce Programming

- ✓ **Prioritizing High-Risk Eastern Caribbean Youth:** Positive programming directed toward this cohort of young people is considered necessary and important. Therefore, it is recommended that USAID continue delivering programs for EC’s high-risk youth to best prepare them to positively transition into a productive adulthood.
- ✓ **Avoid Catchall Programming for Out-of-School Youth:** With limited available resources and USAID/BEC’s regional scope of emphasis, care should be taken to avoid ‘mile wide and inch deep’ programming. One preventative measure is to specify the demographic and educational profile of at-risk youth
- ✓ **Considerations to the RDCS:** There are two considerations that may support the Mission’s development of results that correspond to youth with the Results Framework: (a) take into consideration that ‘improved capacity’ typically sits at the first level of the results hierarchy – not the highest; and, (b) ensure that future programs: articulate a causal chain of results; and that their higher-level results support achievement of the RF results.

ACRONYMS

ACE	Adult and Continuing Education
A Ganar	Spanish for “To Win”
BEC	Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean
BELfund	James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund
CALLS	Center Where Adolescents Learn Love
CAP	Community Achievers Project
C.A.R.E	Centre for Adolescent Renewal and Education
CASMAL	Caspar/Maria Marshal Center
CBO	Community-based organization
CHLP	Caribbean Health Lifestyles Project
CYEP	Caribbean Youth Empowerment Project
EC	Eastern Caribbean
GARD Centre	Gilbert Agriculture & Rural Development
GIDC	Grenada Industrial Development Corporation
HR	Human Resources
IO	Implementing Organization
IT	Information Technology
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IYF	International Youth Foundation
MOE	Ministry of Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NEWLO	New Life Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSDC	National Skills Development Centre
PEPnet	Promising and Effective Practices Network
POA	Partners of the Americas
PTS	Passport to Success
RA	Youth Volunteer / Research Assistant
SKNFA	St. Kitts and Nevis Football Association
SKWHM	St. Kitts District Wesleyan Holiness Men
SOW	Statement of Work
SKN	St. Kitts and Nevis
SVG	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
USAID/BEC	US Agency for International Development/Barbados and Eastern Caribbean
UWIC	University of West Indies Consulting
WDP	Workforce Development Program
YAP	Youth Assistance Program
YEDF	Youth Enterprise Development Fund
YES	Youth Empowerment Service

INTRODUCTION

A. Evaluation Purpose & Evaluation Questions

The following report provides a mid-term performance evaluation of two USAID / Barbados and Eastern Caribbean (USAID/BEC) youth programs:¹ A Ganar; and Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP).² Pursuant to task order 538-13-00000, and on behalf of USAID/ BEC, the evaluation was conducted by an independent external team led by Dexis Consulting Group and Management Systems International (MSI).

The purpose of this evaluation is to contribute knowledge and learning at USAID/BEC with respect to the: (a) effectiveness of at-risk youth prevention programs especially in successfully providing a second chance for youth and in areas that are relevant to their countries; and (b) use of sports in development interventions with a focus on its use in attracting and keeping youth focused. The results of the evaluation will be used by USAID/BEC to assist in the design of future youth-focused programs that target vulnerable youth under its current 2011-2015 strategy (see Annex A for SOW).

The scope of work identified five key questions to be answered through the performance evaluation:

1. To what extent does participation and completion of the workforce development programs (WDPs) contribute to the likelihood that youth who are beneficiaries of the program will obtain and maintain jobs, return to school, start their own business or reduce risky behavior as compared to non-program participants? What are the major factors which contributed to the achievement of (or failure to achieve) these results?
2. Does the use of sports in the A Ganar workforce development curriculum versus the non-sports CYEP program increase the retention rate, the job insertion rate, and the effectiveness of the program to teach life skills, language, math, IT, and other complimentary activities among beneficiaries of the program?
3. What are the essential components for workforce development programs to be successful?
4. What benefits have accrued to the development of the local IOs since the introduction of the CYEP and A Ganar programs?
5. Are the benefits to youth serving organizations provided under the two programs sustainable?

B. A Ganar & CYEP Background

A Ganar

In 2009, USAID awarded Partners of the Americas (POA) a \$1.4 million two-year cooperative agreement to implement the A Ganar Alliance program. The table below provides a rapid summary of A Ganar:

Program Name	<i>A Ganar</i>
Implementing Partner	Partners of the Americas (POA)
Start/End	FY 2009-2015
Funding (US \$)	8.9 million total: Phase 1 (2009-11) ~ \$1.4 million; Phase 2 (2011-15) ~ \$7.5 million,
Youth Definition	16-24 y/o
Profile of Youth	At-risk youth that: (a) come from a socially or economically-disadvantaged household or community; or (b) dropped out of school or is one or more years behind; (c) his/her community is plagued by high level of drug use and/or trafficking, youth violence and/or youth gangs; or (e) are seeking a second chance.

¹ Throughout the report, A Ganar & CYEP are referred to as 'programs' to mirror USAID/BEC terminology.

² The programs are referred to in alphabetical order; it does not represent preference or advantage.

Program Focus	Targeting 4,500 total youth in six countries within geographic scope (see next). Training focuses on building employability skills. The program also uses sports as an educational “hook” and as a context for basic education and IT skill training.
Geographic Scope	Dominica; Dominican Republic; Guatemala; Honduras; Jamaica; St. Kitts; St. Vincent
Evaluation Scope	Dominica; St. Kitts; St. Vincent

A Ganar seeks to combat unemployment through the application of a 7-9 month, integrated job training program in which youth transform lessons and intellectual skills, developed through sports, into marketable job skills.

A Ganar works through local implementing organizations or ‘IOs’ (i.e., NGOs, CBOs, foundations or government entities) that were selected based on a competitive solicitation process and must meet the following criteria: demonstrate financial stability; have access to suitable resources, facilitators, and facilities; and possess ability to attract or contribute additional resources into the project. The following is a rapid summary of the A Ganar IOs in the three countries:

A GANAR/St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG): A Ganar began in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2010. During the cycles one and two, 203 youth were trained via five IOs: Adult and Continuing Education (ACE), Youth Department/Green Hill, Liberty Lodge, Marion House and Caspar/Maria Marshal Centre (CASMAR). During 2012, SVG conducted its third cycle of implementation with six organizations adding Rose Hall Working Group/National Council of Women. Currently, there are five active IOs as Liberty Lodge is no longer with A Ganar.

A GANAR/Dominica: A Ganar began in Dominica in February 2012 with a total of 50 young people between age 16-24: 26 males with the Youth Development Division (YDD) and 14 males and 11 females at the Center Where Adolescents Learn to Love and Serve (CALLS). The 2012 phase concluded with 40 trainees graduating in November 2012 (21 YDD and 19 CALLS). In 2013 YDD added programs at the Roseau and Marigot Youth Centers and recently the Social Centre and the Prison have initiated programs.

A GANAR/St. Kitts and Nevis (SKN): A Ganar was initiated in May 2010 with 120 youth being trained by Community Achievers Project (CAP), Caribbean Healthy Lifestyles Project (CHLP), and the St. Kitts and Nevis Football Association (SKNFA). In January 2011, 105 youth graduated from the program. A second cohort of 85 youth was trained in March 2011 under SKNFA and the St. Kitts District Wesleyan Holiness Men (SKWHM). Of the 85, 50 SKWHM participants completed training. The remaining 35 SKNFA youth graduated in December 2012. In January 2012, the Ministry of Education (MOE) began its first implementation with 120 youth. The second cycle of 120 youth began in October of 2012. Currently, only the MOE is active.

Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP)

In 2008, USAID/BEC awarded the International Youth Foundation (IYF) a cooperative agreement to implement the CYEP. The table below provides a rapid summary of the CYEP program:

Program Name	Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program
Implementing Partner	International Youth Foundation
Start/End	10/2008 - 12/2013
Funding (US \$)	Phase 1 (2009-2011) ~ \$2.5 million; Phase 2 (2011-2013) ~ \$2.5 million
Youth Definition	17-25 y/o
Profile of Youth	At risk-youth

Program Focus

Provide at-risk youth with: (i) skills training (life skills, IT, entrepreneurial, technical, cultural); (ii) access to the job market via apprenticeships and job insertion (ensure 40% job placement rate); and (iii) sustainable livelihood pathways to prepare them for positive roles within the workforce, communities, and their families.

Geographic & Evaluation Scope

Antigua/Barbuda; Grenada; St. Lucia

IYF has employed the methodology of its Entra21 program as the core of CYEP. In the three EC countries, a second phase of this program started in early 2012 and builds upon Phase I experiences. This second phase focuses on at-risk youth in vulnerable communities, with the addition of career counseling as well as a microenterprise development. CYEP also works through local IOs that were selected based on a similar competitive solicitation process and criteria as the A Ganar project. The following is a rapid summary of the CYEP IOs in the three countries:

CYEP/St. Lucia:

Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund Incorporated (BELfund). For the past twelve years, BELfund, a government entity, has offered at-risk, unemployed St. Lucians access to low cost loans, enterprise training, technical assistance and other business support services. BELfund joined CYEP St. Lucia in Phase II to provide holistic entrepreneurship training based upon IYF's Passport to Success.

National Skills Development Center (NSDC). NSDC is recognized as the premier vocational training agency of St. Lucia and has been training youth for the past 12 years. The center builds upon a successful CYEP Phase I partnership in which 216 youth received vocational training and 41% were employed.

Centre for Adolescent Renewal and Education (C.A.R.E.). CARE is an NGO that has been working with marginalized youth for 20 years. In Phase 1, CARE contributed to NSDC's project by providing intensive life skills training to incarcerated youth and assisting with job placement support and M&E.

RISE: RISE is non-profit, non-governmental organization that has been operating since 2007. Since their involvement in CYEP in Phase 1, they have worked in support of the other CYEP IOs in St Lucia to recruit candidates for the program, assist in the mentorship component, and support M&E efforts.

CYEP/Grenada:

New Life Organization (NEWLO). NEWLO is a life skills and vocational training NGO with 28 years of experience. NEWLO offers at-risk youth life skills and competency-based, market-relevant training.

Grenada Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC). For the last five years, GIDC has specialized in youth entrepreneurship training via a cadre of full time staff. It benefits from an existing partnership with governmental agencies that provide access to financing for its graduates.

CYEP/Antigua:

Gilbert Agricultural & Rural Development Center (GARD Center). GARD builds upon the success CYEP Phase I success to provide youth with comprehensive training and job placement. The Center is a leading training facility with over 20 years of experience.

Non-A Ganar / CYEP Comparison Projects

In addition, the evaluation looked at a number of 'comparison projects' in order to answer evaluation question #1. With the guidance of the Mission, the following comparison projects were identified and analyzed in St. Lucia (where CYEP is working) and St. Vincent (where A Ganar is working):

St. Lucia. These comparison projects consisted of trainee and graduated youth from similar BELfund and NSDC youth workforce development training programs. The companion BELfund program was the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) that targets youth from 18-35 y/o and is supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is a selective program based on an interview and a preliminary business plan. NSDC is using an extracurricular activity/life skills module that is integrated into their programs.

St. Vincent. The comparison projects consisted of trainee and graduated youth from Marion House's Youth Assistance Program (YAP) and the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports/Youth Affairs Department's Youth Empowerment Service (YES) program – supported by Thailand. YAP provides life and work skills training to youth 15 -19. The YES program targets out-of-school, unemployed youth through attaching them to a business enterprise.

C. Evaluation Methods & Limitations

Approach and Methods

The Dexis/MSI Team rolled out the evaluation via two teams: one responsible for the Eastern Caribbean's northern countries (i.e., St. Kitts, Antigua and Dominica) and the second responsible for the southern countries (St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada). Each team also had a project emphasis as two of three countries visited corresponded to one specific project: Team 1 for A Ganar; Team 2 for CYEP. At the same time, however, each team had one country experience with the opposite project in order to enable more robust analysis whereby each team validates the other's findings.

The approach of this evaluation was based on two arms. The first consisted of a utilization-focused, participatory design that employed qualitative and quantitative methods (see Annex C for data collection tools). Within the mixed method paradigm, the approach drew out perceptions corresponding to before, during, and after contexts. Also, the Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPnet) Guide to Quality Standards for Sustainable Youth Programs was the questioning framework utilized for evaluation questions 4 and 5. Performance and training items were addressed via the Kirkpatrick Training Evaluation model (satisfaction, learning, application, impact). This evaluation focused on a self-perception of satisfaction (i.e., success) related specifically to the learning and application phases.

In the spirit of USAID Forward, the second arm of the evaluation approach leveraged Eastern Caribbean know-how and resources. Complementing Dexis and MSI's management role, the University of the West Indies Consulting (UWIC) was a key partner in the evaluation and fielded and managed one of the two evaluation teams. As well, each evaluation team was composed of Caribbean evaluation experts who best understand the local context. Finally, in nearly every country, a country-based youth volunteer research team contributed to the fieldwork and analysis.

Data Collection, Sample and Analysis

Data collection took place over a three week period – one week per country (June 23 through July 12, 2013) with teams one and two working simultaneously in their respective countries. As described above, selected comparable Non-CYEP/A Ganar projects were sampled in St. Lucia and in St. Vincent.

The total evaluation sample was identified via two methods. The first was a stratified, randomized method, which drove the sample selection of CYEP and A Ganar youth. Participant lists were provided by IOs and served as the list-frame from which youth informants were randomly identified. Selection of comparison project youth in St Lucia and St. Vincent was less rigorous and depended upon availability. The second was a purposeful, non-random methodology to identify private sector companies, IOs and IPs, and key public sector informants. Table 1 below summarizes the total evaluation sample:

Table 1. Total Evaluation Sample

Key Informant	Evaluation Methodology	Participants	Total (n)
Youth	Focus Groups; Demographic-Workforce Survey; Life skills Inventory	A Ganar and CYEP trainees & graduates; Non project youth	636
Implementing Organizations	Semi-structured Interviews; Accrued Benefits Questionnaire	Program Directors / Coordinators	16
Implementing Partner	Semi-structured Interviews	Country Reps (3 A Ganar; 1 CYEP)	4

Key Informant	Evaluation Methodology	Participants	Total (n)
Private Sector Companies	Semi-structured Interviews; Survey	HR Officers / Company Official	26
Police Department	Semi-structured Interviews; Survey	Commissioner, Superintendent, Deputy	6
Ministries & Correctional Facilities	Semi-structured Interviews	Senior officials	8
Program Officers	Semi-structured Interviews	Facilitators, Mentors & Counselors	13

Across the evaluation, the following was realized: 28 youth focus groups (16 A Ganar; 12 CYEP); 16 IO interviews; 26 private sector interviews (partnering companies); 15 public sector interviews; and 13 program officer interviews. The sample was considered representative of a cross-section of stakeholders and beneficiaries of both programs. Table 2 further details the youth sample:

Table 2. Total Youth Sample by Method and Program

Method / Program	Male (n)	Female (n)	Total (n)
Focus Group			
A Ganar	70	74	144
CYEP	44	66	110
Total	114	140	254
Demographic & Workforce Survey			
A Ganar	73	71	144
CYEP	74	63	137
Non A Ganar / CYEP	32	69	101
Total	179	203	382
Grand Total Sample of Youth	293	343	636

As seen in Table 2, the youth survey respondents were unique from the focus group youth respondents. Table 3 below shows the demographic profile of the youth survey sample, disaggregated by A Ganar trainee and graduate and CYEP trainee and graduate.

Data analysis was iterative across the evaluation; however, its emphasis initiated with both teams reconvening in Barbados during August 15 -19, 2013. During this time, the team began analyzing data collected during the three-week fieldwork phase. These data were cleaned, organized and entered into a statistical software package (SPSS) during the fieldwork phase, which allowed a first level of analysis to occur. From July 18 - August 1, 2013, preliminary findings were discussed with USAID/BEC as well as key staff from POA and IYF.

During the month of August 2013, the team deepened the analysis of primary and secondary data. The team employed content and frequency analyses, which were followed by triangulation techniques to identify trends, repeated attributions and important differences in perceptions. The evaluation team's youth volunteers also produced a summarized report that discussed results based on their evaluation experience (see Annex B for Report).

Limitations

This evaluation had a number of limitations that warrant recognition:

- **Logistics:** The first limitation was conducting the evaluation in six island nations. Beyond flight delays and nuances of ground transportation, the team also had to manage Tropical Storm Chantal. This, along with limited IO availability to support youth outreach efforts, precluded a more extensive sample.

- **Timeline:** The evaluation timeline of late June and early July posed challenges to the fieldwork as carnivals were beginning. Likewise, some programs had held their graduations and trainees were conducting internships or attachments, which posed a challenge in locating trainees and graduates.
- **Low literacy of some youth:** A number of key informants had low literacy levels and required assistance in order to complete the surveys. While the evaluation provided trained enumerators to assist with survey completion, there can be a level of response bias in cases where survey was administered to these youth.
- **Un-true comparison projects:** Both the Mission and Dexis/MSI were aware of the tradeoffs required to obtain a level of comparison data from non-project participants as sought in evaluation question #1. As this is not an impact evaluation design, the team did its best to glean data from non-project participants in the two counties. That said, we recommend prudence in drawing conclusions from comparison samples as their validity and reliability as rigorously controlled comparison groups is limited.
- **Spillover:** Within the comparison projects being carried out by IOs (each also delivering A Ganar and CYEP projects in their respective countries), the team found evidence of spillover that can also limit comparability. Specifically, in St. Lucia (CYEP comparison), BELfund and NSDC cited use of CYEP elements in the comparison projects the evaluation reviewed. Likewise in St. Vincent (A Ganar comparison), Marion House and the Ministry of Education/Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) disclosed use of or intent to use aspects of A Ganar's program.
- **Attributing change:** As this is a performance evaluation, directly attributing changes in the social or economic status of young people as a unique result of either the A Ganar³ or CYEP programs may not be plausible.

In spite of these limitations, and with persistence, the evaluation team was able to obtain representative sample sizes. With respect to the random youth sample, the evaluation carefully ensured a relative balance between: sex, age and trainee vs. graduate (see Table 3 below). Likewise, the various comparison sub-groups were adequate with balanced sample sizes and similar demographic characteristics. Overall, the evaluation team received excellent cooperation from the IOs with minor exceptions.

I. FINDINGS

A. Evaluation Questions

I) Evaluation Question I

To what extent does participation and completion of the workforce development programs contribute to the likelihood that youth who are beneficiaries of the program will obtain and maintain jobs, return to school, start their own business or reduce risky behavior as compared to non-program participants? What are the major factors that contributed to the achievement of (or failure to achieve) these results?

Summary of Major Findings for Question #1:

- ✓ The A Ganar and CYEP Programs are seen to have the most positive effect on the self-confidence, self-awareness and outlook of graduated project youth.
- ✓ A Ganar and CYEP have a positive, yet emerging effect on life skills of participants and graduates as viewed by private sector informants.

³ Currently, A Ganar is part of a larger 5-year longitudinal randomized control trial impact evaluation being carried out in Honduras and Guatemala by Social Impact (SI). To date, baseline data for each country have been collected. Mid-line data will be collected in 2014 and end line in 2016.

- ✓ Program participation produces positive effects on the employment status of a select number of graduating youth. This potential effect on employment status rises when youth become graduates.
- ✓ Despite a comparison group that was older, more educated, more likely to be employed and more rigorously selected to their program, A Ganar / CYEP youth reported higher gains on the majority of workforce characteristics surveyed.
- ✓ A Ganar: Most mentioned contribution to success was the life skills curriculum; most cited limitation was financial resource constraints.
- ✓ CYEP: Most mentioned contribution to success was the life skills curriculum; most cited limitation was program length is too short.

Findings for this question will be provided under its three key elements: (i) effect of the programs on youth beneficiaries; (ii) comparison between A Ganar / CYEP participants and non-program participants; and (iii) contributing and limiting factors to A Ganar and CYEP success. To justify all major findings, multiple data sources will be referenced, including youth survey results in Tables 3 (Demographic Profile) and 4 (Workforce Profile) below. While this survey did not measure the same beneficiaries over time (i.e., a longitudinal / panel study), it did obtain the perceptions of two sets of program beneficiaries at a specific moment in time.

Table 3. A Ganar and CYEP Youth Survey Sample (Demographic Profile)

Characteristic	A Ganar (n= 144)		CYEP (n=137)	
	Trainees (n= 68) # (%)	Graduates (n= 76) # (%)	Trainees (n= 72) # (%)	Graduates (n= 65) # (%)
Sex				
Male	33 (49)	41 (54)	48 (67)	26 (40)
Female	35 (51)	35 (46)	24 (33)	39 (60)
Age (years)				
16-18	29 (43)	17 (22)	12 (17)	5 (8)
19-21	26 (38)	40 (53)	33 (46)	26 (40)
22-24	12 (18)	12 (16)	21 (29)	18 (28)
25+	1 (1)	6 (8)	6 (8)	16 (24)
Highest Education completed				
Primary	4 (4)	4 (4)	2 (3)	5 (8)
Form 1-4	32 (48)	19 (25)	13 (18)	17 (26)
Secondary	27 (40)	39 (51)	48 (67)	32 (49)
Vocational/Technical	5 (7)	14 (18)	9 (12)	10 (15)
Marital Status				
Single	46 (67)	59 (78)	55 (76)	46 (71)
Relationship, not living together	18 (26)	15 (20)	14 (19)	17 (26)
Other	3 (4)	2 (2)	3 (4)	3 (4)
Have Children				
Yes	14 (20)	19 (25)	18 (25)	15 (23)
No	54 (80)	57 (75)	54 (75)	50 (77)
Household size				
0-1	1 (1)	4 (5)	6 (8)	8 (12)
2-3	17 (25)	19 (25)	18 (25)	11 (17)
4-5	21 (31)	17 (22)	13 (18)	15 (23)
5 or more	29 (43)	36 (47)	34 (47)	31 (48)
Employment status				
Self-employed	3 (4)	7 (9)	3 (4)	11 (17)
Employed	5 (7)	33 (43)	1 (1)	17 (26)
Unemployed	29 (43)	20 (26)	8 (11)	21 (32)
Other (intern, never worked, student)	31 (45)	15 (20)	59 (81)	16 (25)

Table 4. A Ganar and CYEP Youth Survey Sample (Workforce Profile)

Characteristic	A Ganar		CYEP	
	Trainees (n=68) # (%)	Graduates (n=76) # (%)	Trainees (n=72) # (%)	Graduates (n=65) # (%)
Life Skills Gained				
Basic Education	29 (43)	27 (36)	56 (78)	40 (62)
Communication/Interview Skills	49 (72)	43 (57)	53 (74)	55 (85)
Leadership	40 (59)	49 (65)	43 (60)	50 (77)
Positive Values	44 (65)	53 (70)	57 (80)	56 (86)
Workplace Behaviors	51 (75)	59 (78)	62 (86)	56 (86)
Obtained employment as a result of the program	2 (3)	23 (30)	3 (4)	18 (28)
Willing to or have furthered education	51 (75)	59 (77)	65 (90)	61 (94)
Willing to or have started own business	42 (62)	45 (59)	50 (69)	38 (59)
Less likely to engage in risky behavior b/c of project				
Yes	33 (49)	45 (59)	56 (78)	37 (57)
No	19 (28)	22 (29)	8 (11)	21 (32)
Unsure	12 (18)	5 (7)	3 (4)	7 (11)

(i) Effect on youth who have participated (trainees) or completed (graduates) A Ganar or CYEP?

Major Findings:

- ✓ The A Ganar and CYEP Programs are seen to have the most positive effect on the self-confidence, self-awareness and outlook of graduated project youth.
- ✓ A Ganar and CYEP have a positive, yet emerging effect on life skills of participants and graduates as viewed by private sector informants.
- ✓ Program participation produces positive effects on the employment status of a select number of graduating youth. This potential effect on employment status rises, as youth become graduates.
- ✓ There is inconclusive evidence as to the effect that the programs are having on youth starting their own businesses.
- ✓ The programs are having variable effects on youth returning to school; however, the likelihood for participants to continue education in formal or vocational settings increases as youth become graduates.
- ✓ There is inconclusive evidence as to the level and scope of effect that the programs are having in reducing risky behavior – particularly after youth leave programs (e.g., dropout or graduate)

Life Skills (supply-side): A Ganar and CYEP programs are seen by the evaluation to produce the most significant effects on the self-confidence, self-awareness and outlook of graduated project youth. While both are built to develop more than the life-skills of youth, in each case this program element is seen to have the strongest positive effect. As shown in Table 4 above, key life skill areas that show a reported increase in gains from trainees to graduates, include: Leadership (both programs); (b) Positive Values (both programs); Communication Skills (CYEP); (c); Workplace Behaviors (A Ganar).

Interestingly, two life skill elements show decreases from surveyed trainees to graduates: (i) Basic Education (both programs); and (ii) Communication / Interview Skills (A Ganar).

This negative change may represent graduates ‘ground truthing’ these life skill areas in the world of work and realizing a need for further development. With respect to the Communication / Interview Skills, a

Youth Focus Groups

“I did my skills training, hair dressing. I am also learning to accept persons for who they are, I learn about other person’s experiences and see how my life is good and accept other people’s opinion.”

–A Ganar Trainee, St. Vincent

“Before the program, I was disrespectful, I used to curse people. I then took the life skills for 5 weeks and now I’ve learnt to control my anger, stress and am able to resolve conflict effectively”

number of private sector informants mentioned that A Ganar and CYEP youth need to continue to improve their abilities in life skills, as will be further explained below.

Life Skills (demand-side): Private sector partners consider participation in the WDPs to have a positive, yet emerging effect on the life skills of participants. On the demand side, partners expressed an overall level of satisfaction with the life and basic skills of interns / employees from both programs. Nevertheless, in semi-structured interviews, the private sector recommended improving how youth apply learned life skills in the workplace. As seen in Table 5 below, CYEP partners mentioned this area most frequently, while A Ganar partners cited this as a third recommendation.

Table 5. Private Sector Prioritized Recommendations

Private Sector Prioritized Recommendations: A Ganar (Appearing by response frequency)	Private Sector Prioritized Recommendations: CYEP (Appearing by response frequency)
1. Increase coordination and collaboration with private sector (e.g., more information from project; marketing and networking of project).	1. Improve (quantity and quality) of employability and life-skills to youth.
2. Improve the monitoring and evaluation system (e.g., evaluate to learn; monitor to manage; track intern/attachment progress).	2. Increase the length of the training / project.
3. Improve (quantity and quality) of employability and life-skills to youth.	3. Increase coordination and collaboration with private sector (e.g., serving as project trainers; supporting the marketing and networking of project; closer coordination in screening and placement of youth; and training for company mentors).
4. Increase the availability in training of relevant technical skills – such as IT skills.	4. Increase time / opportunities for practical work-related learning.
5. Improve the quantity and quality of internship and real employment opportunities for youth.	5. Increase IO ability (via private sector needs assessments or market studies) to provide relevant technical skills – such as IT skills.
6. Increase stipend.	6. Improve quantity and quality of workplace observations for project youth.

The recommended emphasis given to life skills from private sector informants (26 companies in total) can serve as an important signal for programs to adjust and deepen emphasis upon life skills.

Employment: Both A Ganar and CYEP are demand-driven models that have a clear orientation toward facilitating practical experience through internships or attachments that can lead to permanent employment. The evaluation found that the programs produce positive effects on the employment status of a select number of youth graduates. Among the evaluation survey sample, Table 4 shows that 23% of A Ganar graduates and 18% of CYEP graduates reported receiving employment as a result of participation. Important to note, however, is the programs' effect on employment increases exponentially as each group of trainees become graduates.

The survey numbers point in a similar direction to the programs' self-reported numbers. In A Ganar's July 2013 report, Phase II numbers of 'total # of graduates found employment' were: Dominica: 40/68 'cumulative 2013 graduates' (59%); St Kitts: 105/147 'cumulative 2013 graduates' (71%); St Vincent: 30/155 'cumulative 2013 graduates' (19%). In CYEP's August-2013 Bi-annual Report, the aggregate of Phase II 'post-program working youth' in the Caribbean was 23%.⁴ Although both programs are indeed facilitating employment opportunities for a number of program youth, the rate of success varies within country and among programs.

⁴ The 23% aggregate was for four countries (Antigua/Barbuda, Grenada, Jamaica and St. Lucia). The 29% that corresponds to the evaluation survey did not include Jamaica.

Youth Business Start-ups: Entrepreneurship within A Ganar and CYEP continues to develop. However, there is inconclusive evidence as to the effect that the programs are having on youth starting their own businesses. In the demographic module (see Table 3), surveyed youth reported their employment status as ‘self-employed’ in the following way: 9% of A Ganar graduates and 17% of CYEP graduates. That said, the evaluation does not have cumulative data on the numbers of students graduating from the entrepreneurship tracks of the A Ganar and CYEP programs, therefore these figures do not reflect the percentage of entrepreneurship graduates who have successfully started their own business.

A Ganar and CYEP have an entrepreneurship development track within their overall programs. In addition to training, there are opportunities around mentorships, entrepreneurial attachments and start-up funding with an approved business plan. With respect to A Ganar, by Phase II every country developed a localized entrepreneurship program that is supplemented by the A Ganar entrepreneurship manual. A Ganar uses an installation model whereby IOs do not have specific expertise in entrepreneurship, but are provided with technical manuals and typically bring in outside experts to facilitate these sessions. In CYEP’s case, a partnering model (consortium model in St. Lucia) is used, whereby IOs focusing on entrepreneurship team up and bridge youth to new or existing funding opportunities via host-country governments. A key piece of this program includes access to such micro-credit via approved business plans. Yet, numerous informants revealed that many program youth finish the program without an approved business plan and need additional counseling and technical support after graduating.

Feedback from youth informants provided additional detail on challenges facing youth enrolled in the entrepreneurship track that were not adequately addressed by the programs, including: lack of access to credit, lack of guidance and/or expertise from IO programs, or youth not committed to starting and maintaining a business. Despite efforts to foster entrepreneurship in both programs, data made available to the evaluation was not sufficient to discern the effect on youth starting their own businesses.

Continuing Education: Both programs appear to have variable effects on youth returning to school. Nonetheless, the likelihood for participants to continue education in formal or vocational settings increases as they become graduates. Table 4 shows that surveyed youth responded positively to ‘willing to or have furthered education’ with 77% of A Ganar graduates and 94% of CYEP graduates affirming such. Also, as seen in the gender analysis below (see Tables 14 and 15), 23% of A Ganar male respondents specifically listed their ‘employment status’ as ‘student’ versus 51% of their male CYEP counterparts. Likewise, 10% of A Ganar females reported ‘employment status’ as a ‘student’ versus 19% of CYEP females. While this may not directly translate to returning to school, the figures are noteworthy considering the challenges around males and formal schooling. Anecdotally, youth informants expressed the desire to continue their studies in technical and vocational settings to enhance job prospects or, to a lesser extent, return to finish secondary school. Numerous focus group youth also mentioned the tradeoff of going back to school versus earning money now was too high.

In the July 2013 Quarterly Report, A Ganar reported on the indicator “# of graduates returned to school” in the following way: Dominica: 13/68 ‘cumulative 2013 graduates’ (19%); St. Kitts: 50/147 ‘cumulative 2013 graduates’ (34%); St. Vincent: 2/155 ‘cumulative 2013 graduates’ (.01%). CYEP reported generally in the August 2013 Semi-Annual Report that 50% of program participants who have left school are re-enrolled in an educational training program or have gained additional schooling credentials. Overall, evidence was not strong on the programs’ effect on continuing education. The evaluation did not see consistent and specific interventions to transition a high volume of youth into educational settings (formal or non-formal).

Risky Behavior: The evaluation found inconclusive evidence as to the level and scope of effect that the programs are having in reducing risky behavior – particularly after youth leave programs (i.e., graduate or drop out). Overall, ‘risky behavior’ proved very difficult to extract and analyze as it can be defined in a number of ways. This term can have diverse meanings and implications to both males and females. Operationally speaking,

Police Interview

“I am aware of the agencies making significant efforts to help youths. However, I do not have an informed position as to their level of success on youth behavior.”

–Commissioner of St. Lucia Police

the evaluation left this definition open to the interpretation of the informants as we did not see a standard definition or set of indicators to support one definition.

The evaluation did see various programmatic efforts to address or track risky behavior. A Ganar has indicated that many trainees encounter sexual and reproductive health issues that are outside the purview of the program, although Marion House in St. Vincent did deliver a HIV/AIDs module. Overall, A Ganar does not appear to be tracking and monitoring risk measures. In CYEP's case, some general risk factors are being tracked in the semi-annual reports (i.e., poverty, violence, disability, school dropouts and early pregnancy). Likewise, the evaluation was made aware of GARD's intervention of mobilizing the head of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) to discuss conflict resolution in response to a number of fights among the trainees. Beyond the curriculum and a small number of isolated interventions, the evaluation was left with little understanding as to how both programs are addressing specific risk factors and their consequent effect – particularly in terms of outcome-level results.

The evaluation also pointed to a need to gain further evidence on the programs real effect on 'risky behavior'. For example, and as seen in Table 4 above, the youth response affirming less likelihood to engage in risky behavior decreases from surveyed trainees to graduates (6% decrease). Correspondingly, the response rejecting less likelihood to engage in risky behavior increases from surveyed trainees and graduates (10% increase). While IO and youth informants were generally positive about the programs'

Youth Focus Groups

"I have been given a second chance; I am keeping off the streets."

—A Ganar Graduate, Dominica

"I am still in a gang; I am still smoking – nothing has happened."

—A Ganar Graduate, Dominica

positive effect on 'risky behavior', the collective results from informant interviews signaled a mixed review as illustrated in the text boxes. Of equal importance is that in all six country interviews with police there was a level of consensus that while crime trends fluctuate, youth involvement in criminal activities (particularly around gangs, guns, theft, drugs) continues to be a significant problem. Some pointed to the swelling youth prison populations as evidence. In sum and based on these cumulative findings, the evaluation team believes it worthwhile to seek further clarity around this important element and, as will be discussed in the recommendation section, further guidance on how

better to define, offer interventions, and track results.

(ii) Comparison of A Ganar/CYEP vs. Non-A Ganar/CYEP

Major Finding:

- ✓ Despite a comparison group that was older, more educated, more likely to be employed and more rigorously selected to their program, A Ganar / CYEP youth reported higher gains on the majority of workforce characteristics surveyed.

As discussed, the evaluation administered the same A Ganar / CYEP participant survey to trainee / graduate comparison groups in St. Lucia and St. Vincent (see p. 4 above for comparison project description). In order to obtain a first level of insights into this comparison, it is useful to first highlight the aggregate demographic characteristics of the comparison vs. A Ganar / CYEP sample:

- **>21 years old:** 72% comparison youth versus 32% A Ganar / CYEP youth.
- **Completed secondary / vocational education:** 83% comparison youth versus 66% of A Ganar / CYEP youth.
- **Having children:** 44% comparison youth versus 23% of A Ganar / CYEP youth.
- **Currently employed:** 34% comparison youth versus 29% A Ganar / CYEP youth.
- **Participating in a program with length ≥ 3months:** 56% comparison group versus 88% A Ganar / CYEP youth.

Collectively, the demographic elements point to a comparison group that is: older, more educated, more likely to be a mother/father, and more likely to be employed. As well, and in their majority, the comparison group does not experience a WDP program for as long as A Ganar / CYEP youth.

Similar to A Ganar and CYEP youth, the comparison group trainees and graduates were also administered a workforce module. These data displayed in Table 6 demonstrate a side-by-side contrast of workforce characteristics as reported by sampled youth from each program versus the corresponding country comparison group (i.e., A Ganar in St Vincent; CYEP in St. Lucia)

Table 6. A Ganar & CYEP vs. Country-Specific Comparison Group

Workforce Characteristic*	A Ganar/ St Vincent (n=54) # (%)	Non-A Ganar/ St Vincent (n=49) # (%)	CYEP/ St Lucia (n= 47) # (%)	Non-CYEP/ St Lucia (n=52) # (%)
Graduated from WDP	20 (37)	15 (31)	16 (34)	15 (29)
Life Skills gained*				
Basic education skills	33 (61)	27 (55)	28 (60)	26 (50)
Communication/Interview skills	44 (82)	23 (47)	31 (66)	40 (77)
Leadership	38 (70)	20 (41)	32 (68)	30 (58)
Positive values	40 (74)	29 (59)	37 (79)	46 (88)
Workplace behaviors	47 (87)	45 (92)	37 (79)	49 (94)
Willingness to or have furthered education	46 (85)	38 (78)	45 (96)	45 (87)
Willingness to or have started own business	33 (61)	19 (39)	35 (75)	28 (54)
Less likely to engage in risky behavior	30 (56)	23 (47)	37 (78)	44 (85)
Satisfaction with technical training	22 (41)	29 (59)	37 (79)	31 (60)

*Categories are not mutually exclusive

Based on the comparison of these workforce characteristics, the following warrants highlighting:

- **A Ganar and CYEP reported higher graduation rates** versus comparison groups in both countries
- **A Ganar youth self-rate life skills gain consistently higher** in every category versus St. Vincent comparison youth sample.
- **A Ganar respondents are more willing to further their education** versus comparison groups in both countries: 85% of A Ganar versus 78% of comparison.
- **A Ganar (in particular) and CYEP respondents are more willing to start (or have started) their own business** than comparison group youth: 61% of A Ganar versus 39% of comparison; 75% of CYEP versus 54% of comparison.
- **A Ganar youth reported being less likely to engage in risky behavior** than St. Vincent comparison group: 56% of A Ganar versus 47% of comparison.
- **CYEP youth reported a higher level of satisfaction with technical training:** 79% of CYEP versus 60% of comparison.

(iii) Contributing & Limiting Factors to A Ganar / CYEP Program Success

Major Findings:

- ✓ A Ganar: Most frequently mentioned contribution to success was the life skills element in curriculum; most mentioned limitation was financial resource constraints.
- ✓ CYEP: Most frequently mentioned contribution to success was also the life skills element in curriculum; most mentioned limitation was program length (i.e., too short).

These factors have been identified by considering the summative body of data as provided by key groups of informants (namely youth trainees & graduates, IO staff, and private sector partners). The following are the prioritized factors (as per frequency in the data) that affect A Ganar and CYEP success:⁵

⁵ The evaluation considered 'success' to be the goal of both programs.

A Ganar goal: Help at-risk youth, boys and girls, ages 16-24, throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to find positive engagements in their communities via (1) employment, (2) a return to the formal education system, or (3) starting their own business.

Table 7. Contributing & Limiting Factors to Success: A Ganar

Contributing Factors (Appearing by response frequency)	Limiting Factors (Appearing by response frequency)
1. Life Skills: This piece of the overall curriculum was found as critical to the success of A Ganar. Youth and the private sector informants alike recognized its value and importance.	1. Financial Resources: Constraints include: (a) student stipend availability is irregular and amount does not cover basic needs; (b) phased disbursement of funds to IOs place undue financial burden and limit delivery; (c) amount of IO funding restricts critical human resources and inputs; and (d) over-dependence on outside funding.
2. Business & Employability Skills: Informants lauded the ability to learn through practical means – particularly around internships, professional mentoring or conducting business or technical exercises in the classroom.	2. Curriculum Content: Constraints included: (a) overall time for training is too short; (b) 120 hours for life skills module is insufficient; (c) Life skills should be integrated across all curriculum; (d) Basic skills and vocational training need more time and hands-on emphasis; (e) can't tailor rigid curriculum to Caribbean context; (f) too much emphasis on one sport – particularly considering female participants.
3. Sports: Mainly cited by IOs, but informants see the emphasis on teamwork, respect and communication in soccer as a natural and opportune complement to teaching and reinforcing life skills and values.	3. Absent Facilitators: This was recognized by youth and IO staff alike and is one of the challenges with using volunteers. The youth in particular saw the importance of consistent, motivated, and knowledgeable program facilitators as critical.
	4. Absent or Late Students: Reasons provided included: inconsistent or overcrowded public transportation, lack of personal resources, disinterest, or competing interests. In particular youth coming late or not at all was seen to disrupt momentum and reduce overall motivation among participants and A Ganar staff.

CYEP's goal is to provide young people in Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, and St. Lucia with positive youth development opportunities that include technical/vocational skills and complementary life skills needed for them to be successful in developing sustainable livelihood pathways.

Table 8. Contributing & Limiting Factors to Success: CYEP

Contributing Factors (Appearing by response frequency)	Limiting Factors (Appearing by response frequency)
1. Life Skills: Frequently identified as a key contributor to CYEP's success – particularly in boosting self-esteem and generating realistic life goals.	1. CYEP Program Length: According to a strong majority of youth and IO staff, and as confirmed by the private sector partners, the length of the program is not seen as sufficient. Specifically informants mentioned: (a) basic skill training too short; (b) teachers moving over curricula too fast; (c) weak pedagogical quality of delivered trainings.
2. Business & Employability Skills: Market driven technical training and practical experience associated with this element was seen as important. Specific mention was also made of CYEP support offered in linking youth to the workplace.	2. Curriculum Content: Constraints include: (a) limited practical training / experiences; (b) not having a psychosocial element (services or curriculum) to address youth realities; (c) insufficient / inflexible employment and internship opportunities; (d) Tech training level is general.
3. CYEP Staff: Youth, in particular, mentioned the importance of having high quality teachers that are knowledgeable and willing to support young people.	3. Financial Resources: Constraints include: (a) insufficient stipend for transport to program and internships; (b) lack of seed capital for entrepreneurship

Contributing Factors (Appearing by response frequency)	Limiting Factors (Appearing by response frequency)
4. Passport to Success (PTS): PTS curriculum was identified, mostly by IOs, as enabling youth to grow, realize and orient within society and the workforce.	opportunities; (c) implications of finite resources on ability to hire new part-time or permanent staff.

2) Evaluation Question 2

Does the use of sports in the A Ganar workforce development curriculum versus the non-sports CYEP program, increase the retention rate, the job insertion rate, and the effectiveness of the program to teach life skills, language, math, IT and other complementary activities among the beneficiaries of the program?

Summary of Major Findings for Question #2:

- ✓ In the Eastern Caribbean, the sports emphasis of the A Ganar curriculum does not appear to produce a stronger positive effect on retention, job insertion, or the transfer of skills versus the non-sports curriculum of CYEP.
- ✓ CYEP maintains a higher retention rate range versus A Ganar. Each program's self-reported dropout rates also point to similar trends.
- ✓ A Ganar graduates reported higher employment rates than CYEP graduates. Employment rates between A Ganar trainees and graduates showed higher increases versus the same from CYEP.
- ✓ Self-reported life skills gains of CYEP graduates and trainees are higher in nearly every characteristic, versus the self-reported gains of A Ganar graduates and trainees.

In order to begin drawing comparisons between A Ganar and CYEP and justify the above summary findings, the response will deconstruct four key elements of the evaluation question: (i) curricula; (ii) life skills; (iii) retention rates; and (iv) employment rates (as a proxy for job insertion rates). In order to support the major findings for question #2, Tables 9 and 10 below will serve as a key quantitative source and will be complemented by further qualitative information.

Table 9. Program Comparison Matrix: A Ganar & CYEP

Characteristic	A Ganar		CYEP	
	Trainees	Graduates	Trainees	Graduates
I. Retention Rate⁶ (%)	(n=10) 60%-80%	n/a	(n=6) 80%-90%	n/a
II. Employment Rate⁷ # (%)	(n=68) 8 (12%)	(n=76) 40 (53%)	(n=72) 4 (6%)	(n=65) 28 (43%)
III. Life Skills				
a) Life Skills Inventory⁸	Mean Score (SD)			
	(n=42)	(n=37)	(n=45)	(n=55)
Participation	3.20 (.559)	3.32 (.455)	3.12 (.723)	3.29 (.524)
Communication	3.05 (.670)	3.05 (.562)	3.06 (.709)	3.05 (.545)
Planning/Organization	3.07 (.750)	3.11 (.631)	2.91 (.862)	3.18 (.710)
Leadership	3.24 (.567)	3.27 (.457)	3.31 (.574)	3.34 (.439)
Analysis	3.12 (.812)	3.22 (.687)	3.26 (.720)	3.43 (.542)

⁶ Data source: Implementing Organization Interviews

⁷ Data source: Youth Survey Demographic Module

⁸ Data source: Life Skills Inventory, which was a unique survey administered to focus group participants around a 5 point scale (0=little to no knowledge; 1=trying to understand; 2= trying to perform; 3=able to perform sometimes; 4=able to perform consistently).

Characteristic	A Ganar		CYEP	
	Trainees	Graduates	Trainees	Graduates
b) Life Skills Gained (Survey)⁹	# (%)			
	(n=68)	(n=76)	(n=73)	(n=65)
Basic Education skills	29 (43)	27 (35)	56 (78)	40 (61)
Communication/Interview Skills	49 (72)	43 (57)	53 (74)	55 (85)
Leadership	40 (59)	49 (64)	43 (60)	50 (77)
Positive Values	44 (65)	53 (70)	57 (79)	56 (86)
Workplace behaviors	51 (75)	59 (78)	62 (86)	56 (86)

**Table 10. Private Sector Satisfaction Levels w/ Participant Life Skills
(Appearing by response frequency)**

c) Private Sector Satisfaction (Yes/No/Unsure) ¹⁰	A Ganar – EC Countries (n=15 companies)				CYEP – EC Countries (n=11 companies)			
	Yes	No	Unsure	NR	Yes	No	Unsure	NR
Literacy	13	0	1	1	8	2	0	1
Math	9	0	3	3	5	2	3	1
Information technology	8	2	4	1	3	2	2	4
Ability to work in a team	13	1	0	1	9	1	0	1
Ability to plan/organize	10	4	0	1	6	2	1	2
Ability to communicate	14	1	0	0	9	1	1	0
TOTAL	67	8	8	7	40	10	7	9

(i) Comparison of A Ganar & CYEP: Curricula

Major Findings:

- ✓ In both programs, instructional quality and delivery are variable.
- ✓ CYEP facilitators appear to be more consistently compensated and occupy more full-time positions than A Ganar facilitators.
- ✓ There is no conclusive evidence that job placement is stronger in one program versus the other.

Both programs focus on building similar youth skill sets, which include life, employability, and technical skills. Yet, as illustrated in Table 11 below, there are important differences between them.

Table 11. Curricula Comparison: A Ganar & CYEP

Curriculum Element	A Ganar	CYEP
Core Curriculum Components	A Ganar Toolkit: 6 core sport-based skills (teamwork, communication, discipline, respect, a focus on results, and continual self-improvement). Manuals also available for market-driven technical / vocational or entrepreneurial skills.	PTS: 57 lessons for vocational training track; 64 lessons for entrepreneurship track; and 48 lessons for career guidance track. IOs select which modules to use. Instructional Strategies Handbook supports pedagogy.

⁹ Data source: Life skills gained from survey given to non-FG participants. Yes/No questions were used as responses. Participants were to check those life skills gained. This survey module along with the Life Skills Inventory served as a cross-validation on participant response to the life skills items.

¹⁰ Data source: Private sector satisfaction of select basic/life skills of participating youth using a proficiency scale (Yes/No/Unsure). In some cases, there were no responses, noted by NR.

Curriculum Element	A Ganar	CYEP
Length of Training	<p>Total Program: 7-9 months</p> <p><u>Phase 1:</u> Minimum of 80 hours Sports-based training: translating sports skills to employability skills</p> <p><u>Phase 2:</u> Minimum 100 hours Market-driven technical, entrepreneurial or vocational training.</p> <p><u>Phase 3:</u> Minimum 40 hours Supervised internships & apprenticeships</p> <p><u>Phase 4:</u> Variable hours <u>Follow-On Support:</u> Job placement, business involvement and re-integration in school</p>	<p><u>Vocational Training</u> (500 – 1300 hours) Life skills: 60-180 hours Math/English (remedial education): 48-70 hours ICT: 20-40 hours Technical: 232-1005 hours Internship: 160 hours</p> <p><u>Entrepreneurship</u> (200 – 225) Life Skills: 65 hours Math/English (remedial education): 40 hours (applicable only to GIDC) ICT: 20-30 hours Entrepreneurship training: 68-90 hours Business Plan Development: 10-30 hours</p> <p><u>Career Guidance</u> Life Skills: 54 hours Career Guidance: 42 hours</p>
Average Facilitator Pay	Ranges: Volunteer, part-time, to USD 20-40 p/ hour ¹¹ .	Ranges: USD 16.66 - 56.18 p/ hour
Facilitator Selection & Training	Flexible selection criteria; train the trainer in A Ganar curriculum.	More standardized selection criteria; project staff trained in PTS curriculum.
Job Placement / Mentoring	In addition to a required service-learning component, participants complete 40+ internship hours or similar practical experience with a matched mentor.	Dedicated Job Placement and Business Support Officers support internship placement and job search, or business start-up. Officers also match youth with mentors within the private sector.
Monitoring of Graduates	Limited monitoring and follow-up with graduates at uncertain intervals	Program follows-up with graduates on a periodic (but not systematic) basis. Bi-annual reports provide info on ex-post indicators.

The A Ganar program goes through four implementation phases and lasts between 7-9 months. While A Ganar does have paid facilitators, volunteers and part-time staff comprise the majority of the positions. As well, various IOs cited that A Ganar curriculum delivery standards prevented facilitators from orienting the curriculum to the life and/or local contexts of their young people. Nevertheless, the evaluation did not find evidence that there were high levels of uniformity in the delivery of the curriculum. In regards to A Ganar's job placement efforts, there is a service learning component that is complemented by required hours in an internship or a mentorship experience. The mentoring program aims to foster meaningful relationships between mentors and mentees that can be sustained over a prolonged period of time.

A Ganar: 4 Implementation Phases

Phase I	Sports-based training: translating sports skills to employability skills.
Phase II	Market-driven technical, entrepreneurial or vocational training.
Phase III	Supervised internships & apprenticeships.
Phase IV	Follow-on support (job placement, business involvement and re-integration in school).

CYEP: 4 Implementation Steps

- Step 1: Partner Identification
- Step 2: Project Development
- Step 3: M&E and Learning
- Step 4: Project Implementation & Mgt.

The CYEP program is implemented through four functional steps that comprise a cycle. As noted in Table 11 above, the delivery intensity of CYEP varies depending on the PTS track. In their majority, CYEP IOs use paid, full time facilitators to deliver the program. However, the evaluation did not find conclusive evidence that PTS and corresponding tracks are delivered in a

¹¹ There is budget to pay these instructors, but this also varies per country, as some are able to get this support in match/in kind.

consistent manner. Instead, it was found that CYEP delivery varies with respect to curriculum emphasis and pedagogical quality. With respect to CYEP's job placement, IOs utilize dedicated Job Placement and Business Support Officers to bridge youth to internship, job, or entrepreneurship opportunities. CYEP also has mentoring activities within the select IOs.

(ii) Comparison of A Ganar & CYEP: Life skills

Major Findings:

- ✓ Self-reported life skill gains of CYEP graduates and trainees are more highly rated in nearly every characteristic versus the self-reported gain-ratings of A Ganar graduates and trainees.
- ✓ Self-reported gains in life skills of trainees and graduates from both programs are higher than the private sector's perception.

The evaluation measured perceived gain of specific life skills via two instruments: the life skill inventory – administered to youth after focus groups ('a') in Table 9); and, the life skills gained – as part of the youth survey ('b') in Table 9). As seen above in Table 9, both samples of CYEP trainees and graduates self-rated higher on nearly every life skills element versus A Ganar youth.

On the demand side, Table 11 demonstrates the private sector's perception to life skill gain among A Ganar and CYEP youth. The aggregate of these data show that private sector respondents were overall satisfied with basic education and life skill categories. They were unsure about numeracy and most unsure on information technology (IT). Customer service and IT were commonly identified as weak areas along with the need for more technical skill training, especially in the A Ganar countries.

However, within semi-structured interviews with private sector informants, the evaluation discerned a repeated recommendation with respect to improving how youth apply learned life skills in the workplace. As previously discussed above in Table 5, private sector informants specifically mentioned the need for improvement in areas that included: dressing in the business place, communication skills, ability to plan and organize, information technology skills, and other technical skills gained from practical experiences. The evaluation sees the improvement in application occurring through increased periodicity of trainings, more practical experience with purposeful feedback from employers and deeper life skills training. This will be further discussed in response to evaluation question #3.

(iii) Comparison of A Ganar & CYEP: Retention Rates

Major Finding:

- ✓ CYEP maintains a higher retention rate range versus A Ganar. Each program's self-reported dropout rates also point to a similar trend.

The retention rate is a key success indicator for WDPs. It is linked to a range of quality-oriented elements of the WDP, including: type of targeted student; enrollment / dropout policies and definitions; curriculum and pedagogy; and program length. Clearly, A Ganar and CYEP differ with respect to all mentioned elements and many others. Therefore, while the evaluation is able to offer a finding on retention rates, it is important to note that it is not a strict and equal one-to-one comparison.

The above in mind, and as seen in Table 9, CYEP is seen to maintain a higher and tighter retention rate range at 80% - 90% versus A Ganar retention at 60%-80%.¹² These numbers appear similar when compared to the self-reported retention rates of both organizations. In A Ganar's July 2013 Report, retention rates can also be interpreted (via total # youth registered divided by total # graduated):

¹² The evaluation identified a retention range instead of an average. This was the case as inconsistencies were noted in the computation of various rates among IOs. That is, some IOs are waiting one – two weeks after courses being to set base enrollment numbers, as most dropouts occur during the first weeks. Within IO programs, there are also inconsistencies in how often participants can be absent and remain on class lists before they are considered 'dropping out'. It was found that some IOs allow participants to return toward the latter part of the program and graduate a few months later. Clearly, these realities affect the retention rate.

Dominica: 39% retention; St Kitts: unable to calculate¹³; St. Vincent: 97% retention. In the CYEP August 2013 Bi-Annual Report, the following retention rates can be interpreted (via country-reported dropout rate): Antigua/Barbuda: 85% retention; Grenada: 93% retention; St Lucia: 80% retention.

The numbers above demonstrate a quantitative snapshot of retention rates as of August 2013. The following findings are presented to further develop this picture:

A Ganar:

- A Ganar has more openness and flexibility in admission than CYEP. This is seen to bring in more marginalized youth, with more diverse and intense needs.
- A Ganar delivers services to youth within a longer program cycle than CYEP.
- A Ganar's programmatic emphasis is on sports (particularly at the beginning as a 'hook'); however, various IOs cited a lack of equipment (cleats, balls) and/or infrastructure (fields, open space). This can create a negative impression and cause youth to drop out quickly.
- A Ganar has an outstanding challenge of absent facilitators (see Table 7) reducing motivation and/or multiplying dissent.
- A Ganar has an outstanding challenge of late or absent students (see Table 7) reducing motivation and/or multiplying dissent.

CYEP

- CYEP uses multiple strategies to enhance retention, including use of motivational speakers, competitions and extracurricular activities, and are starting to tie transport funds to attendance.
- CYEP emphasizes a marketing and outreach strategy to draw in applicants.
- CYEP possesses a more rigorous selection process that prioritizes youth with a foundation of basic education skills.

A Ganar & CYEP

- IOs of both programs continue to be challenged with providing transportation stipends to youth. While the evaluation picked up that POA is currently trying to tie funds to attendance, there was no evidence of specific A Ganar or CYEP policies on this issue.
- IOs do not have guidance on how to report youth who drop out because of income earning opportunities that they've received via the programs – termed "Positive Dropouts".
- A Ganar ~ one organization (Marion House) has made clear accommodations for youth with children; CYEP ~ there was mention that GARD has made similar accommodations, but the evaluation was unable to confirm.

Overall, the length of A Ganar's program and its flexible and open intake of youth, along with staffing and participant-related limitations can be seen as potential causes for a lower retention rates when compared to CYEP. At the same time, CYEP's purposeful selection and intake of youth, more incentivized staff, and an integrated approach to retention can be seen as potential grounds for a higher retention range when compared to A Ganar.

(iv) Comparison of Programs: Employment Rates

Major Findings:

- ✓ A Ganar graduates reported higher rates of employment than their CYEP counterparts.
- ✓ Employment rates increased by a higher percentage from A Ganar trainees to graduates than the CYEP trainee to graduate group.

¹³ In the July 2013 St Kitts report, youth numbers for 'Cumulative 2013 youth # registered' = 120; numbers for Cumulative 2013 youth # graduated = 147. There is no explanation for this overage documented on the report and may represent a data reporting/entry error.

For evaluation Question 2, ‘employment rates’ was used as a proxy for ‘job insertion rates’. In the evaluation survey, A Ganar graduates reported higher rates of employment than their CYEP counterparts. In Table 9 above, 53% of A Ganar graduates affirmed current employment versus 43% CYEP graduates. Also as seen in Table 9, the employment rate increase was more pronounced from A Ganar trainees to graduates (43% increase) than for CYEP trainees to graduates (37% increase).

These results are similar to the data found in the most recent A Ganar and CYEP reports. In the case of A Ganar, the evaluation’s employment rate is slightly higher than the program’s self-reported numbers: 47% of graduated youth found employment in the three EC countries (July 2013 Report). Likewise, the evaluation’s numbers were higher than CYEP’s self-reported employment rates as 23% of ex-post graduates (which includes Jamaica) were reported to be ‘working’ (August 2013 Report).

There are a number of factors that can both limit or contribute to positive employee rates (or job insertion) as effected by the programs, which include:

- Diverse country contexts (Macro): Particularly with regard to the economy, each country presents unique supply and demand realities. Shocks or upticks to the macro-economic situation trickle down very quickly to the individual level, which has a direct and significant positive or negative effect on the programs’ ability to identify and secure internship, attachment, apprenticeship and/or employment opportunities.
- Competing programs (Meso): Within countries there can be any number of competing programs whose aim is to develop skills of a youth beneficiary population and bridge them to the workforce. The implementation of such projects can range from NGOs/CSOs funded by bi/multilateral donors to universities and national level training institutes. Clearly, when there is a high supply of workforce projects in a country, the finite demand that does exist challenges all programs to secure practical learning experiences or permanent job opportunities for their participants. This also has an effect of turning such programs into competitors, which may not be beneficial to the youth population as a whole.
- Cultural, social and gender-based biases of respondents (Micro): Clearly, there are individual preferences that can promote respondents to overstate their status. Enumerators administering the survey provided detailed explanations to youth, which also included ensuring their response anonymity, but this possibility always exists.

CYEP Bi-Annual Report: Feb 2012

Antigua: The current financial situation in the country, as well as the arrest of the second largest employer in the country R. Allen Stanford, resulted in major lay-offs and business closures over the last two years. Three major hotels have closed their doors, in addition to other smaller establishments who have either had to shut down or decrease their operations. Government has had a freeze on all employment into the civil service for over a year, which affected the Center’s ability to find not only job placements, but also to some extent internship opportunities.

3) Evaluation Question 3

What are the essential components for WDPs to be successful?

In answering this question, the evaluation relied most heavily on primary data. It also specifically deepened the discussion on contributing and limiting factors to A Ganar and CYEP success (see Tables 6 and 7). Equally important, however, relevant information was also extracted from the contemporary youth workforce literature in effort to add value to the question’s findings.

The following represents a guiding programmatic framework that can be utilized two ways: option 1: to strengthen current programming, strategic management and performance monitoring of A Ganar and CYEP; and/or, option 2: to support the development of new, stand-alone WDPs. Regardless of which option is deemed more relevant, the following four-step strategic process can best inform the feasibility and utility of adapting any ‘essential components for WDPs.’

Step1. (Re) Assess Youth & Market (Supply/Demand): Numerous private sector partners pointed to the need for more relevant technical skills, and others recommended doing so via consistent

market or needs assessments. The evaluation sees it important to (re) assess the key needs/characteristics of program youth (supply-side) as well as the current macro-economic realities and specific needs of targeted local market or industries (demand-side). A current understanding of these elements will be critical to most effectively and efficiently tailoring any identified WDP success elements to the local supply/demand reality.

Step 2. Develop a Solid Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: This plan should be prioritized and developed around four major components:

- **Logical Framework:** The log-frame should direct indicator selection -- which must balance between custom and standard indicators. Developed by the Mission, the 'log-frame' is composed of: (a) key program results (outputs and outcomes); (b) corresponding indicators to measure them; (c) data sources from which to collect data; and (d) assumptions (typically at the context/macro level) that should be monitored and managed.
- **Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRs):** This template is now required by USAID. It enables effective tracking and data collection on indicators, through: definition of indicators, data sources, method of collection, frequency of collection, and person responsible for collection.
- **Activity Matrix:** This simple matrix is composed of two columns that link major interventions of the program (e.g., life-skills training, mentor matching, or IO capacity building) with already-developed indicators.
- **M&E Action Plan:** A simple work break down action plan (e.g., GANTT chart) that specifies who, what, where, and when with regard to key performance monitoring activities. Included in such activities should be, as recommended by the private sector, purposeful monitoring of youth in internships or permanent jobs as well as that of graduates still searching.

Step 3. Review Available Resources: This exercise should rapidly weigh current programmatic needs to available resources. Key planning documents (e.g., Performance M&E Plan's LogFrame; annual plan) can be compared to available resource pipeline. The purpose of the exercise would be to ground the resource reality and get an informed read on the feasibility of adding (or subtracting) components.

Step 4. Identify WDP Success Components & Tailor: The optimal mix of the WDP success elements hinges on three key factors: (1) country / local context; (2) needs on supply and demand sides; and (3) evidence from program learning. It is recommended, therefore, that based on evidence from these factors, a relevant selection (prioritization), mix and tailoring of the WDP components occurs.

Informed by the above-mentioned four-step process, the following comprises a 'toolbox' of essential WDP components, which can be selected as deemed relevant and necessary. The elements build on the programmatic successes of both programs, while addressing some of the perceived limitations, both identified in evaluation question #1.

- **Phased, Comprehensive & Private Sector-Driven Approach to Training:** Across the evaluation, three key findings stand out: (i) the importance of life skills to the private sector and their value to young people; (ii) the level of consensus in the private sector on the success of life skills, yet their need to further affect youth behavior; and (iii) the call by youth for deeper and longer training – particularly CYEP youth.

Youth Focus Groups

"The program is too short and teachers went through the topics too fast (e.g., passport to success); life skills needed to be more uplifted because in the life skills this subject needs to be more interesting; PTS needs improvement (e.g., no consistency in the lecturers); We need to get jobs at the end of the program."

—Antigua Graduates

In response to these findings, and keeping pace with the good practice of short-term, 'just in time' training, the following could serve as a framework to strengthen training curriculum:

- o Emphasize periodicity and develop 2-4 short-term training levels that correspond to specific technical, employability or entrepreneurship curricula, which youth advance through in order to graduate;

- o Directly involve key private sector partners in developing or reinforcing curricula and teaching;
- o Follow-up each level of training with a period of work / practice via an internship or attachment in which youth can practice skills;
- o Obtain feedback from youth and employer on first placement and tailor follow-up training toward strengthening skill / knowledge gaps identified.

In sum, programs should avoid focusing on length, and instead consider: depth of curriculum; periodicity of theoretical training and complementary practice in the workplace; and flexible, yet consistent, content and pedagogy.

- **Multiply Practical Learning & Job Placements:** Partnership strategies should be continued and enhanced through: (a) securing internship and placement opportunities via international as well as national and local partnership models; (b) establishing alliances with ‘competing programs’ in-country and broaden potential labor pool to partner companies; and (c) scaling-up entrepreneurship programs and emphasizing alliances with financial institutions. Both POA and IYF are diligently working to bridge program youth to the workplace. As well, both organizations are known for their ability to mobilize international alliances and leverage funds. All said, and as emphasized by youth participants, more must be done to facilitate further practical and employment opportunities.
- **Staff Incentives:** Incentivizing facilitators and administrative staff is important to combating challenges all WDPs face such as high turnover, teacher and participant absenteeism, and demotivated youth participants. Initially, each program may want to review their hiring processes and compensation structure to ensure that both are designed to attract and maintain quality staff. Beyond salary, incentives can include: performance bonuses, special recognition, contests such as teacher of the month/year, training or continuing education, position advancement, or performance-based salary structure. In the case of A Ganar, relying on volunteers to deliver the program brings with it numerous challenges. Accordingly, the program should look for ways to best identify and support facilitators in a manner that promotes consistency and quality across the program.
- **Policy Focus:** Possessing a policy focus is seen as a critical element to address within WDPs. In particular, the evaluation sees two important opportunities to pursue in the EC region. The first, which should be a part of any WDP, is partnering with ministries connected to young people (i.e., labor, education or youth) and build capacity via: strengthening internal policies or systems; enhancing capacity to better understand a certain context or issue and take action accordingly; or support strategies to develop or implement a specific policy / law. Whatever the emphasis, the policy component has a combined positive effect of building/strengthening ministries connection to young people as well as to that of USAID

The second opportunity is seeking to validate WDP curricula via a nationally recognized certificate. A significant number of A Ganar and CYEP youth informants expressed a desire to obtain nationally recognized certificates for technical components within WDPs.¹⁴ EC countries have, or will soon have, the CARICOM Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQ) and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), which are specific technical skill certifications recognized at national levels. Typically, there is a national government oversight body responsible for supporting the demand-driven standards, working with industry leaders and national organizations, and encouraging community and local businesses to incorporate the identified skills and attitudes. For youth who do not have high school diplomas, obtaining a certificate can boost their educational status and can be utilized to advance in their career; it will also remain with them long after WDP graduation.

¹⁴ A Ganar and CYEP each have isolated efforts around certification: (a) A Ganar: in 2011 the program developed two new indicators (1.6 curriculum materials endorsed by local organizations; 1.7 curriculum certified by local organizations) that would drive activities toward certifying curricula as well as be tracked via the M&E plan; and (b) CYEP/ Grenada: in 2012, TAM CC (a previous IO), obtained CVQ and NVQ certification. From information available, it appears that both of these efforts did not yield concrete results.

- **Capacity Building:** Although there is some overlap with the policy component, building or strengthening the human and institutional capacity of organizations to support young people's transition into the workforce is seen as critical to enable effectiveness and efficiency as well as sustainability. Key ministries should occupy a priority in the WDPs, but programs should also target a range of other organizational actors that can include: schools, private sector companies, NGOs/CSOs, or youth groups.
- **Manage for Results:** Establishing a set of causally linked outcome-level results is critical for the planning, management, and reporting of any WDP program. While A Ganar and CYEP have high-level goal statements, there is no causally linked chain of output to outcome level results. Moreover, indicators are not attached to results. Instead, each program is tracking a set of general indicators that correspond to enrollment, dropout, graduation, and entrance into workforce. Noteworthy is that CYEP is also tracking three-four 'quality' indicators that provide insight into conditions of youth as employees or business owners. While positive, the reality that indicators are not attached to specific results limits the ability to: track progress toward identified outputs or outcomes, facilitate direct (and causally linked) opportunities to learn, adjust implementation, revise strategy, and shift resources.

4) Evaluation Question 4

What benefits have accrued to the development of the local IOs since the introduction of the CYEP and A Ganar programs? Will these IOs continue with the program or aspects of it without the benefit of support from IYF or POA?

Summary of Major Findings for Question #4

- ✓ Generally, A Ganar and CYEP IOs report low to moderate levels of benefits accrued since the introduction of the CYEP and A Ganar programs.
- ✓ The two areas in which benefits accrued by IOs was reported as moderate to high were: (i) partnerships ~ leveraging resources and/or services through collaborative partnerships; and (ii) employer engagement ~ engage public/private sector employers to strengthen program activities.
- ✓ Generally, A Ganar and CYEP IOs demonstrate a level of institutional sustainability, with self-reported high ratings in youth engagement and leadership.
- ✓ Few A Ganar and CYEP IOs exhibit traits of financial sustainability. Yet, a majority of IOs from both programs are likely able to maintain partnerships with the private sector absent support from POA / IYF.
- ✓ All IOs expressed desire to continue programs; however, only select IOs are seen to possess the ability to continue with aspects of their corresponding program absent financial support from POA or IYF.

The response to this question occurs under two sub-headings: (i) What are the benefits that have accrued to local IOs from being a part of A Ganar / CYEP/? and (ii) Will IOs continue to implement components or all of these programs without support from POA or IYF?

(i) What are the benefits that have accrued to local IOs from being a part of A Ganar/CYEP?

The National Youth Employment Coalition's PEPnet Guide to Quality Standards for Sustainable Youth Programs was the guiding framework for this sub question. The tool, consisting of a Likert scale, was administered to IOs in each country and was followed up with semi-structured interviews.

PEPnet standards address essential development components that provide the foundation for implementing a youth program with quality and sustainability in mind. Altogether there are seven standards: Youth Engagement; Employer Engagement; Leadership; Partnerships; Transition Support; Financial Support; and Accountability. Across evaluation question #3, these seven standards served as the

key ‘benefit categories’ under which IOs were assessed. The transfer of these benefits from POA / IYF to corresponding IOs is indicated by the rating: low, moderate, or high.¹⁵

Standard I. Youth Engagement: Quality programs engage youth as active, respected contributors to the program and the community.

A Ganar: IOs with improved levels of youth engagement reported soliciting youth input to inform program design. In St. Vincent, CASMAC developed a youth-led mapping activity of employment opportunities in their community that then fed into the program design. The Green Hill Sports and Culture IO in St Vincent periodically involves alumni volunteers in supporting the A Ganar program. (*Transfer of benefit: Moderate*)

CYEP: Most IOs report little or no change in levels of youth engagement since beginning CYEP activities. However, IOs in St. Lucia have begun to solicit youth input to strengthen program design. (*Transfer of benefit: Low*)

Standard II. Employer Engagement: Quality programs engage public and private sector employers to strengthen program activities

A Ganar: Several organizations reported improvement in this area and have incorporated members of the private sector into programming via mock interviews and the like. One organization described a change in their objectives from entrepreneurship to a broader employment focus due to involvement with A Ganar, which has led them to develop partnerships with the private sector. (*Transfer of benefit: Moderate*)

CYEP: Selected IOs that reported benefits in this area described improving contacts within the private sector to solicit input on program design. Another organization conducted a labor market assessment to better inform the WDP component of their program. CYEP has also secured in-kind donations of materials for IOs and trainees. However, in St. Lucia, NSDC described no improvement and even said that their ability to support employers who offer internships and jobs to program participants had decreased. This finding is echoed by a businessperson who said that NSDC was not providing adequate training to company mentors. (*Transfer of benefit: Moderate*)

Standard III: Leadership: Quality programs have leaders who focus on the success and growth of the organization in the context of accomplishing the organizational mission

A Ganar: Organizations in Dominica and St Kitts described strong leadership that had been in place prior to A Ganar. However, responses in St Vincent indicate that while management structures tend to be clearly defined, communication within organizations remains a challenge, as do the roles and composition of their Boards and Senior Leadership. (*Transfer of benefit: Low*)

CYEP: With the exception of NSDC in St Lucia, CYEP partners indicated that strong leadership and management had been in place prior to the start of CYEP. NSDC indicated that they recently established a formal management team to help the organization achieve its objectives. (*Transfer of benefit: Moderate*)

Standard IV. Partnerships: Quality programs leverage resources and/or services for youth through collaborative partnerships

A Ganar: Many of the organizations described deep networks that have existed for a number of years. However, several organizations described how their networks broadened via A Ganar. Importantly, both the prison in Dominica and the NSTP in St Kitts indicated that their partnerships have expanded beyond the government to include NGOs. (*Transfer of benefit: Moderate*)

CYEP: Most organizations claimed that CYEP had no impact on their networks, which were already strong. However, the NSDC and BELfund both indicated significant increases in partnerships since becoming a part of CYEP. Program reports to USAID also document IO participation in several international conferences, thus facilitating access to a broader range of partners. The private sector also described strong partnerships and a willingness to work with CYEP in the future. IYF has also secured partnerships with a variety of organizations that provide technical assistance and training to IOs,

¹⁵ Low = the extent of benefit transfer to IOs was at a minimal level; Moderate = the extent of benefit transfer to IOs was at an intermediate level; High = the extent of benefit transfer to IOs was at an elevated level.

including a partnership with the St. Gallen University in Switzerland who will help develop fundraising and leveraging strategies for each CYEP country. (*Transfer of benefit: High*)

Standard V. Transition Support: Quality programs help youth make a gradual transition from full program participant to independent engagement in positive activities.

A Ganar: Some organizations indicated having offered high levels of transition support prior to A Ganar as well, but the quality and utility of the support is unclear. Others, such as the Dominica Prison, described significant improvements in the support they were able to offer youth. Comments from youth confirm uneven capacity of the implementing organizations in this area. (*Transfer of benefit: Low*)

CYEP: The findings for this benefit category are inconclusive as there was high variance in IO self-ratings. For example, CARE described itself as possessing good transition support – elements of which were strengthened by CYEP. BELfund also described strong support services, but then self-rated low in this category. NSDC indicated significant improvements in transition support services, but was unable to provide concrete examples of such. Finally, other IOs reported that improvement is needed in this area. (*Transfer of benefit: unable to rate*)

Standard VI. Financial Support: Quality programs employ a consistent strategy for strategic financing orientation, managing resources effectively and achieving organizational longevity.

A Ganar: Several organizations reported improved awareness of and access to funding streams, however did not describe changes in their funding streams or support base. (*Transfer of benefit: Low*)

CYEP: NSDC indicated it had been able to secure more support from the private sector since becoming involved with CYEP, and two other organizations are seeking outside funding to continue programming. Other organizations indicated severe limitations in financial and human resources. (*Transfer of benefit: Low*)

Financial Support

“The experience of “A Ganar” has provided a platform to seek regional and international funding.”

—CASMAG, St. Vincent

Standard VII. Accountability: Quality programs hold themselves accountable for setting and meeting operational and programmatic goals.

A Ganar: Nearly all organizations cite quarterly reports to POA as evidence of high levels of accountability and tracking goals. They did not, however, indicate if or how they utilize the information or whether they have accountability to other key program stakeholders independent of USAID report requirements. The prison in Dominica is a notable exception, as they provided evidence of improvements in strategic planning, measurement, and communication of program activities and results. (*Transfer of benefit: Low*)

Accountability

“The reporting requirements—even though they have been tedious, they have been valuable in providing important information to the program”

—Social Centre, Dominica

CYEP: The IOs in St Lucia demonstrate good accountability via strategic plans, public dissemination of reports, or regular assessments, though not always attributable to involvement with CYEP. The NSDC directly attributes its improvements in this area to the CYEP design workshop. Other organizations also report that

they are accountable, but did not provide details or examples. CYEP quarterly reports describe training implementing organizations on the CYEP M&E system. (*Transfer of benefit: Low*)

(ii) Will IOs continue to implement components or all of these programs without support from IYF or POA?

This section will focus on identifying which of the PEPnet standards (aka benefits) described above can be sustained without support from IYF or POA. The evaluation team defined sustainability as having two key characteristics: (1) organizational sustainability ~ the ability of IOs to replicate technical and functional aspects of the program (corresponding PEPnet Standards: youth engagement; employer engagement; leadership); and (2) financial sustainability ~ the ability of IOs to capture, leverage, or

multiply financial resources (corresponding PEPnet Standards: partnerships, transition support, financial are indicated by the rating: low, moderate, or high¹⁶.

Organizational Sustainability

Youth Engagement: Quality programs engage youth as active, respected contributors to the program and the community.

A Ganar: Several A Ganar IOs cited valuable input from youth that helped improve their programming and knowledge base. As mentioned above, CASMAC developed a youth-led mapping activity that was beneficial to the organization. It is possible that similar types of youth engagement, at CASMAC and other organizations, might be inhibited by human resource/financial constraints, but youth engagement could likely continue in a scaled-back manner without financial support from the program. That said, there is no specific evidence to confirm if this scenario would unfold. (*Sustainability of benefit: High*)

CYEP: As the IOs were seen to have a solid ability around this benefit category before IYF involvement, there is no specific evidence to suggest that organizations would be unable to continue engaging youth as active contributors absent funding from IYF. (*Sustainability of benefit: High*)

Employer Engagement Quality programs engage public and private sector employers to strengthen program activities

A Ganar: Currently, a number of IOs are using private sector personnel as trainers/facilitators. The prison in Dominica uses private sector partners to stage mock interviews for youth. One IO indicated improved partnerships were achieved through shifting focus from entrepreneurship to employment; however, multiple IOs self-rated low in this category. (*Sustainability of benefit: Low-Moderate*)

CYEP: Human resource constraints may impede the degree of employer engagement that IOs can mobilize and maintain without external financial support. Interviews with the private sector indicate that employers are willing to engage further with IOs, and CYEP quarterly and annual reports document in-kind donations of time and expertise by private sector individuals who lead sessions on workplace behavior, financial management, and the like. While these two contributions may not have up-front costs associated with them, and in the instance of the teaching sessions and donations are even a cost-saving measure, human resources are needed to effectively coordinate and incorporate these inputs. If IO staff are let go due to lack of funds, it is difficult to see how IOs will be able to sustain current levels of employer engagement. (*Sustainability of benefit: Low*)

Leadership: Quality programs have leaders who focus on the success and growth of the organization in the context of accomplishing the organizational mission

A Ganar: Marion House leadership is already thinking about how they can adapt the curriculum to a more limited environment, and are already considering alternate funding streams. Other organizations such as CASMAC have demonstrated innovative ideas that not only engage youth, but further the organization's knowledge as well as demonstrated by the youth mapping assessment they conducted. These initiatives indicate that leadership is strong and functions independent of support from POA. (*Sustainability of benefit: High*)

CYEP: Many of the CYEP IOs have been in existence for a number of years and were selected for their leadership achievements and potential. The efforts of organizations like NEWLO to seek funding and/or in-kind donations from outside resources demonstrates that good leaders exist within some of these organizations that can maintain progress beyond the IYF partnership. (*Sustainability of benefit: High*)

¹⁶ Low = extent of benefit sustainability within IO is at a minimal level; Moderate = extent of benefit sustainability within IO is at an intermediate level; High = extent of benefit sustainability within IO is at an elevated level.

Financial Sustainability

Partnerships: Quality programs leverage resources and/or services for youth through collaborative partnerships

A Ganar: Many IOs have described long-standing partnerships, developed over years of work in their countries. These relationships will likely be sustained. Marion House reported that they will look to other donors they have worked with in the past for financial support. It was also reported that A Ganar had expanded the number of partnerships of various organizations. While these partnerships could also likely be maintained by IOs, it is possible that the nature and utility of some of the partnerships might shift if the program has to be scaled back due to financial constraints. *(Sustainability of benefit: High)*

CYEP: CYEP implementing organizations describe deep connections established via years of work in their respective countries. CYEP annual reports show the program has also facilitated a broad range of connections by inviting implementing partners to attend international workshops, program launch events, and regional training sessions. Private sector informant interviews indicate that both the public and private sector support of CYEP objectives and wish to begin or maintain involvement. Given the long-standing roles that many of these IOs have played in their communities, combined with the new connections facilitated by CYEP, partnerships can likely be sustained independent of support from IYF. If IOs are forced to change programming scope due to lack of funds, the dynamics of some of these partnerships may change as there is less cause for interaction. *(Sustainability of benefit: High)*

Transition Support: Quality programs help youth make a gradual transition from full program participant to independent engagement in positive activities

A Ganar: Some organizations offer counseling sessions and workshops for alumni that require financial resources (like the Dominica Social Centre), but others offer much less resource-intensive support such as referring graduates to vocational education programs (NSTP). For those organizations offering more comprehensive support, the self-reported financial limitations indicate that these services will not be sustained beyond program life. For organizations that offer less resource-intensive support, it is likely that these services will be continued. *(Sustainability of benefit: Low)*

CYEP: The ability of organizations to provide transition support to youth participants is closely linked to their financial sustainability. For example, CARE and NSDC have identified that their ability to offer psychosocial counseling and/or access to computer labs is directly tied to financial resources. The evaluation also found that facilitating connections between youth and employers also requires a financial commitment as the Job Officers that are a part of IO staff in each country (BELfund has two full-time Business Support Officers as an entrepreneurship-focused IO) are paid for through program funds. With the financial and human resource limitations repeatedly cited by IOs, it is unlikely that transition support interventions in their entirety will be sustainable absent support of IYF. *(Sustainability of benefit: Low)*

Financial Support: Quality programs employ a consistent strategy for strategic financing orientation, managing resources effectively and achieving organizational longevity.

A Ganar: All IOs stated that financial limitations would prevent continuation of A Ganar programming in its entirety. IOs, such as CALLS and the YDD said that programming might stop entirely without support. All organizations expressed a willingness to continue implementation, though likely using a modified program. The Dominica Prison indicated challenges to continue with the sport element of the program due to lack of equipment. There is clear consensus that A Ganar cannot be sustained in its entirety without support from POA. *(Sustainability of benefit: Low)*

Financial Support

“A Ganar program is comprehensive and requires a lot of human/financial resources, but [our] organization, National Skills Training Program has limited staff.”

—The Ministry of Education, St. Kitts & Nevis

CYEP: Financial sustainability is a concern. Every organization cited financial limitations as severe constraints upon program activities. CARE indicated they were unable to follow up with program graduates due to lack of resources, and that program attendance was hindered by lack of a stipend and the cost of travel (a challenge that is documented several times in CYEP reports to USAID). Other IOs,

including NEWLO and the GARD Center also echoed this same challenge. Multiple organizations indicate that they will be unable to continue program activities in their current form without continued or alternate financial support. Organizations also cited limitations in human resources, further highlighting financial constraints, particularly because many personnel are paid out of the CYEP program budget. Several IOs such as the NSDC and NEWLO described potential funding opportunities from the private and development sectors. However, at this point in time, there is a lack of financial support to sustain these programs independent of IYF funds. *(Sustainability of benefit: Low)*

Financial Support

“More funds are needed for further development and refinement of the program, including documentation, transportability, and partnerships for improved sustainability of some of the program parts.”

–NSDC, St. Lucia

“Distance between communities, lack of a stipend and the cost of travel particularly in the Castries area were limitations of the Program.”

–CARE, St. Lucia

Accountability: Quality programs hold themselves accountable for setting and meeting operational and programmatic goals.

A Ganar: Most of the M&E currently conducted by IOs is a required component of A Ganar. M&E is also resource intensive and will pull on already tight financial and human capacity of these organizations. The evaluation heard a general appreciation for the importance of M&E as a key element of accountability. Yet, due to time and resource constraints it seems unlikely that full M&E efforts can be sustained. *(Sustainability of benefit: Low)*

CYEP: CYEP quarterly reports describe developing an M&E plan and training that takes into account the limited resources of implementing organizations. Nevertheless, it appears that one IO staff member is dedicated to M&E and is funded by the CYEP program. Therefore, and as is discussed above, it is questionable whether IOs will have the needed finances to maintain this position without CYEP funding. Furthermore, existing human resource constraints may make it a challenge for existing staff to take on the work of the M&E officer. *(Sustainability of benefit: Low)*

5) Evaluation Question 5

Are the benefits to youth-serving organizations provided under the two programs sustainable?

Summary of Major Findings for Question #5

- ✓ A Ganar IOs considered moderate → high in organizational sustainability: Her Majesty’s Prison (Dominica); NSTP (St. Kitts & Nevis); CASMAC and Green Hill Sports & Culture (St. Vincent & Grenadines).
- ✓ CYEP IOs considered moderate → high in organizational sustainability: GARD (Antigua); GIDC and NEWLO (Grenada); BELfund and CARE (St. Lucia).
- ✓ CYEP IOs considered moderate → high in financial sustainability: BELfund and NSDC (St. Lucia).

Under this final question, we will deepen the analysis of evaluation question 4. The response will be organized into a ‘Benefit Sustainability Matrix’ for each program. In the matrix we will rate each IO’s level of benefit sustainability through a financial and organizational sustainability lens introduced in question #4. Again, these two characteristics are defined as: (1) organizational sustainability ~ the ability of local organizations to replicate technical and functional aspects of the program (corresponding PEPnet benefits: youth engagement, employer engagement, leadership); and (2) financial sustainability ~ the ability of organizations to capture, leverage, or multiply financial resources with respect to the program (corresponding PEPnet benefits: partnerships, transition support, financial support, and accountability). Within the Benefit Sustainability Matrix, and according to organizational and financial sustainability, each IO is rated along one of two scales: Low → Emerging and Moderate → High¹⁷.

¹⁷ Emerging → Low = extent of organizational / financial sustainability within IO is with the parameters of nascent to minimal; Moderate → High = extent of organizational / financial sustainability within IO is with the parameters of intermediate to elevated.

Table 12. A Ganar Benefit Sustainability Matrix

Country/ IO	Organizational Sustainability		Financial Sustainability		Observations
	Emerging → Low	Moderate → High	Emerging → Low	Moderate → High	
Dominica					
CALLS	●		●		<u>Organizational</u> : Limited evidence of youth engagement and leadership qualities. Only organization to complete Phase 3 of programming as of the Q3 FY13 report. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported financial constraints.
Her Majesty's Prison		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : Proactive leadership, evidence of senior leadership support for program. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported lack of funding for prison program and lack of staff.
Social Centre	--	--	--	--	Unable to rate - program began implementation in February 2013.
YDD	●		●		<u>Organizational</u> : Evidence of high turnover, limited evidence of leadership commitment. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported lack of financial and material, resources.
St Kitts & Nevis					
NSTP		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : Evidence of established management structure and close coordination with private sector around vocational education. <u>Financial</u> : Expressed phased payment structure challenges implementation of activities. Evaluation left with question around dependence on A Ganar funding. Housed within MOE, so resources come from federal budget.
St Vincent & the Grenadines					
ACE	●		●		<u>Organizational</u> : Low self-ratings. Evidence of alumni returning to volunteer. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported financial limitations to continue the program.
CASMAC		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : Innovative program developed based upon youth feedback. Self-reported improvement in relationships with employers. Demonstrated leadership from volunteer board. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported dependence on cash and in-kind support. Evidence of strong partnerships.
Green Hill Sports & Culture		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : Organization in existence for 30 years. Prior WDP. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported need for additional financial support.
Marion House	●		●		<u>Organizational</u> : A level of strategic management exists. Limited evidence of youth and employer engagement. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported financial problems.
Rose Hall	●		●		<u>Organizational</u> : Appears to have strong youth engagement methodologies, but limited evidence of private sector engagement and leadership. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported periodic financial constraints.

Table 13. CYEP Benefit Sustainability Matrix¹⁸

Country/ IO	Organizational Sustainability		Financial Sustainability		Observations
	Emerging → Low	Moderate → High	Emerging → Low	Moderate → High	
Antigua					
The GARD Center		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : 30 years in existence; evidence of youth, employer engagement, and leadership <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported that finance and staffing were the biggest problems. In Phase II the IO leveraged ~ 73k cost share (19k in-kind; 54 cash).
Grenada					
GIDC		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : Entrepreneurial focus, strong youth engagement; staff of qualified experts. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported that activities are contingent upon funding availability. As a gov’t agency, less flexibility to seek alternate funding. Overall, the IO leveraged ~ 90k cost share (33k in-kind; 57k cash).
NEWLO		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : Established organization; proactive leadership; solicit input from youth; track record of work with private sector. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported financial challenges in funding aspects of CYEP. IO leveraged ~88k cost share (46.5k in-kind; 42k cash).
St Lucia					
BELfund		●		●	<u>Organizational</u> : Evidence of adaptation to youth and private sector needs; strategic plan in place. <u>Financial</u> : Although a gov’t organization, a diversified funding portfolio; proactive in seeking alternate funding streams. Phase II, IO leveraged ~ 287k cost share (1.3k in-kind; 286k cash).
CARE		●	●		<u>Organizational</u> : Demonstrates strengthening of program due to employer & youth assessments; strategic planning. <u>Financial</u> : Self-reported progress on diversifying funding streams and limitations in HR. Overall the IO leveraged ~ 33k cost share (10k in-kind; 23k cash)
NSDC	●			●	<u>Organizational</u> : Demonstrates good youth engagement; new management/leadership team. <u>Financial</u> : Positive results in mobilizing resources from private sector. In Phase II the IO leveraged ~ 350k cost share (5.5k in-kind; 344k cash)
RISE	--	--	--	--	Unable to interview.

B. Rapid Gender Analysis

Major Findings:

- ✓ Within A Ganar and CYEP, there was a balance between surveyed males and females reporting status as employed.

¹⁸ Matrix scale is same as in above table.

- ✓ Both programs lack gender-specific indicators and do not appear to be disaggregating and tracking gender-specific outcomes beyond enrollment levels.
- ✓ A Ganar males and females reported higher levels of employment versus CYEP; a higher percentage of CYEP males described themselves as students versus A Ganar males and females.
- ✓ Both programs are aware that female participants drop out due to pregnancy and/or lack of childcare options; yet, programmatic provisions made to accommodate appear to be limited to non-existent.
- ✓ A higher percentage of male youth report being less likely to engage in risky behavior as a result of CYEP than female youth. The reverse is true for A Ganar.

During the evaluation's analysis phase, the Mission requested a 'gender analysis' on the collected data. While data was disaggregated by female/male across fieldwork, a purposeful gender analysis was not built into the original evaluation design. That said, what follows is a 'rapid gender analysis', in which a gender lens was utilized to analyze all secondary and primary information collected. The purpose of the analysis is to shine a light on each program's approaches, issues or results that may warrant gender-specific programming considerations or adaptations.

Within the Eastern Caribbean region, both male and female youth face unique challenges. While girls tend to remain in school longer than boys, rates of unemployment are higher for females than males.¹⁹ Such realities indicate the need for a nuanced approach to youth workforce programming. The evaluation found that while CYEP and A Ganar are cognizant of these nuances, greater attention is needed on tracking gender-specific inputs and corresponding outcomes to better inform program design.

A Ganar

Gender Snapshot: According to the A Ganar implementation plan, the program was designed to achieve a 50/50 male to female participant ratio. However, initial program documents indicate that USAID favored an approach that had a higher quota for men due to gang and dropout issues. This in mind, the evaluation found no evidence of a gender specific indicator that measures male retention. More broadly, A Ganar does not appear to be tracking and disaggregating female/male program participants. The following is also not documented in USAID reports: female/male dropout rates, enrollment rates, retention rates, employment status. Lastly, there is no reporting on the sex of mentors for the A Ganar mentoring program. This is seen as important as under-representation may adversely affect the outcome of this component if male and female youth do not have equal access to role models of both sexes.

Indeed, interviews with the private sector demonstrate that young men have specific needs that should be considered at a programmatic level. For example, in Dominica, the owner of the Rudolph Thomas Hardware store indicated that female interns demonstrated better literacy skills and teamwork than male interns. More, the owner stated that male interns did not have good attitudes or dress appropriately. In a slightly different vein, the General Manager of the J.E. Nassief grocery store indicated that the male and female interns from A Ganar had a lack of respect for one another on the job. In St. Vincent, the Bishop College JC Catering Services reported: *"There is a need to get more males in the program ... career motivation is an issue for the males."*

Gender Considerations

"Boy/girl disputes are common."

—CASMAG, St. Vincent

The gender analysis equally showed that females have specific programming needs. The A Ganar Year 2009-2010 Annual report describes ongoing challenges with female dropout rates due to pregnancy and/or lack of childcare options. Although Marion House allows children to accompany their parent(s), available information indicates that only one IO actually provides childcare for participants. Coupling these retention issues, females may need additional support in securing employment due to the increased difficulty women in the Caribbean face in finding jobs.²⁰ Finally, NSTP and CASMAC both reported that

¹⁹ [http://unpan.org/publications/PDFs/E-](http://unpan.org/publications/PDFs/E-Library%20Archives/2005%20Report%20on%20the%20United%20Nations%20Sub-Regional%20Workshop%20for%20the%20Caribbean%20on%20Youth%20Employment%20Policies.pdf)

[Library%20Archives/2005%20Report%20on%20the%20United%20Nations%20Sub-Regional%20Workshop%20for%20the%20Caribbean%20on%20Youth%20Employment%20Policies.pdf](http://unpan.org/publications/PDFs/E-Library%20Archives/2005%20Report%20on%20the%20United%20Nations%20Sub-Regional%20Workshop%20for%20the%20Caribbean%20on%20Youth%20Employment%20Policies.pdf)

²⁰ The most recently available labor statistics from CARICOM, the ILO, and others (see above footnote) show significantly higher rates of unemployment for women versus men.

girls did not like the sport component of A Ganar. Marion House also reported that sports were not attractive for either males or females, but indicated this may have been due to lack of a shower facility.

Female/Male Disaggregated Data: Results from the evaluation youth survey sample demonstrate that A Ganar has generally achieved a balance between females and males on some key indicators. According to Table 15 below, graduation levels between males and females are nearly identical, though a higher percentage of males report not graduating.

Table 14: Demographic Profile of Male and Female A Ganar Participants

Characteristic	A Ganar	
	Females (n=70) # (%)	Males (n=74) # (%)
Graduated from the A Ganar Program		
Yes	44 (31)	45 (33)
No	44 (31)	51 (38)
Employment status		
Employee	27 (19)	26 (19)
Self-Employed	4 (3)	9 (7)
Unemployed	34 (24)	34 (25)
Student	10 (7)	23 (17)
Other (intern/never worked)	23 (16)	(6)
No Response	1	--
Have Children		
Yes	40 (28)	7 (5)
No	60 (42)	93 (69)
Less likely to engage/engaging in risky behavior as a result of A Ganar		
Yes	63 (44)	46 (34)
No	27 (19)	30 (22)
Unsure	6 (4)	18 (13)

Employment levels are also very similar between males and females – though slightly more males report being self-employed. Unemployment levels are also nearly identical, which is surprising given the regional trend of higher female unemployment levels. 23% of young men vs. 10% of young women report that they are in school; however this may reflect lower education levels to start with for young men. Significantly more women report having children than men, and as discussed above, this may have an adverse effect on the ability of young women to participate in the program. Significantly more women also reported that they are less willing to engage in risky behavior as a result of their participation in A Ganar. More young men replied that they were unsure, or that they were not less likely to engage in risky behavior as a result of the program.

CYEP

Gender Snapshot: CYEP reports, while more detailed, also lack granular gender data. Figures from the most recent semiannual report indicate slightly higher participation by females than males,²¹ but otherwise do not disaggregate gender-specific data on education, retention, graduation, unemployment, and employment (both status and type). However, the participation and job placement rates by gender include all CYEP countries, thus limiting their utility for country-specific gender-responsive programming and planning. Similar to A Ganar, there is no evidence that CYEP IOs track female/male status of mentors under the mentoring program.

²¹ This figure also includes participants from Jamaica. Due to how this data is reported by CYEP, it is not possible to disaggregate gender data for the countries in this evaluation.

With respect to male CYEP participants, there are noteworthy positive trends. First, CYEP made good progress on increasing participation rates for young men between the first and second phases of implementation. During Phase II in Grenada, CYEP also began to work with NEWLO, an organization that specifically targets young men. Such strategies may have facilitated the increase in CYEP's male enrollment rate. Participants themselves also noted positive changes: one male participant described himself as having been *"troublesome, stubborn, and resistant to change,"* but said that participation in CYEP has changed his outlook. Another male participant from St Lucia who had been incarcerated for four years for trafficking narcotics said that the program had offered him a *"second chance."*

CYEP interventions do not appear to be as targeted for females as they are to males. Aggregated data from Phases I and II show that 15% of CYEP participants are young mothers. Findings from an IYF assessment of NEWLO pointed to a lack of childcare as a reason why youth dropped out of the program. A similar message was reported in CYEP's August 2012 and February 2013 Semi Annual Reports that childcare was an area that needed improvement in both NSDC and NEWLO. While there was mention that GARD in Antigua had a childcare center, the evaluation was unable to validate it.

Gender Considerations

"Dropout levels are about 15% -- a lot of this is due to pregnancy among the females and there is no child care available at the center"

–CYEP officer, Antigua

Female/Male Disaggregated Data: As is illustrated below in Table 15 CYEP females have higher retention and completion rates than males. However, females report higher levels of unemployment than males, reflecting general unemployment trends in the region.

Table 15: Demographic Profile of Male and Female CYEP Participants

Characteristic	CYEP	
	Females (n=63) # (%)	Males (n=73) # (%)
Graduated from the CYEP Program		
Yes	59 (37)	37 (27)
No	40 (25)	51 (38)
Employment status		
Employee	11 (7)	15 (11)
Self-Employed	13 (8)	8 (6)
Unemployed	33 (21)	11 (8)
Student	19 (12)	51 (38)
Other (intern/never worked)	24 (15)	14 (10)
No Response	--	1
Have Children		
Yes	38 (24)	12 (9)
No	62 (39)	88 (65)
Less likely to engage/engaging in less risky behavior as a result of CYEP		
Yes	57 (36)	77 (57)
No	30 (19)	14 (10)
Unsure	8 (5)	7 (5)

More young women than young men reported being self-employed. More young men than young women are in school, though this may be reflective of lower education levels for young men at the start of their involvement in the program. Finally, more young men (77%) than young women (57%) indicated that they were less willing to engage or were less engaged in risky behavior.

II. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & LESSONS

A. Conclusions

The A Ganar and CYEP Programs are seen to have the most positive effect on the self-confidence, self-awareness, and outlook of graduated youth. Although private sector partners are generally satisfied with participant life skill gains, they did express a need for further improvement in how youth are applying such skills in the workplace. The programs also produce positive effects on the employment status of a select number of graduating youth. This potential positive effect on employment status increases when youth become graduates. Of further importance, both programs appear to be achieving a degree of balance with respect to bridging employment opportunities to surveyed female and male youth.

In relation to the comparisons the evaluation was tasked to investigate, the following surfaced: (a) A Ganar vs. CYEP ~ the sports emphasis of A Ganar curriculum does not appear to produce a stronger positive effect on retention, job insertion, or the transfer of skills versus the non-sports curriculum of CYEP; and (b) A Ganar / CYEP vs. Comparison group ~ A Ganar / CYEP youth self-reported higher gains in almost all workforce characteristics surveyed, the most significant of which included: willingness to start own business; program graduation rate; satisfaction with technical trainings.

While each program appears to be producing positive effects on their youth cohorts, they are also not without challenges and gaps. The first is that as both programs lack a causal chain of results and indicators attached to them, it is not possible to make an evidenced based assertion as to if and when A Ganar and CYEP will meet established goals. Equally important is that the evaluation was unclear how each is specifically contributing to the two Intermediate Results streams (IR1.1 and 1.2) under USAID/BEC's current Development Objective "(DO1) Opportunities for youth to lead productive lives increased."

Inconclusive evidence was also found on the level and scope of effect the programs are having in reducing risky behavior, particularly after youth leave programs. Likewise, inconclusive evidence was found on both programs' effect on youth owned-businesses. In evaluating the IO capacity building efforts of both programs, it was also found that IOs have accrued a moderate level of benefits since the introduction of the CYEP and A Ganar programs. Finally, even though all IOs expressed a desire to continue implementing their corresponding program, only select IOs are seen to possess the ability to do so absent financial support from POA / IYF.

In consideration of the above, the purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to generate sufficient knowledge from which to base corrective management interventions. In response to USAID/BEC's evaluation questions, the major findings consist of successes to leverage and challenges to be addressed. Appropriately, the succeeding section will offer up practical, actionable recommendations, which can serve to further multiply the positive effect on an important, yet underserved youth cohort in the Eastern Caribbean.

B. Recommendations

This section will present recommendations at three levels: Level 1. Overarching Recommendations; Level 2. A Ganar and CYEP Recommendations; and Level 3. USAID/ BEC Programming Recommendations. All three levels will be based on findings of the five evaluation questions above, with particular reference to question #3 responses.

Level 1. Overarching Recommendations

- **Tighter Targeting of Beneficiary Youth:** In order to enable a more positive and sustainable effect on future youth beneficiaries, it is recommended that both programs work with the Mission to select a tighter age range of youth beneficiaries and a more specific educational profile. While the parameters are clearly up to each program's discussion with the Mission, the evaluation recommends a tighter

age range (e.g., 16-21 y/o range) and a more specific educational level (e.g., foundation of basic skills, low basic skills, in-school, dropout, or in prison system). The evaluation sees this parameter-setting exercise (something CYEP is already doing to some extent) as critical to maximizing the programs' positive effects upon beneficiaries within the resource realities of the programs.

At this stage in the life cycle of both programs, a key message of the evaluation is to emphasize quality over quantity. Both programs (particularly A Ganar) appear to be spreading themselves thin in an attempt to address the needs of a wide range of youth with finite resources. As noted in Table 3, both programs target a wide age-range of youth, with varied educational levels and socio-economic status. As well, both are focusing on incarcerated youth. Each group of youth brings a specific set of needs that warrants corresponding programming considerations. This not only translates into multiple strategies, approaches, and pedagogies, but curricula and materials design as well. Indeed, the evaluation found that the wide and diverse range of existing youth beneficiaries, coupled with limited available resources, appear to be constraining a deeper positive effect of both the programs.

- **Ramp Up Capacity Building Efforts:** While both programs have different end-dates (CYEP in Dec 2013 and A Ganar in FY 2015), effective and efficient capacity building efforts should be prioritized. Based on the findings of questions 4 and 5, the following prioritized recommendations can be considered:
 - Immediately conduct an organizational needs assessment on all IOs to best understand progress, situate needs, and identify organizational and financial sustainability priorities. If a program assessment framework does not currently exist, there are a number of tools that can be adapted.²² Lastly, be mindful of the following IO evaluation findings before organizational assessments are undertaken:
 - A Ganar: Consider evaluation findings of low financial sustainability of all IOs as well as low organizational sustainability ratings for: CALLS, YDD, ACE, Marion House and Rose Hall.
 - CYEP: Consider evaluation findings of moderate organizational sustainability for NSDC and weak financial sustainability of majority of IOs.
 - Based on assessment findings, develop a capacity building action plan, with a time-line, roles and resources needed. Also, develop some simple targets and measures (i.e., results with corresponding indicators) and closely monitor organizational performance through the end of the programs.
- **Improve Reporting & Evidence of Success:** The evaluation observed reporting weaknesses of both programs (particularly in A Ganar) with respect to information and evidence sought by the Mission for this evaluation. Specifically, there were inconsistencies in tracking indicators and/or gaps in quantitative and qualitative information corresponding to: (i) measured gains in knowledge or skills; (ii) returning to school; (iii) business start-ups; and (iv) measured changes in behavior. The following, therefore, consist of quick-fix options to improve reporting quality – all of which are inherently linked to a succeeding recommendation, “Strengthen Activity Level M&E Plan.”
 - **Identify USAID Indicators & Define Key Terminology:** Starting with the most current version of USAID/BEC's DO 1 Results Framework and Indicator Reference Sheet, work with the Mission to identify and prioritize key custom and standard indicators upon which programs will report until the end-date. Discuss feasibility and utility of tracking and reporting on these indicators as well as which are most important to track for (IR1.1) Capacity of youth-serving institutions to prepare at-risk youth to meet existing workforce demand; and (IR 1.2) Enabling Environment for Youth Entrepreneurship Improved. At the same time, work to define key terms

²² Organizational assessment frameworks include: Participatory Results Oriented Self-Evaluation (PROSE); Institutional Development Framework (IDF); Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT); Dynamic Participatory Institutional Diagnosis (DPID); Organizational Capacity Indicator (OCI); and the Yes/No Checklist Scorecard.

such as: ‘risky behavior’; ‘school-re-entry’; ‘youth engagement’; ‘starting youth-owned businesses’; ‘maintaining jobs.’ Once understood and prioritized, consider the need for any new indicators to monitor program performance.

- o **Disaggregate Data by Female/Male:** Each program should consider developing gender-specific indicators and become more purposeful about reporting how the programs are affecting female and males. Beyond reporting, disaggregating the sex of participants can facilitate the identification of gaps and provide signals to improve the positive effect on young women and men. Current indicators to disaggregate by female/male can include but are not limited to:
 - Education re-insertion rates
 - Dropout and retention rates
 - Graduation rates
 - Job insertion (employment) rates
 - Type of employment
 - Wages
 - Willingness to engage in risky behavior
- o **Measure Learning & Behavior Change:** While many IOs are not conducting pre/post tests for basic skills courses, a number also affirmed testing to measure learning (e.g., NEWLO, GIDC, GARD, Marion House). Likewise, the evaluation did not see any measurement procedures or tools in place to determine behavior change, the next level up from learning in the hierarchy of results.²³ More concrete evidence is needed to demonstrate that learning is occurring and skills are being built. As well, more needs to be done to measure the effect of the program on the behavior of youth in terms of: (a) how life skills are being applied in the workplace; or (b) how the program is affecting the propensity of youth to engage in ‘risky behavior.’
- **Develop Activity Level M&E Plans:** As per USAID’s Automated Directives System (ADS), there is new guidance requiring that implementing partners possess an Activity M&E Plan (see ADS 203.3.5). Following the specific guidance offered under question #3 above, it is recommended that each program update their M&E plan. Current M&E plans for each program are considered inadequate to conduct strong performance monitoring efforts. For example, while the M&E plans have key ‘criteria’ (in POA’s case) or ‘outcomes’ (in IYF’s case), neither has specifically linked indicators to these results nor has systematically tracked them across the current program iteration.
- **Strengthen Programming:** With guidance offered under question #3 response, the following can be considered as options to bolster the positive effect both programs are currently achieving:
 - o **Entrepreneurship:** A piggyback approach is recommended whereby reputable micro-enterprise organizations are partnered with to leverage knowledge, experience, and networks. The approach would be one of win/win, as these organizations can contribute entrepreneurship success and experience and, at the same, gain a new program, new clientele (if not already working with youth), and the potential to enhance capacity. The evaluation saw promise in the St. Lucia Consortium model (BELfund, NSDC, CARE, and RISE), which aims at supporting youth entrepreneurs as well as an enabling environment. As entrepreneurship development requires a high level of experience and expertise, this piggyback model is seen as more efficient and effective than trying to install entrepreneurship models or expertise into inexperienced IOs. Overall, the installation model is considered to be time and resource intensive and may only yield limited results.

IO Interviews

“More collaboration among implementing agencies.”

–BELfund, St. Lucia

“There needs to be more networking with other agencies such as the Ministry of Education for job placement.”

–GARD, Antigua

“... There is no connection between the other countries. More cross-country sharing of best practices would be helpful. Even a student exchange with others in other countries through a project Facebook would be good.”

–Wesleyan Holiness Men, St, Kitts

²³ The hierarchy of results situates results levels – typically from lower-level outcomes and up. Generally, the hierarchy is presented as follows: Lower-level results (i.e. gaining knowledge, skills and awareness); Mid-level results (i.e., behavior change); Higher-level results: (i.e., change in beneficiary socio-economic or political status); and (iv) Impact-level: (positive change multiplies and affects context).

- **Deepen Life-Skills Curriculum:** As recommended under question #3, consideration should be given to deepening life skills and integrating it across program levels. While life skills is considered to be a highly successful aspect of the programs, youth and private sector informants alike considered it as needing further theoretical and practical emphasis.
- **Increase Partnerships:** Moving from both programs' strengths, A Ganar and CYEP IOs should continue developing partnerships aimed at leveraging additional resources and improving the sustainability of the programs. These partnerships include:
 - **Public & Private Sector Partnerships:** Continue to mobilize the in-kind contributions of the private sector and, equally important, seek to increase public sector partnerships (e.g., police, ministries). Numerous informants voiced that more can be done to strategically involve both groups across programming, training design and delivery, and M&E.
 - **Intra-program Country Partnerships:** Collaboration and networking among country IOs can enhance learning and improve capacity to deliver more effective programs, as seen among St. Lucia IOs.
 - **Intra-program Regional Partnerships:** As resources allow, the programs should consider cost-effective ways to foster regional collaboration and learning (e.g., regional workshops, virtual communities of practice, study tours or exchanges).
- **Incorporate Gender into Programming:** There are three key recommendations aimed at integrating gender into programming and implementation:
 - **Inclusion of "Gender Action Plan" in planning mechanisms:** To ensure that each organization and its implementing partners continue to factor gender into their program design and implementation, each organization should include specific gender sections within their regular planning and reporting documents.
 - **Balance of M/F in Mentor Cohort:** It is important that both young men and women have access to role models with whom they can identify. As much as possible, the mentor cohort should include equal representation between male and female mentors.
 - **Childcare:** If data reveals that pregnancy and/or lack of childcare continue to be a factor pushing females out of the programs, both CYEP and A Ganar should look at developing plans in conjunction with local partners that meet the childcare needs of these females so they do not lose the opportunity to benefit from CYEP and A Ganar. This may also warrant special consideration of internships and job placements that make some sort of allowance for single mothers.

Level 2. Specific Recommendations for A Ganar & CYEP:

A Ganar

- **Incentivize Facilitators:** Teacher absenteeism appears to be an ongoing challenge. As such, there is a need to identify and implement a compensation / bonus structure for all of its facilitators in line with program resources. Providing some sort of compensation contingent upon the teacher showing up and delivering a lesson or workshop will help to mitigate facilitator absenteeism and may also translate into improved pedagogy and motivation.
- **Develop a Marketing Strategy:** A Ganar may wish to consider establishing a marketing and communications plan aimed at leveraging resources, increasing internship placements and increasing youth enrollment. The plan can possess a supply and demand orientation, which develops messaging for youth and the private sector. It could also consist of country-specific activities that utilize low-cost methods such as social media, radio, or word-of-mouth via pre-existing IO networks. Likewise, A Ganar can identify specific activities to expand its EC identity and sense of belonging among trainees and graduates. Such activities could include: (i) inter-IO sport tournaments (for trainees and alumni) to engage participants in friendly competition and meet other program youth; or (ii)

Youth Focus Groups
"Teachers need to show up."
 –St. Kitts

establishing an active alumni network in each country to support fellow graduates as well as current participants.

- **‘Caribbeanize’ Curriculum:** Several IOs expressed a need to be able to adapt the curriculum to the specific needs and contexts of each country. A Ganar should work with each group of in-country IOs to support a tailoring of curricula, which is seen as an optimal country-fit, while still advancing the key goals of A Ganar.
- **Further Customize Program for Incarcerated Youth:** Special programmatic consideration should be given for incarcerated youth. As their situation is much different than walk-in youth, it is necessary that special consideration be given to A Ganar materials, training techniques and facilitators to maximize their learning experience. Equally important, consideration should be given on if/how best to facilitate workplace experiences. Finally, an A Ganar transition support plan should also exist for these young people to help their integration back into society. One simple activity would be to give them access to another A Ganar program with an IO.

IO Interviews

“The program should take into consideration that youths between 16 - 25 years face a number of social issues such as single parent, absent fathers, common law relationships, domestic abuse and unhealthy living conditions. The program must therefore be tailored to address these issues.”

–NSTP, St Kitts

CYEP

Specific recommendations for CYEP have been developed under the assumption that the program will close out in December 2013 per the contract. As such, two program-specific recommendations are seen as relevant options.

- **Exit Strategy:** Craft an exit strategy that answers three important questions: (i) What are the priority actions over the next four months – particularly in regards to fostering sustainability?; (2) How will IYF document and disseminate CYEP key lessons?; and (3) What will IYF’s exit communication strategy emphasize, who will it target and when/how will it be put into play?
- **Prioritize IO Capacity Building Efforts:** Within the next four months, CYEP should be strategic about its IO capacity strengthening efforts. IYF may look to priority IOs that are more advanced in their organizational and/or financial sustainability levels. Likewise, particular attention should be given to the entrepreneurship-focused consortia in St. Lucia and Grenada. These consortia should be strengthened at the country level (via developing standard operating procedures; identifying member roles and responsibilities; and establishing communication protocols) as well as at the regional level (e.g., sharing lessons and disseminating practices).

IO Interviews

“Some treat the inmates poorly when they are doing the A Ganar activities.”

–Her Majesty’s Prison, Dominica

Level 3. Programming Recommendations for USAID/BEC

The evaluation understands that this is an opportune moment for USAID/BEC, as the Mission is solidifying the evidence-base and finalizing its Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS). In this strategy, the Mission will define its vision for investment in the Eastern Caribbean region. This will, in turn, provide the foundation for the USAID/BEC program across the next five years. With this in mind, the following recommendations aspire to add value to two key USAID/BEC efforts: (1) maximizing A Ganar and CYEP success; and (2) enhancing future programming efforts in the youth workforce arena.

Maximizing A Ganar and CYEP Success

- **Guide the Definition of Desired Outcomes:** Identify / develop key indicators that will illuminate the definition of the key outcomes sought by the mission (i.e., business start-ups, school re-insertion, reduction of risky behavior). While there is value in allowing each program the flexibility to define these outcomes themselves, this approach appears to have yielded a level of vagueness that continues to challenge programming and reporting activities.

- **Data Quality Assessment(s) (DQA):** Both programs have been the flagships with respect to supporting the Mission achieve its results under (DO1) Opportunities for youth to lead productive lives increased. Likewise, there have been two funding phases that initiated in 2008 (CYEP) and 2009 (A Ganar). Third, data from both of these programs is: (i) abundant with respect to the amount collected as it is beneficiary-driven (versus sector driven); and (ii) absolutely critical in understanding progress and making management decisions to support progress. In consideration of these realities, and the fact that the evaluation found various gaps in data and reporting, a DQA is recommended for one or both programs. The purpose of the DQA will be to ensure that USAID/BEC is fully aware of data strengths and weaknesses and the validity of data when making management decisions and reporting as the programs close out.

The new ADS 203 Guidance is now strongly recommending that the Technical Offices, with support from the Program Office's M&E Specialist or Point of Contact, conduct DQAs. Beyond the DQA policy guidance found in ADS 203.3.11.3 (pp. 40-41), USAID possesses a [DQA Checklist](#),²⁴ which provides a guiding framework of recommended procedures and a DQA template.

- **Strengthen Reporting Requirements:** Overall, it is recommended that the Mission require a number of 'standardized elements' to improve the program reporting, which include:
 - Require reporting on identified standard / custom indicators that the Mission has linked to the DO1 results framework.
 - Reserve a section of the report for gender-specific information (e.g., reporting on gender specific outcomes) and corresponding programmatic / management interventions.
 - Require information on the efforts and results of IO capacity building, particularly as they feed into IR1.1
 - Consider a standard reporting template that is balanced between quantitative and qualitative information.
- **Deepen Relationships with Key Private Sector Partners:** In all countries, the private sector appeared to be a willing and motivated partner, believing whole-heartedly in the importance of programs that provide second-chance opportunities for marginalized youth. With this in mind, the Mission should take a leadership role in leveraging and multiplying this sentiment in a manner that can have deeper positive effects on current and future programs.

USAID/BEC Youth Workforce Future Programming

- **Prioritizing High-Risk Eastern Caribbean Youth:** As pointed out in the 2008 Rapid Youth Assessment conducted under the USAID EQUIP 3 mechanism, prioritizing opportunities for out-of-school youth is critical. Based on the feedback from beneficiaries and stakeholders throughout the evaluation, this appears to be the case five years later in 2013.²⁵ Accordingly, the evaluation views positive programming directed toward this cohort of young people as absolutely necessary and important. USAID should continue delivering programming for EC's high-risk youth to best prepare them to positively transition into a productive adulthood. However, and as previously mentioned, concentrated effort should be made to specify who these young people are (specific profile) before issuing any solicitations for contracting mechanisms.
- **Avoid Catchall Programming for Out-of-School Youth:** With limited available resources and USAID/BEC's regional scope of emphasis, care should be taken to avoid 'mile wide and inch deep' programming. Clearly, a balance must be struck between quantity and quality. However, if the latter

IO Interviews

"The Passport to Success materials are not at the right level for these youth. It is not reaching the targeted group. It is above these youth. These youth need in-depth and practical experiences and follow-on and less of the class room role-play and discussion. Everything needs more time and needs to be broken-down into smaller steps. The emotional needs are great."

—CARE, St Lucia

²⁴ See: <http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/data-quality-assessment-checklist-dqa>

²⁵ Currently, there is an on-going EC Rapid Youth Assessment to further investigate and identify optimal youth beneficiary profiles and sectors of emphasis.

is sacrificed, programming may fall short of affecting these young people at the level needed or intended. Thus it will be critical to target a specific demographic and educational profile and holding true to it in the recruiting, enrollment, and delivery components of a program.

- **Considerations to the RDCS:** There are two considerations that may support the Mission’s development of results that corresponds to youth.
 - **Improved Capacity is a Lower-Level Result:** Take into consideration that ‘improved capacity’ typically sits at the first level of the results hierarchy. For example, if the capacity of young people is improved (i.e., their knowledge, skills or awareness), we then look for a level of behavior change. That is, it is expected that they apply their gained knowledge and skills via changed behavior (the next hierarchical level). The same can be said for youth-serving institutions: it is expected they move beyond gaining knowledge or skills (i.e., capacity) to operating more effectively or efficiently (i.e., behavior change). Therefore, when crafting a stream of causal results in an RF, consider that improved capacity may very well occupy the lowest level outcomes. The next question is: if improved capacity, then what? This is important because it allows the thinking to address what we want organizations (and their staff) to do with the new developed capacity. It also gives us areas of focus in which to build such capacity.
 - **Ensure Programs Support Achievement of the RDCS RF:** As programs (aka activities²⁶) begin to feed into the Mission’s Results Framework (and within that its projects²⁷), it will be important to ensure: (a) that they articulate a causal stream of results; and (b) that their higher level results support achievement of the RF results – at whatever level it is designated to. As illustrated below, the goals of A Ganar and CYEP occupy lower level results. In turn, this affects the way a program is carried out and how it supports the achievement of the Mission’s RF. Therefore, being cognizant of the levels of a program’s results and how / where they feed into the Missions RF will become quite important over the next five years.

Table 16. A Ganar & CYEP Goal Interpretations

Goal	Result Level Interpretation
A Ganar: To help at-risk youth, boys and girls, ages 16-24, throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to find positive engagements in their communities via (1) employment (2) a return to the formal education system or (3) starting their own business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus on achieving knowledge, skills, attitudes (lowest outcome level) in order to get involved in work or school settings. – No results focusing on improved behavior change (next outcome level) or improved status of youth (higher outcome level yet).
CYEP: To provide young people in Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and St. Lucia with positive youth development opportunities that include technical/vocational skills and complementary life skills needed for them to be successful in developing sustainable livelihood pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus on providing positive development opportunities that include skills needed for success in livelihood (argument could be made that ‘providing positive development opportunities’ is output-focused – i.e., training). – Also, no specific results focusing on improved behavior change (next outcome level) or improved status of youth (higher outcome level yet).
Synthesis: Both goals are emphasizing the development of youth skills in order to become involved in an opportunity. The evaluation considers this is a low level goal that does not strategically push the organizations to reach beyond capacity building. At the same time, the evaluation does not consider these goals as results statements that can be seen as feeding into and contributing to the achievement of USAID/BEC IR 1 and IR2, under DOI.	

²⁶ The term ‘activity’ now refers to what was previously known as a ‘project’ per ADS 200.6. Activity is defined as follows: “a sub-component of a project that contributes to a project purpose. It typically refers to an award (such as a contract or cooperative agreement)...”

²⁷ Per ADS 200.6, the term ‘project’ is defined as “a set of executed interventions, over an established timeline and budget, intended to achieve a discrete development result (i.e., the project purpose) through resolving an associated problem. It is explicitly linked to the CDCS Results Framework”.

C. Lessons Learned

- **Sports Provides an Initial Doorway:** In the 2008 EC Rapid Youth Assessment, male and female youth identified sports as a key element in a ‘youth strategy’ designed to support them. Indeed, A Ganar is a project that emphasizes sports to build skills and develop opportunities. What the evaluation learned is that soccer can indeed serve as the attracting element that encourages youth to come through a program’s door. Yet, to sustain initial enthusiasm, a WDP must consistently deliver on this concept via dedicated and motivated facilitators, access to playing fields and equipment, and a flexibility to focus upon other sports as called for by the country context or female/male participant needs. The evaluation also learned that while sports can serve as the element of attraction, it’s a program’s ability to bridge real experiences in the workforce through internships and employment that carries the day. As young people settle down in the program, what becomes most important is their chance to enter the workforce in a way they perceive holds promise and potential for positively advancing their socio-economic status. All of this has implications on if they will join the program; continue through it; and graduate from it.
- **Graduate, Graduate, Graduate!:** While it is generally perceived that graduation from a WDP adds value to young people’s lives in some manner, this evaluation saw concrete evidence that this is what both programs are delivering. Indeed, the youth survey demonstrated that the positive effect on obtaining employment multiplies when trainees turn to graduates. Not only does this provide a level of assurance that the programs have the potential to produce a positive effect on the employment status of youth, but it also demonstrates that in order maximize this potential young people need to be among the graduated youth. Although there are some youth that find jobs as trainees (aka positive dropouts), they are an anomaly. Clearly, once youth are enrolled, A Ganar and CYEP need to take care that the right programmatic and monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure graduation. Of course, this doesn’t imply attaining graduation rates at all costs (e.g., bending enrollment policies or ignoring curriculum requirements).
- **Life Skills are the Right Place to Start:** Across the evaluation, and from diverse groups of informants, the evaluation heard about the value and importance of transferring life skills to youth. Among this low skilled, low educated cohort, transferring personal skills through a combination of reflection, theory and practice appears to be the most impactful place to start. Beginning with them also allows a quick win in terms of young people seeing immediate successes. It also is something tangible that they can use to gain more control over their own lives. Clearly, as youth enter into the programs the development of their personal skills is the point of least resistance (versus vocational, math, or literacy skills where negative experiences may lie). Typically, and when placed within the context of the workforce, youth are eager to improve with respect to their communication, dress, and teamwork skills. On the demand side private sector partners who are working with these youth appear to very much value life skills as it is consider a fundamental skill and can easily assess performance (i.e., How are they dressed? How are they communicating? How are they treating clients? How are they working with others? How often are they late for work?).

Prison Interviews

"The younger prisoners used to be locked in-now they use their energies for different things. The inmates in the program are more responsible, more patient, they have changed in how they dress, how they address others. Other inmates look on."

—Prison Official, Dominica

"They get to understand life more, they have more expectations. They think about their life and reflect what will happen when they get out".

—Prison Official, St. Kitts

"I was a very rude young lady but now I know how to behave and talk to people in a good manner."

—FG Trainee, St. Vincent

- From Skills to Behavior:** Ample qualitative evidence suggests that there is a level of transfer of knowledge and skills (particularly life skills) from both programs to their beneficiary youth. What the evaluation wasn't able to ascertain is any level of behavior change in youth as a result of one specific intervention or combinations of them. Indeed, there was variable anecdotal evidence of some youth positively describing how the programs are positively affecting them. However, there is no specific indication as to the scope and intensity to which the programs are affecting the behavior of youth. The evaluation learned that this is just as much a programmatic issue as it is a measurement one. This implies that both programs may wish to start thinking of purposeful interventions as well as adequate mechanisms with which to affect and measure behavior, respectively. In regards to the former, there are a number of follow-up interventions to training, which can exist (mentoring, which both programs possess, is one example). With respect to the latter, there is a range of measurement approaches (e.g., supervisor surveys, scorecards etc.) that can serve to compile evidence of any changes in behavior.

Youth Focus Groups

"Program taught me that I can become a better person in life"; "have been less violent and have better behavior"; "learned how to deal with criticism."

—CYEP Graduates, Antigua

"I am more open and able to express myself verbally in discussions."

—A Ganar Graduate, St. Vincent

"I was a very rude young lady but now I know how to behave and talk to people in a good manner."

—A Ganar Trainee, St. Vincent

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