USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

YOUTH IN DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2022 COMPANION GUIDE

CONTENTS

BACKGROUND

The USAID Youth in Development Policy (the Policy) guides Agency-wide investments in youth and is the primary source of direction for all youth-related programming. *This companion guide provides practical supplemental information for external audiences to guide its implementation.*

The Policy outlines key principles and priority areas for all USAID programming regardless of sector or geographical region, and inclusive of all funding accounts, directives, and program areas.

Categorization of Youth Projects

The Policy establishes updated categories for USAID programming: a) youth-focused b) youth-relevant, and c) youth-led. Almost all USAID programming will fall into one of these three categories, as defined below and the Policy applies to all three categories of activities, including reporting requirements.

- **Youth-focused:** An activity in which youth are the primary program participants.
- **Youth-relevant:** An activity that includes youth within its targeted participants.
  - Youth-relevant activities may include direct service delivery as well as those that focus on systems-level outcomes (i.e., policy development, service delivery, infrastructure, supply chain reform activities).
- **Youth-led:** A youth-led activity is one in which youth are the primary implementers and which has youth leadership guiding its implementation, management, and design.
  - A youth-led organization focuses on youth-led development, promotes youth participation, and often has young people as staff.
  - Youth-focused and youth-relevant activities may have components which are youth-led and/or may have sub-awards with youth-led organizations.

EXAMPLES: YOUTH PROJECT CATEGORIES

YOUTH-FOCUSED

COLOMBIA: Youth Resilience Activity (YRA)

Youth Resilience Activity is USAID/Colombia's first activity to focus entirely on youth. Through YRA, USAID is supporting youth in high-risk environments to help them reach their full potential as safe, productive, healthy members of society. Using a socio-ecological systems approach, the activity fosters multi-stakeholder partnerships to engage youth, families, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), media, and the public and private

sector to recover public spaces, increase youth engagement, promote economic opportunities, provide psychosocial support and improve youth access to public services. This entails supporting youth-centered efforts targeting Colombian and Venezuelan youth, disengaged child soldiers, and former youth offenders.

YRA works with youth between the ages of 10 to 29, with an emphasis on adolescence and emerging adulthood (ages 15-24). (See descriptions below of each age range.)

YOUTH-RELEVANT

CAMBODIA: Feed the Future Harvest II

The Feed the Future (FTF) Cambodia Harvest II Activity seeks to accelerate growth of mango, longan, vegetables and cashew markets. Harvest II employs a strategy that blends a buyer-led approach with market systems development. It strengthens partnerships between buyers and suppliers while engaging other market actors to identify and address broader systemic market constraints in the horticulture sector.

Harvest II works with any farmer within the zone of influence, including youth between the ages of 15-29 (15 percent of project participants). The project takes a PYD approach to ensure that youth needs are addressed in a relevant way such as through addressing financial barriers youth face, as well as land access and dwindling popularity of rural employment such as farming. Harvest II works with the Young Entrepreneur Association of Cambodia (YEAC) and encourages youth innovation through developing technology platforms to diversify business opportunities in response to COVID-19. The project encourages youth engagement in capacity building and business innovation through grants that include market diversification and skills training for grantees.

YOUTH-LED

ETHIOPIA: Kefeta ("To Elevate")

The USAID Kefeta project is a youth-focused project with a youth-led component. The project will work at the grassroots level with youth-serving organizations, private-sector businesses, and civil society to amplify youth voices and their role in community development in order to address the growing unemployment gap across the country that youth face. One of Kefeta's components is an innovative youth-led and youth-managed "Empowerment Fund" for youth entrepreneurs. The Empowerment Fund is projected to grow to over $20 million by 2026 and will focus on funding start-ups. Kefeta will also support career centers in higher education institutions and community-based youth centers to reach over 700,000 youth with skills training, such as digital literacy and entrepreneurship training.

Guiding Principles

- **Apply meaningful youth engagement and leadership in the design and delivery of projects and strategies.** Meaningful youth engagement is defined as an inclusive, intentional, mutually respectful partnership between youth and adults whereby power is shared and respective contributions, including young people's ideas, leadership, perspectives, skills, and strengths, are valued.

- **Recognize that youth are not homogeneous.** Promote meaningful inclusion of diverse groups of young people to ensure equity and address systemic barriers to participation based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity/expression.

- **Integrate intergenerational approaches** to strengthen youth participation in decision-making with local leaders and systems. Recognize the traditional roles that youth play in their communities and families, and meaningfully address youth-adult power dynamics in interventions.

- **Protect and support young people's overall well-being** by building resilience to shocks, reducing harmful practices, and supporting mental health and wellness while applying trauma-informed approaches.

- **Apply conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm principles**, while recognizing that engaging young people as partners in peacebuilding and humanitarian activities is critical to success in fragile environments.

- **Create pathways for youth** who have experienced marginalization or disenfranchisement to access opportunities for development.

- **Promote responsible use of technology** by and for youth by leveraging digital literacy, appropriate skills development, and digital citizenship opportunities, while reducing risks for digital harm.

Objectives

The Policy has three objectives that build on the Positive Youth Development framework. The Guiding Principles should be applied to activities which contribute to any of these three objectives.
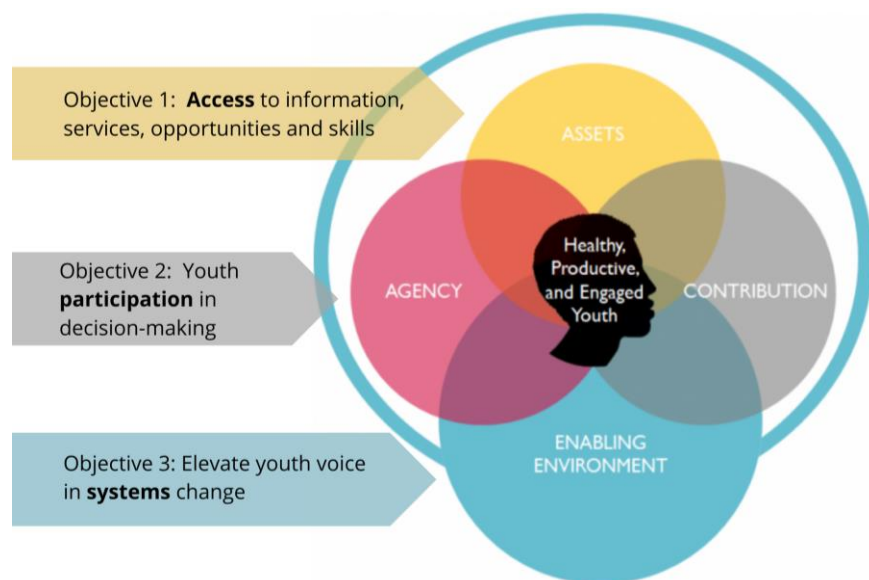

Figure 1: Youth Policy Guiding Principles

1. **ACCESS:** *Youth are better able to access high-quality information, safe services, and livelihood opportunities and build the skills they need to lead healthy, productive, and engaged lives.*

USAID should continue to work to increase access to **youth-responsive services and information** that are equitable, accessible, acceptable, appropriate, and effective. Some examples of youth-responsive services are:

- Age-appropriate health, legal, social, family support, education, employment, entrepreneurship, value chain (agriculture and non-agriculture), security, humanitarian and water services that take into consideration the stage of life which young people are in related to services they access.

- Provision of age and stage appropriate services will often entail:

  – Analysis of relevant data to understand trends and patterns with youth within targeted populations.

  – A gender and social inclusion analysis to review barriers, needs, and opportunities for differentiated target populations.

  – Application of nuanced approaches to ensure that services and information are age and developmentally appropriate.

  – Guaranteed accessibility by considering languages spoken, literacy rates by youth of different socioeconomic groups, and including features such as braille, alternative (ALT) text, and captioning.

  – Supporting the reduction of financial barriers to youth entrepreneurship or services.

  – Consideration of the most supportive way to include families and communities.

2. **PARTICIPATION:** *Youth have the right to fully participate in decision-making as key partners to contribute to individual, household, community, and national well-being.*

- Youth participation may be either a stated objective of a project or a secondary objective which will help USAID to achieve the primary objectives.

- USAID should consider how interventions increase meaningful youth participation in decision-making as partners in development across all sectors.

- Participation activities should be inclusive, taking into consideration the barriers facing historically marginalized youth populations. They should also promote youth leadership. Leadership training and opportunities for decision-making should reach beyond elite and easily accessible youth groups and should intentionally consider if leadership activities may unintentionally reinforce barriers for marginalized groups Some examples of youth participation in USAID programming are:

  – Youth have specific roles in assessment, program design, implementation, and evaluation.

  – Youth-serving and youth-led organizations are supported and engaged.

  – Youth have access to virtual platforms for voice, networking, and innovation.

Youth Leadership

DREAMS is a youth-focused, public-private partnership designed to reduce the transmission of HIV in 16 countries while protecting, empowering, and investing in adolescent girls and young women (AGYW). DREAMS Ambassadors are adolescent girls and young women that have learned about sexual reproductive health and HIV prevention services and serve as leaders in their communities and with their peers. In Lesotho, DREAMS Ambassadors have also educated their peers on the importance of COVID-19 vaccination as part of the U.S. Government's Initiative for Global Vaccine Access (Global VAX). Now, they are as prepared to speak about COVID-19 vaccines as they are about family planning and comprehensive HIV prevention.

Participation in Decision-making

The Puentes Project, a youth-focused activity based in Guatemala, supports youth (ages 15-24) in high migration areas of Guatemala to access education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities while also improving their basic life skills so that they can actively contribute to their communities. Puentes established youth networks throughout all 25 municipalities, with elected officials at the regional and national levels. The national representatives of the youth network are equal members of the project's Steering Committee which meets regularly to guide project planning and implementation.

3. **SYSTEMS:** *Youth have a stronger collective voice in, and are better served by, local and national systems through more coordinated and effective services, practices, and policies that embody the principles of positive youth development.*

- By increasing the capacity and self-reliance of the array of stakeholders, including youth, who support youths' transition to adulthood, USAID maximizes the scale and sustainability of its investments by:
  - Convening and facilitating mechanisms that allow for dialogue, experimentation, collaboration, and exchange of data and knowledge-sharing between system actors at local levels.

- Including specific attention to norms and culture, policies and laws, and resource flows by taking into account context-specific adaptations during youth program design, implementation, and evaluation.
- Identifying and supporting local mechanisms for stakeholder coordination, ensuring that youth are engaged as leaders and agents of change, especially vulnerable and marginalized youth who bring underrepresented perspectives to implementation of interventions.

The Youth Systems Framework developed by the Youth Systems Collaborative,[1] a group of USAID implementing partners, provides a visual representation (Figure 2) of the way stakeholder collaboration can have ripple effects on systemic policies, services, norms, and resources. The work of stakeholders, including youth and youth-led organizations, to promote systems mapping, establish a vision, collect data, and provide capacity development is crucial to accomplishing the Policy's objective of strengthening youth voice in systems change.

Youth Systems Framework
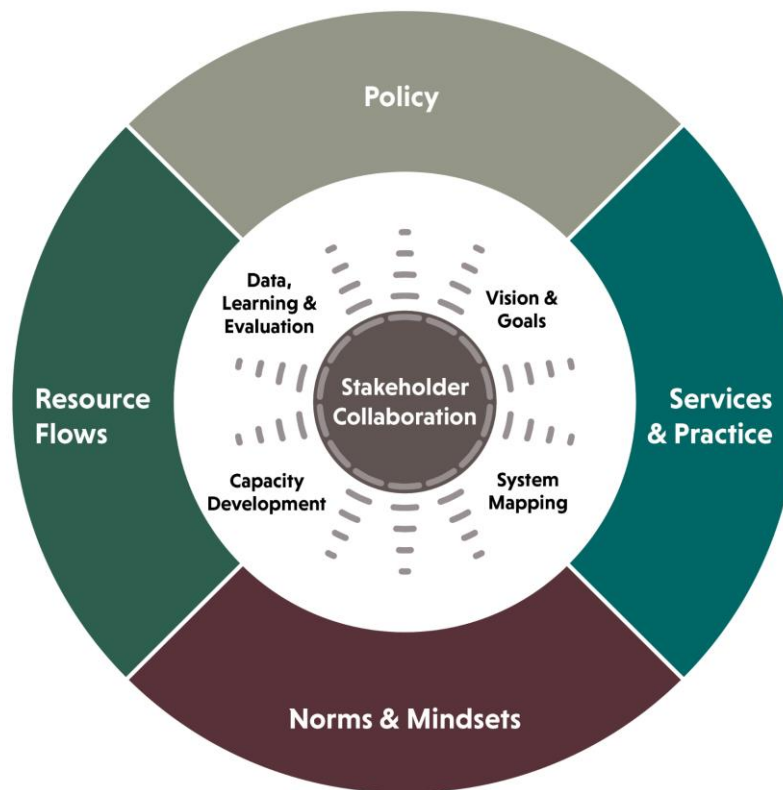by the **Youth Systems Collaborative**[SM]

Figure 2: Youth System Framework

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[1] https://jyd.pitt.edu/ojs/jyd/article/view/21-16-%282-3%29-SIA-03/1290

MOMENTUM: A Global Partnership for Health and Resilience with a Systems Focus

MOMENTUM is a global project which aims to holistically improve voluntary family planning and maternal, newborn, and child health services in partner countries around the world. MOMENTUM is a youth-relevant project, which includes youth as target project participants. The project conducted research into the Social Accountability (SA) needs of youth in order to strengthen youth voices in health systems. The report, "The Power of Youth Voices: How Youth Are Holding

Their Health Systems Accountable for Family Planning and Reproductive Health," includes youth voices as they were key informants and reviewers of the findings presented in the report. The research has been instrumental in shaping the youth-led SA work currently being implemented under MOMENTUM. Further, the research informed a need for more youth-led SA interventions, organizational capacity strengthening to foster youth abilities to record and disseminate their own processes and findings is needed. Since one of MOMENTUM's prime mandates is organizational capacity strengthening, the youth and youth-led organizations conducting SA initiatives are also receiving assessments and training to foster the organizations' ability to write and publish their own findings.
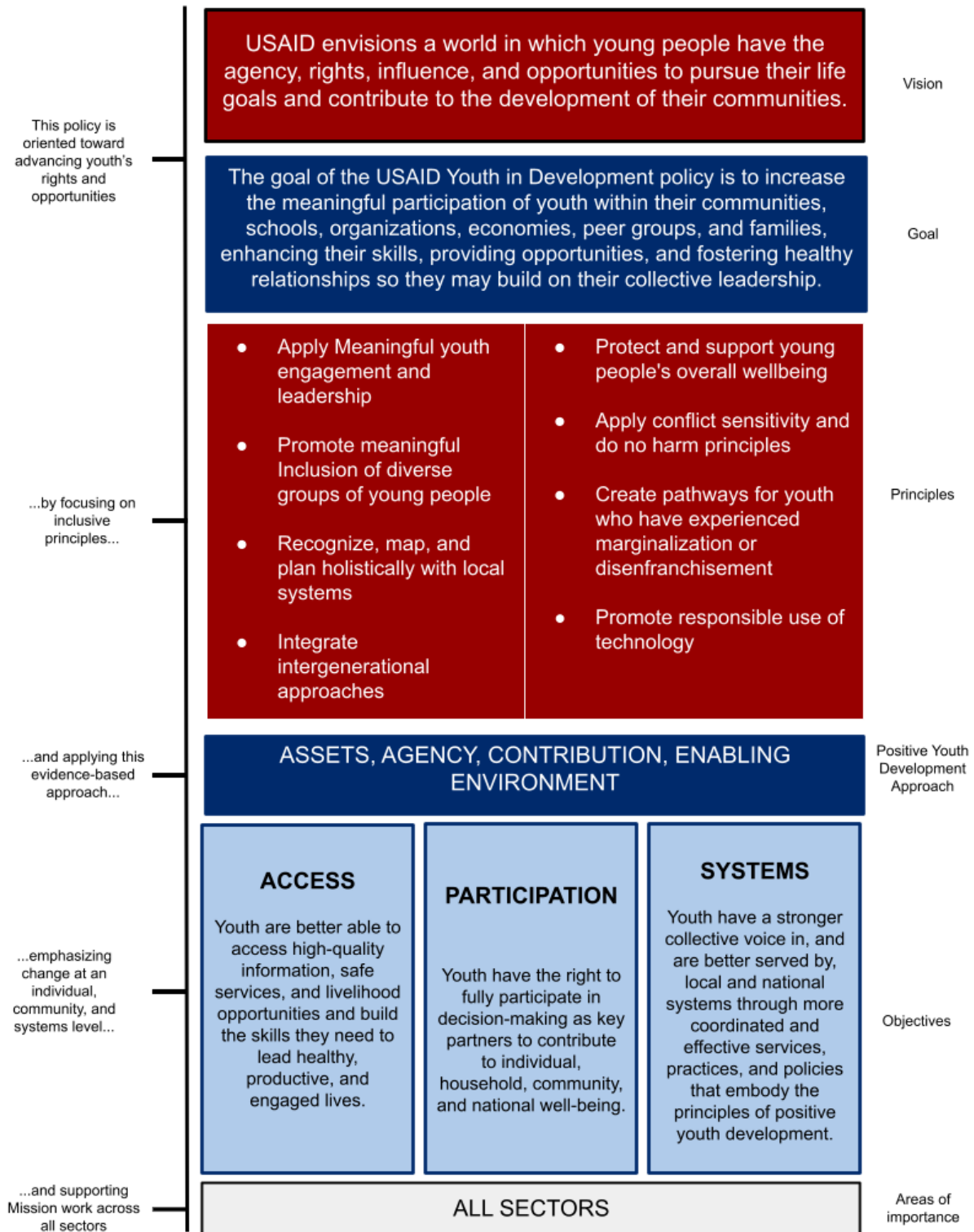
YOUTH POLICY FRAMEWORK SUMMARY

USAID envisions a world in which young people have the agency, rights, influence, and opportunities to pursue their life goals and contribute to the development of their communities.

Vision

The goal of the USAID Youth in Development policy is to increase the meaningful participation of youth within their communities, schools, organizations, economies, peer groups, and families, enhancing their skills, providing opportunities, and fostering healthy relationships so they may build on their collective leadership.

Goal

- Apply Meaningful youth engagement and leadership
- Promote meaningful Inclusion of diverse groups of young people
- Recognize, map, and plan holistically with local systems
- Integrate intergenerational approaches

- Protect and support young people's overall wellbeing
- Apply conflict sensitivity and do no harm principles
- Create pathways for youth who have experienced marginalization or disenfranchisement
- Promote responsible use of technology

Principles

ASSETS, AGENCY, CONTRIBUTION, ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Positive Youth Development Approach

ACCESS

Youth are better able to access high-quality information, safe services, and livelihood opportunities and build the skills they need to lead healthy, productive, and engaged lives.

PARTICIPATION

Youth have the right to fully participate in decision-making as key partners to contribute to individual, household, community, and national well-being.

SYSTEMS

Youth have a stronger collective voice in, and are better served by, local and national systems through more coordinated and effective services, practices, and policies that embody the principles of positive youth development.

Objectives

ALL SECTORS

Areas of importance

This policy is oriented toward advancing youth's rights and opportunities

...by focusing on inclusive principles...

...and applying this evidence-based approach...

...emphasizing change at an individual, community, and systems level...

...and supporting Mission work across all sectors

Figure 3: Youth Policy Framework Summary

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS POLICY?

Ages and Stages

Based on extensive in-country experience and global evidence, USAID takes an ages and stages approach to building a continuum of intentional, age-appropriate interventions across sectors. Particular emphasis is given to expanding access to foundational skills, soft skills, and other youth responsive services. Similarly, the focus on expanding meaningful opportunities for participation and contribution by young people is key to any activity design. The stage of development along the lifespan will strongly determine the types of intervention selected.

- **Early Adolescence (10–14 years):** This is a critical time to build on previous investments in child health, nutrition, and education and to lay the foundation for life skills, positive val–ues, and constructive behaviors. The onset of puberty makes reproductive health and maturation an important area of focus. As the brain is now primed to learn new skills, developing critical thinking skills is essential.

- **Late Adolescence (15–19 years):** These years are critical to sustain and expand health and education gains; protect against rights abuses such as trafficking, exploitation, or hazardous work; and prepare youth for citizenship, family life, and the workforce.

- **Emerging Adulthood (20–24 years):** As behaviors form with last brain development, programs should continue to support positive and constructive decision-making and build resilience.

- **Transition into Adulthood (25–29 years):** Although physical maturation is largely complete, learning continues. In post-conflict situations, programs that provide accelerated learning opportunities to make up for lost years due to war and that provide psychosocial support are often needed.

Inclusive Development

Inclusive development is intrinsically intertwined to USAID's approach to Youth in Development. USAID's programming must consider the intersectional identities, needs, barriers, and opportunities which exist for young people with whom we partner.

An inclusive development approach works towards ensuring that all people can fully participate in and benefit from development efforts. Inclusive youth development projects should include all young people, regardless of identify, especially those who may face discrimination or marginalization and therefore may have less access to a country's benefits, legal protections, and social participation, are fully included in development activities. Inclusive youth development recognizes the intersectionality of young people's identities and how various biological, social, and cultural categories such as gender, race, class, ability, sexual identity, caste, and other identities interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels, contributing to discrimination and inequality. Inclusive youth development that recognizes the intersectional identities of youth populations should:

- Spotlight and focus on authentic youth engagement and inclusion, including a focus on youth as full partners, and concentrating on the diversity and inclusion of young people;

- Support young people as leaders, especially young people who have traditionally experienced less access to and participation in leadership roles due to intersectional marginalized identities;

- Intentionally and strategically support local youth-led and youth-serving organizations; and

- Use conflict sensitive and trauma-informed approaches, such as do no harm, digital protection, and mental health and psychosocial support.

USAID Definitions of Inclusive Development and Intersectionality

Inclusive development: the concept that every person, regardless of identity, is instrumental in the transformation of their own societies and their inclusion throughout the development process leads to better outcomes.

Inclusion: Social, economic, political, and cultural inclusion is the intentional **process** of positively transforming power dynamics to ensure the diverse individuals and communities from marginalized and/or underrepresented groups are able to take part in their societies. Inclusion can also be an **outcome**, when all the diverse individuals and communities, including from marginalized and/or underrepresented groups, are no longer excluded based on their identities or marginalization, and are meaningfully able to take part in their societies, including in decision-making processes.

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, etc.) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized and/or underrepresented individuals or groups. An intersectional approach recognizes that many elements of a person's identity can impact how they experience the world. In combination with systems of inequality, these intersecting identities can lead to varying degrees of power and privilege that, in turn, create unique power dynamics, effects, and perspectives impacting individuals' place in society, experience of, and potentially access to development interventions.

Positive Youth Development

USAID explicitly prioritizes a Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach as foundational to all youth work. This is not only the framework for international youth development, but also for all the United States Government (USG). As a result, USAID's PYD Framework builds on the work of the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, but tailors the approach based on country context. It is crucial that interventions take into account the distinct and diverse age-specific and context-specific needs of youth to create conditions in which youth can thrive.

By taking a holistic ages and stages PYD approach, USAID seeks to move from investments in single-sector, problem-focused responses toward cross-sectoral interventions that support youth in reaching their full potential. Cross-sectoral work is not easy. It often requires more time and resources than traditional, single-sector activities. Bringing together different funding streams and technical areas allows for youth programs to look at the "whole of youth" rather than one development issue at a time. Ultimately, USAID sees cross-sectoral PYD investments as more sustainable in the long-term and more

effective in achieving youth development outcomes. The full PYD Framework can be found at
https://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development-pyd-framework.

Youth Engagement

USAID defines meaningful youth engagement as an "inclusive, intentional, mutually-respectful partnership between youth and adults whereby power is shared, respective contributions are valued, and young people's ideas, perspectives, skills and strengths are integrated into the design and delivery of programs, strategies, policies, funding mechanisms and organizations that affect their lives and their communities, countries and globally."

Power sharing between youth and adults involves incorporating the participation and decision-making by young people in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of USAID projects. The following are examples of how USAID and Implementing Partners can engage youth across the Program Cycle:

PROGRAM CYCLE STAGE	EXAMPLES OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
Activity Design and Planning	• Hire youth to help design assessment tools like surveys and focus group questions to ensure a youth-sensitive analysis • Youth participation in conducting cross-sectoral youth assessments • Ask youth to assist in analyzing the findings of assessment and to contribute suggestions for the co-creation of activity design • Engage youth as participants in cross-sectoral youth assessments • Engage youth as thought partners in design and planning exercises through listening tours and stakeholder consultations • Intentionally share the pre-solicitation with relevant groups of youth and facilitate youth-led workshops or listening sessions to garner their feedback[2] • Review activity designs for opportunities to integrate youth-led activities and partnership strategies, including a review of barriers for youth-led organizations. • Conduct outreach about upcoming Business Opportunities with USAID in a way that would make new and non-traditional partners aware of the opportunity.
Implementation	• Establish a youth advisory group composed of heterogeneous youth voices to guide implementation of the project • Engage older youth as peer leaders and/or mentors in any skills training component (may come from private sector, civil society, etc.) • Hire youth as interns, fellows, apprentices, and employees • Consider youth private sector partnerships

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[2] Please note that planning exercises should be done in close collaboration with Procurement Specialists to ensure that all rules and regulations are adhered to, including those requirements pertaining to fair competition.

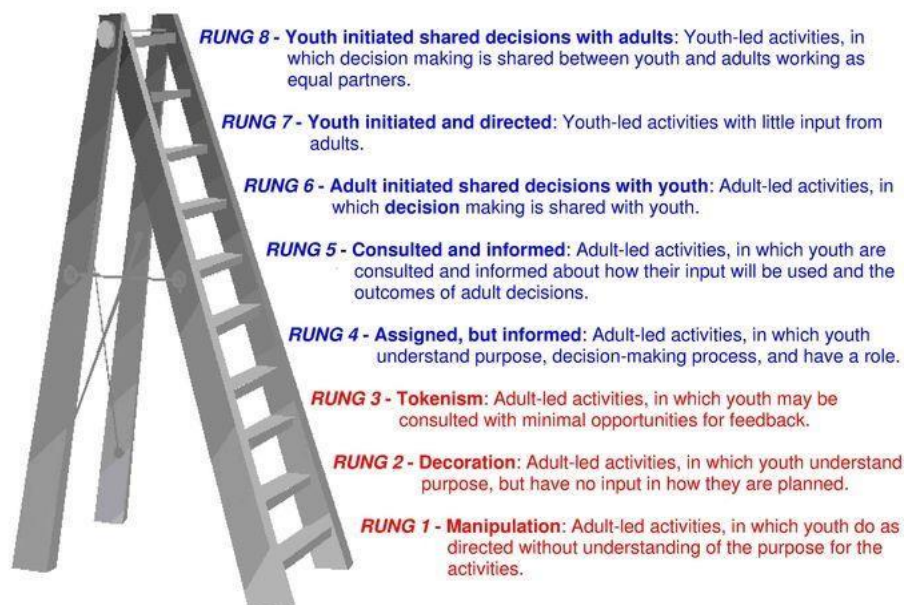| PROGRAM CYCLE STAGE	EXAMPLES OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	• Leverage a youth advisory group for regular input and monitoring of the success of the activity • Encourage youth beneficiaries to develop their own learning agenda for the activity and provide grant funding that allows them to pursue the learning agenda • Engage youth as researchers, enumerators, and data collectors on MEL activities

Youth Engagement

USAID's Changing the Way We Care Initiative, a youth-relevant Global Development Alliance (GDA) working globally, aims to reduce child-family separation. The project has recognized that engaging with youth who have had lived experiences in orphanages or foster care systems, Care Leavers, is critical and as such is working to better engage with Care Leavers as key decision-makers in spaces and conversations about care system reform.

Meaningful Youth Engagement Resources and Tools

- Youth Programming Assessment Tool: Organizational self-assessment tool for measuring current levels of youth engagement in programming and an accompanying action plan.

- YouthPower Youth Engagement Measurement Guide: Online tool provides illustrative indicators for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The measurement statements are classified at three levels: youth, program or organization, and enabling environment.

ROGER HART'S LADDER OF PARTICIPATION

RUNG 8 - **Youth initiated shared decisions with adults**: Youth-led activities, in which decision making is shared between youth and adults working as equal partners.

RUNG 7 - **Youth initiated and directed**: Youth-led activities with little input from adults.

RUNG 6 - **Adult initiated shared decisions with youth**: Adult-led activities, in which **decision** making is shared with youth.

RUNG 5 - **Consulted and informed**: Adult-led activities, in which youth are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adult decisions.

RUNG 4 - **Assigned, but informed**: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, decision-making process, and have a role.

RUNG 3 - **Tokenism**: Adult-led activities, in which youth may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback.

RUNG 2 - **Decoration**: Adult-led activities, in which youth understand purpose, but have no input in how they are planned.

RUNG 1 - **Manipulation**: Adult-led activities, in which youth do as directed without understanding of the purpose for the activities.

Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, as cited in www.freechild.org/ladder.htm

Figure 4: Hart's Ladder

- [Hart's Ladder](): Presents eight levels of youth participation that start from manipulation and tokenism at the lower rungs, to full participation at the top.
- Similarly, the [Flower of Participation]() illustrates how to nourish and grow the different types of youth participation and decision-making.

Youth Engagement

Kenya Youth Employment and Skills (K-YES)

This activity targets out-of-school youth who have not completed or dropped out of high school. The activity, implemented in nine counties, promoted positive youth development, such as building skills, assets, and competencies through training and experiential learning; access to financial services; identifying role models and mentors; and fostering a sense of inclusion by engaging young people as activity implementers through youth-led organizations.

In FY 2018, K-YES reached 60,530 young people with skills training and more than 14,070 youth gained new or better employment. Leveraging a network of one million youth members from the former USAID Yes Youth Can activity, K-YES partnered with Government of Kenya line ministries to identify and register 35,474 youth for national identification cards.

Partnering with Youth-led Organizations

Historically, development partnerships with local youth-led organizations (YLOs) have been predominantly limited to youth participation in pre-designed projects. YLOs are rarely involved in activity design. Further, restrictive contract arrangements, funding structures, and lack of capacity development constrain YLO sustainability (see resources in Annex A for further tips on building YLO sustainability). Capacity development should be considered as an element of partnership arrangements with YLOs, including considering long-term sustainability. In line with the Localization initiative, USAID seeks to support YLOs as credible, thriving, and sustainable partners for solving their countries' development challenges. Accordingly, emerging insights from youth-led programming provides the following approaches for consideration:

- **Near-peer programming:** Support interventions in which older youth provide guidance and mentorship to a younger youth to enable the younger participant to navigate their program successfully.
- **Inclusive programming:** Intentionally include youth-led organizations outside of major cities and elite populations. Ensure participation and leadership is accessible to marginalized youth.[3] Build

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[3] Marginalized Groups: People who are typically denied full access to legal protection or social and economic participation and programs (such as police protection, political participation, access to healthcare, education, employment, etc.), whether in practice or in principle, for either historical, cultural, political, or other contextual reasons. Such groups may include but are not limited to: women and girls, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people, displaced persons, economic migrants, Indigenous individuals and communities, youth and the elderly, religious minorities, ethnic minorities, people in lower castes, persons with unmet mental health needs, and people of diverse economic class and political opinions. These groups often suffer from discrimination in the application of laws and policy and/or access to resources, services, and social protection, and may be subject to persecution, harassment, and/or violence. They may also be described as "underrepresented," "at-risk," or "vulnerable."

trust-based alliances with community gatekeepers that allow access to young people who may be otherwise invisible. Unless we intentionally and proactively include marginalized youth, we risk unintentionally excluding them.

- **Power exchange and transformation:** Recognize that adults and elders with positions of power may have negative and paternalistic perceptions of youth. Create spaces for dialogue and knowledge sharing with the goal of transforming power structures to include youth as decision makers.

- **Recognition:** Meaningfully acknowledge the participation of youth-led work, particularly because youth continue to be tokenized in development initiatives. Meaningful recognition for their work is important for them to continue advancing development projects.

MONITORING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Reporting: Data on outcomes of youth programming (youth-focused, youth-relevant, and youth-led) will continue to be primarily gathered through the Operational Plan (OP), Performance Plan and Report (PPR), Portfolio Reviews, Development Information Solution (DIS) and other reporting processes and systems. These reports help USAID to report on USAID youth investments and outcomes to Congress and external stakeholders.

Monitoring: USAID's Monitoring Toolkit provides guidance and resources on monitoring at USAID. Youth activities should monitor activity implementation, adaptations, costs, and outputs. Monitoring data should reveal how programming targets and affects different groups, highlighting youth as a discrete group and, as relevant for program management and learning, disaggregating by age bands. Progress towards desired outcomes, development objectives, and intermediate results as described in the Country Development Cooperation Strategies should also include youth indicators and age disaggregated data.

1. All relevant indicators should be age-disaggregated. The preference is to use the age bands described in the Policy (10-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25-29)
2. All USAID's people-level standard and custom performance indicators should be sex-disaggregated and age-disaggregated. The following indicators are examples:

STANDARD AND CUSTOM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SECTOR	NAME	TITLE
Health	HL.7.2-1-a/b	Percent of audience who recall hearing or seeing a specific USG-supported Family Planning/Reproductive Health (FP/RH) message
Economic Growth	EG.3-2-f	Number of individuals participating in USG food security programs
	EG.4.2-7-c	Number of individuals participating in USG-assisted group-based savings, micro-finance or lending programs
	EG.6-11-j/k/l/m/n/o	Average percent change in earnings following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs
	EG.6-12-g/h/i/j/k/l	Percent of individuals with new employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs
	EG.6-13-w/x/y/z/za/zb/zc/zd	Percent of individuals with improved soft skills following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs

SECTOR	NAME	TITLE
	EG.6-14-w/x/y/z/za/zb/zc/zd	Percent of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs
	EG.6-16-g/h/i/j	Percent of individuals with improved perceived quality of employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs
Education & Social Services	ES.1-3-c/d/e/f	Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance
	ES.1-4-c/d/e/f	Number of learners in secondary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance
	ES.1-46-g/h/i/j/k/l/m/n	Percent of individuals who transition to further education or training following participation in USG-assisted programs
	ES.1-54-w/x/y/z/za/zb/zc/zd	Percent of individuals with improved reading skills following participation in USG-assisted programs
	ES.2-2-ba/bb	Number of individuals attending higher education institutions with USG scholarship or financial assistance
	ES.2-55-c	Number of learners reached by USG-assisted higher education interventions
	ES.5-1-h	Number of USG social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets [IM-level]
Democracy, Human Rights & Governance	DR.3.3-1-c	Number of individuals who received USG-assisted political party training
	DR.3.3-2	Number of USG-assisted political parties implementing initiatives to increase the number of candidates and/or members who are women, youth and from marginalized groups
	DR.6.1-2-d	Number of human rights defenders trained and supported
	DR.6.3-1-d	Number of individuals from low income or marginalized communities who received legal aid or victim's assistance with USG support

3. The following standard Youth indicators are required, as applicable, across all activities with accompanying Performance Indicators Reference Sheets.

YOUTH OUTCOMES FOR STANDARD INDICATORS

NAME	TITLE
Youth-1	Number of youth trained in soft skills/life skills through USG assisted programs
Youth-2	Number of laws, policies or procedures adopted or implemented with USG assistance designed to promote youth participation at the regional, national or local level
Youth-3	Percentage of participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources who are youth (15-29)
Youth-5	Percentage of youth who participate in civic engagement activities following soft skills/life skills training or initiatives from USG assisted programs
Youth-6	Number of youth who complete USG-funded leadership programming

4. PYD Illustrative Indicators are also available for consideration when developing Activity MEL Plans and Performance Management Plans (PMPs).

5. All custom indicators, when applicable and inclusive of both reporting and non-reporting indicators should be disaggregated by age bands.

Activities should consider actively engaging youth in monitoring efforts. For example, activities may hire and train youth data collectors or consult with youth on indicator selection.

Evaluation: USAID's Evaluation Toolkit provides guidance and resources on evaluation at USAID. Youth considerations should be integrated throughout evaluations, such as when developing evaluation questions, establishing methodologies and tools, and when reviewing performance. Youth may also be engaged when planning, implementing, disseminating, and/or applying evaluation findings. Youth engagement in evaluation activities can improve the quality of an evaluation and can also strengthen youth skills as data collectors or as leaders on disseminating findings locally.

Learning: USAID promotes learning and adaptation throughout the program cycle. Youth sector assessments and sector-specific assessments are crucial to identifying which root causes of development problems to target through USAID programming. During activity implementation, activity collaborating, learning, and adapting should produce timely, actionable insights that influence implementation.

To promote learning at the global level, USAID encourages youth-focused activities to link their activity learning to the Agency's forthcoming Youth Learning Agenda and the Positive Youth Development (PYD) Learning Agenda, both of which are sector-agnostic youth-focused learning agendas. In addition, several sector-specific youth-relevant learning agendas may be contributed to through activity learning.

CROSS-SECTORAL PROGRAMMING

The PYD approach promotes cross-sectoral programming as the most effective method for holistically designing interventions with youth.[4] Across sectors, soft skills such as self-control, higher-order thinking, positive self-concept, and communication skills lead to improved outcomes. Interventions should incorporate as many of the seven key features of the PYD model as feasible: assets and skills development, healthy relationship development, youth contribution as changemakers, access to safe spaces, promotion of a sense of belonging and pro-social norms, and access to youth-responsive services.[5]

Programs that utilize a PYD approach have increasingly demonstrated that building the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional competence of youth is a more effective development strategy than one that focuses solely on correcting problems. Incorporating a PYD approach during program design and using indicators of positive development to evaluate the program can help to assess trends in positive outcomes over the life of a project. When applied across multiple projects and sectors, implementers can ensure PYD program effectiveness within and across sectors, provide evidence for increased funding, and set the stage for program sustainability and scale-up. Implementers can incorporate and measure PYD in youth programming to improve program performance over time, contribute to the body of evidence on PYD, and ultimately influence multi-sector outcomes and impact.[6]

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[4] "What Works in Cross-Sectoral Skills for Youth," YouthPower, n.d., https://www.youthpower.org/youthpower-issues/topics/peer-education.
[5] "A Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development Programs in Low- and Middle-Income Countries," YouthPower, April 27, 2017, https://www.youthpower.org/resources/systematic-review-positive-youth-development-programs-low-and-middle-income-countries.
[6] "Positive Youth Development Framework," YouthPower, n.d., https://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development-pyd-framework

ANNEX

Annex A: Resource Links

Key Resources

- USAID Youth in Development Policy
- www.YouthPower.org
- www.YouthLead.org
- www.Youth.gov
- Communities of Practice
- Global Leadership and Education for Advancing Development (Global LEAD)
- Global Youth Development Index[7]
- UNFPA Youth Dashboard[8]
- UNFPA Youth Demographic Dividend[9]
- Youth Progress Index

Positive Youth Development

- Examples of Positive Youth Development Program Activities
- Positive Youth Development (PYD) 101 and 201 courses
- Positive Youth Development Framework and Features
- Meta review of Positive Youth Development in Low/Middle Income Countries

Working with Youth-led Organizations

- UNFPA's Youth Leadership: Recommendations for Sustainability
- Restless Development's Annual Youth Civil Society Reports such as the Youth Power in a Pandemic Report

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[7] "Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016," The Commonwealth, 2016, https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/commonwealth/development/global-youth-development-index-and-report-2016_global_youth-2016-en#page27.
[8] "Adolescents and Youth Dashboard," United Nations Population Fund, 2021, https://www.unfpa.org/data/dashboard/adolescent-youth.
[9] "Working-Age Population, 2018," United Nations Population Fund, 2018, https://www.unfpa.org/data/demographic-dividend#12.

Annex B: Illustrative Youth Project Types

SECTOR	CROSS-SECTORAL	SYSTEMS
Utilizing best practice for specific interests and modalities for addressing sector-specific needs. Examples of well-established sector programming for youth include:	Agency stakeholders in different sectors working together on concrete assessments, projects, evaluations – toward multiple development outcomes. Examples of promising cross-sectoral collaborations:	Building sustainable local and national institutions, policies and systems to engage and support youth at scale, involving diverse stakeholders concerned with youth. Examples of systems programs:
• Workforce training programs that combine technical & employability skills development with on the job training, counseling & job search support.	• School-based programs that address health, nutrition, employment, & civic participation needs of youth.	• Developing and sharing a vision of youth development across systems (education, justice, health, etc.).
• Peer sexuality education programs & youth-friendly reproductive health services.	• Youth livelihood programs targeted to youth at risk for HIV.	• Tracking of common youth indicators across sectors.
• Agriculture extension for young farmers.	• Awareness campaigns around girls' rights and child marriage.	• Building system capacity for coordination across all sectors.
• Accelerated, flexible learning programs for youth to enable primary or secondary level completion.	• Agricultural programs that coordinate with nutrition, women's empowerment and environmental programs.	• Enabling access to research and new approaches across systems and sectors.
• Conflict mitigation training for youth.	• Computer training for ICT sector jobs for former child soldiers in post-conflict countries.	• Coordinating youth serving organizations for improved efficiency and outreach to underserved youth.
• Voter education campaigns to target youth ("Rock the Vote").	• Safe spaces that may provide multiple services including legal aid, informal education, health guidance, sport and play, and computer access.	• Strengthening the capacity of mentors and community youth advisors.
• Awareness campaigns and protection programs to prevent and respond to sexual and labor exploitation.	• Service learning and volunteerism projects that build leadership, citizenship, and life skills.	• Supporting the development of national youth policies, and strengthening national and municipal youth institutions.
	• Sports programs for leadership, reconciliation, and health.	• Creating and supporting networks among youth.
		• Creating awareness campaigns around gender-based violence and exploitation in communities and schools.

Annex C: Youth Policy Listening Sessions

USAID worked to practice the principles of youth engagement during design and drafting of this Policy. As such, the drafting team hosted Listening Dialogues with young leaders, seen in the recommendations included throughout this companion guide. USAID extends much appreciation and gratitude to all the youth participants who helped the Agency create an inclusive and comprehensive updated Youth in Development Policy. Organizations who participated in the listening sessions included YouthLead, Youth Excel, Restless Development, Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), and Alliance for International Youth Development (AIYD).

During the listening sessions, the youth leaders responded to questions aimed at providing insight on how USAID can better engage youth and help establish a more equitable partnership between youth and adults. While the overall implementation plan ensures that these insights are front and center, a few of the specific takeaways and responses from these sessions include:

- Ensure youth at the grassroots levels have opportunities to implement their projects;
- Provide youth with financial opportunities- both to transition from being volunteers to full-time employees, and to support youth financially when they engage with programs (e.g., travel costs);
- Increase the currently low numbers of youth leaders in government and development programs;
- Improve capacity and quality of resources for youth-led organizations;
- Offer educational workshops on grant writing and how to gain access to scholarship opportunities.