External Review
Of
Rapid Youth Assessments

Tiaré Cross
Consultant
Stand4peace@yahoo.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an external review of rapid youth assessments that have been conducted by donor agencies, with primary emphasis on USAID.

This report reviews rapid youth assessments conducted by organizations other than EQUIP3 / Youth Trust.

Individuals who have direct experience with rapid youth assessments for donor agencies were interviewed to gain further insight into the approaches and the impact of these assessments. Ten youth assessments were reviewed in-depth, fifteen other youth assessments were reviewed briefly, and eleven additional interviews were conducted during November and December of 2005.

Effective approaches and challenges for rapid youth assessments are highlighted. Recommendations and conclusions are intended to help guide further development of standardized youth assessments for donor agencies.

Youth and youth development are new issues for large donor agencies, even though youth programming has a long and remarkable history of innovative practices domestically and internationally. In general, reliable data on youth does not exist internationally. There is a great need for quality data from countries who are recipients of USAID funding. Rapid youth assessments can generate this type of data, which can be used to design effective and sustainable programs.

Two themes have arisen from this review and warrant further discussion. First, USAID should consider making youth an “official” program area, with a mandate, funding and qualified staff. The World Bank, The United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank all have a department dedicated to youth issues; USAID would benefit from establishing a youth program. Second, a common set of “youth indicators” would immensely improve the quality of rapid youth assessments being conducted.

From this brief review it is apparent that there is considerable energy and momentum surrounding youth issues and programs. The challenge for those engaged in this work will be finding consistent and reliable methods to gather data about youth from diverse backgrounds around the world.
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- Identify donors or organizations that have (1) undertaken substantial youth assessments and/or (2) developed a youth assessment protocol or framework.
- Inventory good examples of effective rapid youth assessments.
- Analyze the most effective rapid youth assessments, in order to summarize the strengths of each assessment.
- Identify constraints, challenges and gaps in less successful assessments.
- Identify and document effective approaches and tools.

Introduction

New focus within the development community has been centered on youth, the cohort of young people between the ages of 15 and 24. With this new focus has come a need for reliable information, both qualitative and quantitative data, on the situation of youth around the world. To this end, donor agencies have contributed time and resources to coordinating youth assessment missions. These assessments have varied in scope, scale and focus and have been conducted under contexts of violence conflict, ethnic tensions and extreme poverty.

The purpose of this report is to review work that has been done outside of EQUIP3 / Youth Trust on rapid youth assessments. This report is complementary to the report being developed by EQUIP3 / Youth Trust that reviews their organizational experience with youth assessments.

This report provides an overview of the youth assessment landscape within large donor agencies, with primary focus on USAID. It highlights some lessons learned from reviewing numerous youth assessments and interviewing donor agency staff with direct experience in youth assessments. It also makes several recommendations based on these lessons learned. The appendices, including a resource CD, will be useful to teams planning youth assessment missions because they can serve as models for specific sectoral assessments, provide existing youth specific data different countries and illustrate some of the best practices in this emerging field.

This research gathered information about rapid youth assessments in two ways. The first was by reviewing published youth assessments and several drafts of unpublished youth assessments with a common set of criteria and designed to create a map of this sub-set of research and development work. The second method employed was to interview staff in development donor agencies who had a direct interest or experience in youth assessments. A common set of interview questions were asked to gain a sense of the variety of approaches used to gathering knowledge about youth and how that knowledge is used within these organizations.

This study is brief. It was conducted in a limited time. Many other areas are open for exploration in many additional areas of interest. The international work in the health sector, including HIV/AIDS, has examples of particularly successful youth assessment methodologies. However, it is beyond the scope of this report to review all of those.

1 There is an interesting USAID success story that describes a Zimbabwe health project’s creative way of getting health statistics from children through organizing “station days.” This concept may be able
review to review the extensive literature, however it is important to acknowledge that there may be existing models, methodologies and instruments that could be drawn on from the health sector to inform other youth assessments.

Additionally, the analysis and critiques of “gender mainstreaming” should be considered in discussions about “youth mainstreaming.”

Overview of Rapid Youth Assessments

There is no one definition or set of practices that is consistently referred to under the term, “rapid youth assessments.” In fact, each organization and within the organizations there are diverse understandings of what could be classified as a “rapid youth assessment.” To refine our understanding of the different types of assessments utilized in the development field, especially by donor agencies, it is useful to highlight some of the major objectives of rapid youth assessments. These assessments are generally limited to maximum of six weeks of fieldwork and may involve youth at a variety of levels (though many of the assessments consulted in this research do not involve youth significantly).

Major Objectives of Rapid Youth Assessments:

1) **Knowledge Generation Youth Assessments or Situation Assessments**: These assessments are designed to provide objective data that can be used by USAID country Missions and USAID Washington to guide program decision-making.

2) **Targeted Rapid Youth Assessments**: These assessments have a specific sectoral focus. Sectors that are often selected for a targeted assessment are: workforce development, youth unemployment, health, HIV/AIDS, micro-credit lending potential, youth in conflict, youth in politics, etc.

3) **Youth Participatory Project Evaluations**: These assessments are often coordinated to evaluate youth projects. These serve the dual purpose of gathering information that can be used to improve programs and empower youth, build youth’s capacity and contribute to long-term project sustainability.

Additionally, there are several examples of multi-country knowledge generation assessments conducted within a region. The Central and Eastern Europe/Newly Independent States (CEE/NIS) region and the Asia Near East (ANE) region both have examples of multi-country youth assessments. The multi-country model makes the assessment design more complicated and reinforces the need for standardized methodologies.

Other institutional factors often influence assessment processes as well. USAID country missions need data on youth for program planning purposes, to evaluate strategic objectives, to justify a shift in strategy or to confirm that the current strategy is still relevant and effective. Assessment teams do not know the motivating factors for the assessment. Clear communication about the expected outcomes of the assessment is mandatory to avoid any confusion about these factors.

Most USAID staff interviewed stated that they did not know the impact of the assessments they had been involved in. This lack of knowledge about the impact of these studies poses a challenge for future youth assessment teams because it is difficult to know what approaches were most successful and why. A brief follow-up on assessments that have been conducted might prove to be a useful tool for gaining further understanding about how to best maximize the impact of youth assessments.

to be adapted for rapid youth assessments in specific contexts. The project’s name is, Tsungirirai and the report entitled “Kids have fun with data,” is available at: [http://stories.usaid.gov](http://stories.usaid.gov).
While the goals and objectives of the youth assessments reviewed varied in scope, there were some approaches that stood out among them as good examples for future work. Below I will highlight several effective approaches and some key elements for sector specific assessments.

Effective Approaches to Youth Assessments

1. **Common and consistent definition of youth.** Specifies unique position of the youth demographic and does not treat youth as a monolithic entity. Allows for differing cultural notions of what age bracket constitutes youth, but creatively finds ways to standardize the data collected so that it can be successfully compared to other youth populations.

   Some assessments reviewed presented and analyzed data on youth that had multiple definitions for the youth age bracket. This makes the data difficult to compare, difficult to understand the conclusions and more importantly demonstrates that the assessment team lacked a clear vision of their target group. This problem is most apparent when assessment teams rely on data that has been collected by country governments or other sources. This type of data, if available, should be included and contextualized but every effort should be made to present the data using consistent age brackets.

   **Official Donor Agency Definitions of Youth**

   - United Nations: 15 – 24
   - World Bank: 12 - 24\(^2\)
   - USAID: 15 – 24\(^3\) (not official)

2. Employs a *participatory methodology* in assessment design, implementation and recommendations for future programming.

   USAID encourages participatory evaluations of its projects. The excerpt below states that a key component in any evaluation design is participation. This logic can be applied directly to rapid youth assessments.

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\(^3\) USAID does not have an official definition of youth, but many USAID reports and documents utilize this definition of youth.
203.3.6.5 Participation in Evaluations

Effective Date: 01/31/2003
Operating Units are strongly encouraged to include customers and partners (implementing partners, alliance partners, host-country government partners, and so forth) in planning and conducting evaluations, and to include USAID staff directly when conducting evaluations in order to maximize Agency learning. Operating Units may conduct an evaluation from a variety of perspectives, as illustrated in Figure 203C, “Types of Evaluations and Who Conducts Them.” Operating Units are strongly encouraged to use more collaborative and participatory approaches to evaluation. (See Additional Help document, TIPS Number 11, The Role of Evaluation in USAID to ascertain the strengths and limitations of each type.)

Excerpt from USAID document, “Policy Directives and Required Procedures.”


In this review, assessments that adopted a participatory methodology, even if they could not involve youth significantly in many parts of the design, improved the quality of the data collected and the recommendations made. Assessments that saw youth more as research subjects rather than partners in the assessment process were likely to present adults’ opinions about youth as fact. The assessments that had the capacity to interview youth were more likely to provide different layers of fact that will help to guide future programming.

This is a fictional example to illustrate the added value of using a participatory methodology.

A youth assessment that only collects data from adults might conclude:
- Youth are not genuinely interested in micro-credit schemes because they would rather be employed by the oil companies in their area.

A youth assessment that collects data from youth and adults might conclude:
- Adults feel that youth are not interested in micro-credit schemes because they would rather be employed by the oil companies in their area.
- Youth indicate that their preference for employment is with large international corporation but also are interested in small-scale business ownership.
- Youth perceive the micro-credit schemes in their area as a “pay-off” from the oil companies.

From this example, it is evident that if you ask youth and adults to provide information on their own lives, you receive different layers of information that can be collectively analyzed to provide a more coherent picture of youth. If youth were asking these research questions of their peers, you would be likely to get more accurate answers to the research questions and the youth researchers would be empowered by the process.

However, participatory methodology is not a panacea. Participation must be strategic, effective and produce the desired outcomes. There are real benefits to using a participatory youth assessment strategy and the most successful assessments clearly define the role of youth and the impact of their involvement on the data. There is a strong desire to involve youth in assessments but there are relatively few examples of how to do so, making it difficult to extract best practices for rapid youth assessments.

External Review of Rapid Youth Assessments, EQUIP3 / Youth Trust
Youth assessments that use a participatory methodology must be able to clearly articulate the benefits of using such a methodology and describe how they have mitigated any foreseeable risks.

Factors to consider when using participatory methodology:

a) What is the benefit to the youth involved in this assessment (e.g. those surveyed, interviewed)? How do we know?

b) How is the quality of the data gathered improved by involving youth?

c) What are the areas that are youth unable to provide us with sufficient or accurate information?

d) What biases/perspectives do the youth we are involving hold and how will this impact our research? Are the youth benefiting from development resources? Will this influence their responses to the research questions?

e) Are there any additional risks for youth who are involved in this assessment? (e.g. ostracized by peers, seen as taking sides, put in dangerous locations) Have we taken all possible steps to mitigate these dangers and are they acceptable?

f) How do we manage any expectations that may be raised as a result of the assessment?

UNICEF has completed an impressive Youth Opinion Poll in the CEE/NIS region, which is included on the resource CD that accompanies this report. Their methodology included training teams of youth to administer and analyze a youth opinion survey in several different countries in the region. This assessment is an excellent reference for designing a more extensive participatory assessment process.

3. **Uses standardized social science research methods.** This is extremely important for large donor organizations to be able to compare data across countries, regions and sectors. However, many of the assessments reviewed did not utilize a common social science framework. Additionally, each sector (workforce, health, education) has their own set of indicators that are used in assessment and analysis. What must evolve is a common set of “youth indicators” that can be used to gather baseline data on youth. These indicators will have to be cross-sectoral to gain a holistic picture of youth.

Youth assessments should be able to demonstrate how the data they collect meets the following USAID standards on data quality that are included in the box below.
USAID Data Quality Standards

*Excerpts from USAID document, “Policy Directives and Required Procedures.”*


203.3.5 Data Quality
Effective Date: 01/31/2003
There is always a trade-off between the cost and the quality of data. Operating
Units should balance these two factors to ensure that the data used are of sufficiently high
quality to support the appropriate level of management decisions. Performance data should be
as complete and consistent as management needs and resources permit.

203.3.5.1 Data Quality Standards
Effective Date: 01/31/2003
To be useful in managing for results and credible for reporting, Operating Units should ensure
that the performance data in the PMP for each SO meet five data quality standards
(abbreviated V-I-P-R-T). In some cases, performance data will not fully meet all five
standards, and the known data limitations should be documented. Note that the same data
quality standards cover quantitative and qualitative performance data.

a. **Validity.** Data should clearly and adequately represent the intended result. While proxy data
may be used, the Operating Unit must consider how well the data measure the intended result.
Another key issue is whether data reflect a bias such as interviewer bias, unrepresentative
sampling, or transcription bias.

b. **Integrity.** Data that are collected, analyzed, and reported should have established
mechanisms in place to reduce the possibility that they are intentionally manipulated for
political or personal reasons. Data integrity is at greatest risk of being compromised during
collection and analysis.

c. **Precision.** Data should be sufficiently precise to present a fair picture of performance and
enable management decision-making at the appropriate levels. One key issue is whether data
are at an appropriate level of detail to influence related management decisions. A second key
issue is what margin of error (the amount of variation normally expected from a given data
collection process) is acceptable given the management decisions likely to be affected. In all
cases, the margin of error should be less than the intended change; if the margin of error is 10
percent and the data show a change of 5 percent, the Operating Unit will have difficulty
determining whether the change was due to the USAID activity or due to variation in the data
collection process. Operating Units should be aware that improving the precision of data
usually increases the cost of collection and analysis.

d. **Reliability.** Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes and analysis
methods from over time. The key issue is whether analysts and managers would come to the
same conclusions if the data collection and analysis process were repeated. Operating Units
should be confident that progress toward performance targets reflects real changes rather than
variations in data collection methods. When data collection and analysis methods change, the
performance monitoring plan (PMP) should be updated.

e. **Timeliness.** Data should be timely enough to influence management decision-making at the
appropriate levels. One key issue is whether the data are available frequently enough to
influence the appropriate level of management decisions. A second key issue is whether data
are current enough when they are available. For further discussion, see USAID Information
Quality Guidelines and related material on the Information Quality Act in ADS 578 and at
USAID staff mentioned that rapid youth assessments tend to present “fluff” instead of providing a hard-edged analysis of the situation. Special attention should be given to ensuring that data collection instruments are sufficiently precise as describe above. Reliability has also been mentioned as an area in which rapid youth assessments need to improve their methodology.

Another resource on data quality is the World Bank. The World Bank has developed a framework for youth that emphasizes five key life transitions using a framework built around the concepts of opportunity, agency and a second chance.

The important transitions for youth are:
- transition from school
- transition to work
- transition to a healthy lifestyle
- transition to family formation
- transition to citizenship

The notion of transitions is creative in that it strives to capture the movement between different phases of life and to gauge how successful those transitions are. This model may prove more useful than looking at more traditional indicators such as those of youth employment, youth education levels, and health statistics.

Other useful websites on data quality and research methodology:

USAID Evaluation Website
http://www.dec.org/partners/evalweb/

World Bank Social Science Website

4. **Involves USAID staff in assessment design and implementation.** Several USAID staff indicated that the effectiveness and impact of the youth assessment is improved if USAID staff are involved in the process. USAID staff are able to gain access to internal information in ways that contracting organizations cannot. Additionally, the impact of the assessments may be greater if a USAID staff member is involved because they are able to follow up on the assessment, distribute it within the agency more effectively and have first hand knowledge of the data collected.5

As with any collaborative team approach, roles and responsibilities must clearly be defined. Lines of decision-making must be established and scenario planning must be done as a team before beginning fieldwork.

5. **Conducts a holistic analysis of data gathered.** Making meaningful conclusions, generalizations and recommendations from data collected in a rapid youth assessment is not easy. Data analysis in youth assessments reviewed was repeatedly mentioned as a specifically weak point in rapid youth assessments. Ensuring that the assessment team has the capacity to

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5The Kosovo assessment included in this review was cited as an effective assessment due to the involvement of key USAID staff.
take complicated raw data and analyze and describe is key to the success of the assessment. Also, ensuring that there is sufficient time built in post-field work to dedicate to data analysis is critical.

Good analysis of data (as gleaning from the assessments reviewed in this study) includes:

a) A comparison of data from different sources
b) Illustration of the data with charts, graphs and translated responses from the surveys or interviews
c) Identification of knowledge gaps
d) Conclusions and recommendations that are supported through logical connections to the data collected

When conducting a targeted rapid youth assessment, the data analysis should frame the data collected within the larger societal picture. This helps to gain perspective on the information presented and allows for a more holistic picture.

It must be noted, that there is a tendency for assessment teams analysis of the data to be influenced by what their perceived notion of what kinds of statements USAID may want to hear or fund. Assessment teams and USAID must have transparent and fair processes to counter this tendency. A plan for how USAID handles information that is difficult, sensitive or otherwise controversial should be included in the scope of work.

**Targeted Rapid Youth Assessments: Building Blocks for Design**

Below is a summary of a few key issues that were evident in the external review of rapid youth assessments. These summary issues are based on an in-depth review of ten rapid youth assessments as well as a brief review of fifteen other youth assessments.

**Youth Workforce Development and Youth Unemployment Sector**

- What is the demand for youth labor? What is the available supply of youth labor? What opportunities exist for upgrading youth skills to meet changing needs in the workforce?
- What is the level of youth unemployment? What skills and potential exist in the unemployed youth that are marketable?
- What is the hiring process like for youth? How do employers feel about employing youth? What are the trends in youth employment?
- How does the education system prepare young people for the workforce? What improvements could be made in this area?
- Do youth have the potential to benefit from micro-credit schemes?
- How do youth contribute to their family’s livelihood in the non-formal sector, unofficial economy and agricultural sector? What are youth’s attitudes about their role in these activities?

**Youth in the Political Process and Political Movements**

- How are youth participating in the political process? In elections? In political movements? Are there any visible trends?
- Do youth feel satisfied with their political involvement?
- Do youth feel they are true citizens of the nation? How do they demonstrate this?
What is the level of knowledge among youth about the political process of their country? Are their opportunities to increase this?

How do youth fit in to the larger political landscape?

What is the difference between rural and urban youth on these issues?

What barriers to full participation in the political process exist for vulnerable groups of like youth, women and girls?

Youth Assessments Conducted in Fragile States, Conflict or Violence

A youth assessment cannot replace a conflict assessment (see resource list for reference) but must be adapted to appropriately respond to the unique circumstances of the particular conflict.

A focus on youth in a post-conflict setting has great potential to be a unifying theme rather than a divisive theme. Support for youth development may be able to connect divided communities and strengthen the social fabric that has been frayed by violence and conflict.

To what extent is a country experiencing a “youth bulge”? Is this affecting the social relationships differently? What are the opportunities to constructively harness youth energy, skills and resources?

How have youth been affected by conflict? How have they participated in conflict and violence?

What are youth attitudes towards other groups in society?

What groups might be vulnerable to manipulation by elites? What can be done to decrease vulnerability of these groups to manipulation?

What do youth need in order to feel that the conflict has been resolved and that reconciliation has taken place?

Are their youth groups or youth leaders who can be influential in promoting peace and reconciliation? How can these resources be best leveraged to maximize their impact?

A conflict expert should be attached to any youth assessment team working in a country that is suffering from violent conflict or is just recovering from violent conflict.

Relationships in these countries should be managed with extra care and sensitivity to the conflict dynamics.

Strategies should be devised to be inclusive of all groups in ways that are appropriate and productive.

Challenges for Rapid Youth Assessments

Limited funding, time and trained personnel. Realistic expectations must be agreed upon before undertaking an assessment mission.

Due to the unique nature of youth issues. There is a need for collaboration for two major reasons: 1) youth issues are inherently cross-cutting 2) currently there is no USAID funding or mandate specifically for youth, therefore collaboration is needed to ensure that important youth work continues.

Making the case for youth-specific approaches. Some USAID staff have experienced difficulty in persuading others that a youth specific approach is needed. Often, it is assumed that youth are being served by other programs funded by donor agencies. However, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that a youth focus to USAID’s work will improve its impact on youth beneficiaries. Youth are unique because they are in transition, these transitions need to be studied and supported.

In addition to making the case for focusing on youth specifically, energy should be dedicated to finding ways to mainstream youth without loosing emphasis needed. This will improve data

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6 See USAID’s “Youth in Conflict Toolkit” for definition of youth bulge.
collection across programs at USAID and allow for better understanding of how youth differ from other age subsets.

- Managing expectations with stakeholders involved in youth assessments is a concern for USAID.

**Demand for Future Rapid Youth Assessments**

**USAID**

- There is a real demand for reliable data on youth and youth specific issues. USAID and the World Bank staff repeatedly expressed that their goals of developing more effective youth programming was repeatedly hindered by the lack of existing data about the situation of youth in developing countries.
- Within USAID there is demand for strategies to gather information related to the sectors of workforce development and democracy and governance.
- There is also a need within USAID for information and strategies that span the strategic objectives of USAID in a holistic approach to youth. This is linked to the current unfunded status of youth initiatives within USAID, meaning that if youth are to be addressed it must find ways to collaborate with existing structures.

With heightened interest in youth-focused programming, there is a need to have reliable information with which different departments can use to lobby for youth programming, further youth research or other activities. USAID, as well as other donor agencies, find it difficult to provide evidence that development activities should be targeted specifically at youth because youth specific country data is non-existent. Current youth programs do not have access to objective, reliable data about the general situation of youth in any given country.

Programming is driven by the strategic objectives of individual country missions. Several missions have currently expressed an interest in better engaging youth in development activities. It is standard practice across, USAID to conduct an assessment before deciding what kind of grants they would like to make in that area. There is a need to develop a systematized, reliable way for these missions to collect data about youth in a way that would facilitate effective program design. Further, once a Mission has funded a youth oriented project there is interest in providing a framework for how best to evaluate that project in a way that leads to sustainable, community driven development. In general, there is a need for USAID to provide recommendations to Missions in developing effective youth programming.

The current reality at USAID is that youth is an “unfunded mandate”. There are rising expectations that real steps will be taken by USAID to target development resources to youth. There is an increasing cognizance of the need for youth to become the leaders of their communities, economies and political structures; alongside the increased awareness that if youth are disenfranchised or excluded they pose a significant threat to stability, peace and development. However, there are no funding streams specifically for new youth initiatives, nor is there expected to be any in the near future. Youth research and programs, therefore must find creative ways to collaborate with existing funding streams and strategic objectives.

USAID may choose to institutionalize youth by:

1) Developing a rapid youth assessment framework and instruments that would generate reliable data with a maximum of six weeks of field work that could be used to identify opportunities and challenges for youth program development. This assessment should provide information...
relevant to all sectors interested in youth development: education, health, democracy and
governance, regional bureaus, workforce and economic development and other crosscutting
themes.

Or

2) Mainstream youth into other existing assessment frameworks like: the Conflict Assessment,
Democracy and Governance Assessment and Workforce Assessment.

A rapid youth assessment framework would be most useful to USAID Missions and staff, but is
uncertain at this point if funds would be sufficient in the future to ensure the proper management of this
tool and the information generated by it. Many staff definitively stated that a separate youth tool and
framework would be more useful to their work because it would ensure that this information was being
correctly gathered and analyzed and not “lost” or reprioritized.

World Bank

The World Bank does not conduct specific knowledge generation youth assessments or targeted youth
assessments. Instead, they work to mainstream youth into their existing assessments, including the
social development assessments. The current team in the Children and Youth section of the Human
Development Network at the World Bank is working to incorporate youth specific questions into
existing assessments. Additionally, they work with governments to improve their data collection
instruments to capture issues and trends that are youth specific.

They have several examples, including ongoing work in the Dominican Republic, of how their youth-
led projects increase the impact of projects and produce more beneficial outcomes. The World Bank
has recently produced a framework for youth and a resource guide for its staff. Additionally, a
forthcoming World Development Report that focuses on youth is expected to be published in 2007,
currently an outline of the report is available on their website. Additionally, the World Bank has
compiled existing available statistics and data related to the global situation of youth in their (name of
document) publication. They have identified the need for this data to be updated, researched at greater
depth and statistics validated through randomized sampling.

The World Bank database does have a few examples of targeted youth assessments.

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

The IDB has several large youth projects that incorporate youth into project design, implementation and
evaluation. They employ a participatory approach to engaging youth in development and project
evaluation. Many of their project documents are available in Spanish. Further information about the
work of the IDB is available at: http://www.iadb.org/topics/c&yo.cfm

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on conversations with those involved in youth assessments
and from reviewing published youth assessments.

USAID Specific

1. Define youth. Explicitly state USAID’s definition of youth. This will help to standardize
data collection and analysis pertaining to youth throughout the agency.
2. Communicate to youth assessment teams the approaches, methods and data that will best meet the objectives of USAID. Specifically, how the data will be used.
3. USAID Washington should follow up with USAID Missions who conduct youth assessments to find out: How the Mission has used the information? How useful was the youth assessment? This follow up would help USAID to standardize and identify best practices in youth assessments.
4. Collaborate with academic institutions doing long-term research in countries and sectors of interest to USAID. This type of data will be useful to contextualize data generated from rapid youth assessments. In the health sector, there are some examples of this type of collaboration.
5. Train staff to be Youth Advisors, designate several staff to spearhead USAID’s strategy on youth.

Assessment Teams

1. Spend time before the fieldwork starts understanding the goals and objectives of the assessment.
2. Have a toolbox of data collection instruments available to respond to changing situations or expectations in the field.
3. Know the limitations of the scope, scale and depth of research you will be able to provide given constraints on resources, staff and time.
4. Be ready to engage youth from different backgrounds in different ways.
5. Communicate the objectives of the assessment often. Explicitly state to interviewees the limitations of your ability to influence actions such as future funding.
6. Do not pay research subjects. If compensation is necessary, think of appropriate non-monetary means of compensation.

Future Research

1. Develop a standardized set of “youth indicators” that should be consistently gathered as a baseline for youth assessments. Further, sector specific indicators that pertain to youth should also be standardized.
2. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of different youth assessment methods.
3. More scholarly work needs to be published by youth experts on youth participation in youth assessments.

Appendix A: List of Youth Assessments Reviewed

Summary coversheets of each of these assessments are attached to this appendix and electronic copies of all of these documents have been compiled in an accompanying CD. Additionally, hardcopies of these documents are organized into two binders.
Binder One


4. Azerbaijan Youth Assessment, Submitted to USAID/Azerbaijan by Alan Zuckerman, GWIT and Luba Fajfer, TITLE. No date. www.gwit.us


Binder Two


List of Other Youth Assessments (not reviewed in-depth)
Electronic copies of these assessments have been compiled in the accompanying CD for future reference or review.


2. Entra21 documents in Spanish. Inter-American Development Bank and International Youth Foundation project.


8. **An Assessment of Youth Centers in South Africa.** By Annabel Erulkar, Mags Beksinska and Queen Cebekhulu. Submitted to USAID. December 2001. [www.dec.org](http://www.dec.org)


### Appendix B: Summary Sheets of Ten Rapid Youth Assessments Reviewed

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>Alan Zuckerman, Senior Workforce Policy Analyst, Global Workforce in Transition (GWIT)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Youth workforce development. To provide guidance on approaches USAID/Azerbaijan can implement to address youth concerns.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>Positive youth development, emphasized collaboration and considered specific youth needs and challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>2 Researchers, 2 weeks in Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Approach</td>
<td>Interviews with stakeholders in youth development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Document had no appendix – unable to tell who was interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Incorporated “10 Principles of Effective Practices for Youth” into their recommendations. Utilizes concept of “youth bulge.” Recommended specific activities and identified how each activity met USAID’s SO, demonstrated potential for cross-cutting activities. <em>See pages 10 and 13 for examples of how to recommend cross-cutting activities and how to measure effectiveness of youth employment activities.</em></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>USAID Involvement</th>
<th>Funded study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Involvement</td>
<td>Youth were interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stakeholders Engaged</td>
<td>Private employment agencies, volunteer organizations, other NGOs/INGOs, Ministry officials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Study</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges and Limiting Factors</td>
<td>Report that was published was still in draft form, with editing notes, no appendix or other references.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To assess the effect of war on young people in different countries and evaluate the effectiveness of youth peacebuilding projects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>Participatory research project / peacebuilding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>2 years, 6 post-war countries (Angola, Bosnia, Burma-Thailand, Cambodia, Colombia and Uganda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Approach</td>
<td>Provides an overview of the effect war and prolonged conflict has on young people’s lives. This overview is based on group discussions, interviews and art workshops with youth (8-22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Did not give specific numbers of youth sampled, interviews conducted, etc. Instead, used direct quotes extensively and photos of the artwork and its interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Uses research to discuss the effects of war on young people in four components: forms of separation, child soldiers, gender roles and overall context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID Involvement</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Involvement</td>
<td>Youth engaged in participatory research project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stakeholders Engaged</td>
<td>Church groups, INGOs, NGOs youth peacebuilding projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Study</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges and Limiting Factors</td>
<td>It is difficult to trace the logical progressions from research, analysis to results. It is not clear how representative this research is of the general youth population. Combines children and youth together under “young people.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td><em>Georgia youth Assessment: A Report.</em> Submitted to: USAID/Georgia by Development Associates, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact</strong></td>
<td>None – document found at <a href="http://www.dec.org">www.dec.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Purpose** | To identify the current state of youth in Georgia including their attitudes and values, to determine whether reform ideas are taking root in this sector of the population, and to identify what youth see as their major challenges. Reviews SO of mission and inventories youth programs by other donors. |
| **Conceptual Framework** | Focuses on “youth’s concerns/main problems.” Prioritizes local institutional capacity building as way to improve youth issues. |
| **Methodology** | 2 researchers, 1 interpreter, 1 coordinator |
| **General Approach** | Focus groups – with children and youth In-depth interviews – youth organizations |
| **Sampling** | 1 focus groups (10-12 participants) in 8 cities – 80 youth 6 interviews with municipal officials, 16 interviews with local NGOs. Interviews lasted 1 hour |
| **Analysis** | Tables summarize youth responses |

| **USAID Involvement** | USAID funded assessment, USAID’s SOs were a specific unit of analysis in the study |
| **Youth Involvement** | Presents youth’s main concerns, strives to listen to youth and children themselves to better understand their concerns. |
| **Other Stakeholders Engaged** | Government officials, NGOs |
| **Impact of Study** | Unknown |
| **Challenges and Limiting Factors** | Time and budget prevented the team from undertaking survey research among a significant sample of Georgian youth, therefore they relied on a “rapid response method” |

*20*

*External Review of Rapid Youth Assessments, EQUIP3 / Youth Trust*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th><em>Iraq Youth Assessment: The Role of Youth in a Stable, Prosperous and Democratic Iraq. USAID/Iraq. October 2005. DRAFT.</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Contact    | Chris Shephard  
Health and Education Advisor  
ANE / USAID / Office of Iraq Reconstruction  
cshephard@usaid.gov  
(202) 712-0043                                                        |
<p>| Purpose    | To inform USAID’s strategy in Iraq.                                                                                     |
| Conceptual Framework | Positive youth development                                      |
| Methodology | Standardized survey, focus groups and meetings in five strategic cities                                               |
| General Approach | Knowledge generation. Research conducted by Iraqi contractors. Youth staff of these firms were used to conduct surveys and focus groups as much as possible. |
| Sampling   | 2625 youth surveys, 30 focus groups, 25 meetings                                                                  |
| Analysis   | Specified areas that the assessment did not cover. Data illustrated with graphs and tables. Results used to propose 10 guiding principles for youth programs in Iraq. |
| USAID Involvement | USAID staff designed instruments, strategy and contracted a firm to administer the tools. USAID staff was not able to oversee the data collection (sit in on focus groups, etc.) due to security issues. |
| Youth Involvement | Youth staff conducted assessment and youth responses constituted the bulk of the data generated. |
| Other Stakeholders Engaged | Ministry officials, NGOs, private sector companies that employ large numbers of youth. |
| Impact of Study | Unknown (report is still in draft form)                                |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges and Limiting Factors</th>
<th>The reliability of the data collected has been questioned. Triangulation of data sets would improve the over all data quality. Conducting an assessment in the context of violent conflict complicates the logistics of research, but it is possible to get some information that can be useful to donor agencies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Contact | Liz McKeon, Social Science Analyst  
Bureau for Europe & Eurasia  
Office of Democracy, Governance & Social Transition (EE/DGST) / USAID  
(202) 712-1026  
emckeon@usaid.gov |

| Purpose | To help USAID/Kosovo integrate youth, gender and ethnicity into their program. |
| Conceptual Framework | Integrating cross-cutting themes |
| Methodology | 3 researchers, 3 weeks |
| General Approach | Provide an overview of the youth situation based on existing data. Reviewed USAID’s strategic objectives and other youth interventions. |
| Sampling | n/a |
| Analysis | Their gender and ethnicity analysis were much stronger than the youth component. Provides a well-written conceptual approach to cross-cutting them integration and assessment. Also provides, p. 16, a useful critique of youth work in Kosovo. |

| USAID Involvement | USAID staff was on assessment team, this enabled the USAID/Kosovo mission to open up the full portfolio of the Mission. This resulted in more a more informed and useful assessment for USAID. As a result, the team published an internal and external version of the report. The internal version contained lots of specific program sheets that were very useful. |
| Youth Involvement | none |
| Other Stakeholders Engaged | Other youth work reviewed |
| Impact of Study | Study was well received, the recommendations were beginning to be implemented when a change of staff at the Mission occurred and now the impact is unknown. |
| Challenges and Limiting Factors | Political events disrupted research. |
### Purpose
Workforce assessment – youth included as a priority area, but not addressed separately.

### Conceptual Framework
Workforce and economic development “gaps and opportunities”

### Methodology
11 days – 4 researchers

### General Approach
Review of existing data, 70 interviews

### Sampling
24 ministry officials, 3 NGO staff, 5 education and training institutions, 13 private sector personnel, 19 INGOs (including USAID staff), 6 students

### Analysis
Gaps and opportunities presented for three most critical cluster groups.

### USAID Involvement
9 USAID staff interviewed, USAID funded

### Youth Involvement
6 students interviewed out of 70

### Other Stakeholders Engaged
Education sector, micro-enterprise sector, textile cluster, tourism cluster, rural sector cluster, professional associations.

### Impact of Study
Unknown

### Challenges and Limiting Factors
Data is unclear because it is not organized with consistent age groupings. Recommendations are made about the need for future youth programming, but the assessment does not collect the data from the youth themselves to support the recommendations. Many recommendations were made for rural youth programming but no interviews were conducted in rural locations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>None – document found at <a href="http://www.dec.org">www.dec.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Assess the current situation of youth in relation to workforce development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>Rapid Appraisal Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>4 researchers conducted 94 interviews total.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Approach</td>
<td>Interviews – with youth and adults, qualitative, conducted informally and used existing data collected in a prior USAID Baseline Survey Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>Conducted in three regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>According to the interviews, the youth’s major complaints were about the oil companies. Further exploration of these beliefs should have been assessed, in order to make the results more useful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USAID Involvement</th>
<th>USAID assisted in setting up interviews and their youth programs were included in the report.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Involvement</td>
<td>2 youth were interviewed (the only two designated as “youth leader”) out of 94 interviews conducted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stakeholders Engaged</td>
<td>Private sector – oil companies, government officials, NGOS and INGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Study</td>
<td>USAID Washington officials have cited this study as useful to their work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges and Limiting Factors</td>
<td>Lack of existing data on young people (especially outside of the capital city), time limitations prevented follow up, government officials sometimes not willing to share information. Made un-scientific statements and claims in the report, posited adult opinions on youth as “fact.” Did not investigate gender sufficiently as a factor in their analysis. Researchers were asked to assess prostitution in a certain region, which may have diverted some of their time and resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
---|---
Contact | None – document found at [www.dec.org](http://www.dec.org)
| Contact listed on document - [www.cedpa.org](http://www.cedpa.org)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Identify best practices amongst the strategies employed to improve adolescent reproductive health in Senegal. Focus on out-of-school youth, make strategic recommendations for specific future programming, identify organizations working with youth.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>Health as one of the greatest concerns for development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>3 researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Approach</td>
<td>1) literature review  2) qualitative study: focus groups and semi-structured interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>46 organizations interviewed in seven regional capital cities, one rural village was included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Conclusions presented from materials reviewed, from field research 3 key principles for successful programming where presented, sample of data presentation: “out of 10 organization 3 knew …”, made specific recommendations for CEDPA’s HIV/AIDS Youth Initiative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| USAID Involvement | USAID funded assessment, was interviewed and assisted in design of study including identification of youth centers to study. |
| Youth Involvement | Some youth as interviewees cited, but no qualitative data presented about youth attitudes /responses. Youth will be involved “at every step” of the future program, study relied heavily on interviews with youth organization because the future program will involve these organizations. |
| Other Stakeholders Engaged | Many Ministry officials interviewed, many INGOs and NGOs interviewed |
| Impact of Study | unknown |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges and Limiting Factors</th>
<th>Limited time did not permit visits to rural areas, difficult to assess “clandestine prostitution involving girls”, did not generate new data on youth perspectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| Purpose | To provide evidence of to what extent UNICEF’s current work in promoting young people’s participation is systematically applied in all aspects of programming. |
| Conceptual Framework | Children and young people (9-24), rights-based approach, Millennium Development Goals |
| Methodology | Methods used: questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, impact drawings, testimonials, card visualization, smiley-face scales, force field analysis and social mapping |
| General Approach | 4 day training sessions were held for young research teams. Questionnaire for Country Offices (COs) and participatory field research with young people in five countries. |
| Sampling | 2,177 adults and youth were sampled by the young research teams in five different countries. 12 questionnaires were returned from Country Offices – these questionnaires were lengthy. |
| Analysis | Reviewed the impact of the Young Voices Opinion Poll Survey conducted in 2001 which sampled 15,200 children and youth in 35 countries in 3 months. Research addressed a series of 24 entry points for young people’s participation. Assessed how participation has impacted the youth involved in UNICEF’s programs. |
| USAID Involvement | n/a |
| Youth Involvement | 58 young researchers and 1,970 young informants, youth were trained in research methods prior to conducting field research. |
| Other Stakeholders Engaged | Focus on UNICEF programs only |
| Impact of Study | Unknown |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges and Limiting Factors</th>
<th>Response rate on questionnaire was only 60%, making the data difficult to generalize from. Each country had a slightly different research methodology due to appropriately adapt to the specific context. A sample of only 2,177 over five countries is not a representative sample.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Contact | Elizabeth McKeon  
Bureau for Europe & Eurasia  
Office of Democracy, Governance & Social Transition (EE/DGST) / USAID  
(202) 712-1026  
emckeon@usaid.gov |
| Purpose | A manual designed to help Missions integrate youth in each strategic area of Mission strategies. Volume II is completely dedicated to describing and providing tools for USAID to organize youth rapid appraisals. Some highlights:  
p. 23 outlines steps to take in preparing SOW for a Rapid Appraisal of Youth  
p. 38 lists rapid appraisal research methods, their advantages and limitations.  
Attachment A: examples of youth rapid appraisals in: employment, democracy and health.  
Provides Sample SOWs and examples of research tools. |
| Conceptual Framework | Positive youth development |
| Methodology | n/a |
| USAID Involvement | Recommends USAID should design the rapid youth appraisal and possibly conduct the assessment “in-house.” |
| Youth Involvement | Yes, in different capacities for different research methodologies. |
| Other Stakeholders Engaged | Emphasizes collaboration |
| Impact of Study | This manual has been widely distributed to USAID staff in the E&E region. It is unknown if it has been useful in designing assessments. It is a great resource and one that can be easily provided where there is an interest. |
| Challenges and Limiting Factors | Is very long and bulky. It is specific for USAID/Europe and Eurasia region, but much of it could be generalized for other regions. |
Appendix C: Resource Guide

Electronic copies of these resources have been made available on the CD that accompanies this report. These are all publicly available documents.

Resources on Social Science Research Methodology


USAID Evaluation website http://www.dec.org/usaid_eval/#004


Youth Engagement Frameworks


General Youth Resources


Other Relevant Resources

About EQUIP3 and Contact Information
EQUIP3 / Youth Trust (www.equip123.net) is a USAID-funded Leader with Associates mechanism created to improve the quality of education, learning opportunities, improved livelihoods, and increased civic engagement for youth and young adults. EQUIP3 is pre-competed, allowing for the quick start-up of assessment, design, and implementation of youth-oriented programs. The EQUIP3 consortium is lead by Education Development Center, Inc. and includes 12 international youth development organizations, such as the Academy for Educational Development and International Youth Foundation.

EQUIP3 / Youth Trust Consortium:
Education Development Center, Inc. • Academy for Educational Development • Catholic Relief Services • International Council on National Youth Policy • International Youth Foundation • National Youth Employment Coalition • National Youth Leadership Council • Opportunities Industrialization Centers International • Partners of the Americas • Plan International Childreach • Sesame Workshop • Streetkids International • World Learning

Contacts:
Clare Ignatowski, EQUIP3 CTO, EGAT/ Office of Education, eignatowski@usaid.gov ; 202-712-1759
Paul Sully, EQUIP3 Project Director, Education Development Center, Inc. psully@edc.org ; 202-572-3770