



Better Policies for Better Youth Livelihoods

A GUIDANCE NOTE FOR DEVELOPMENT
PRACTITIONERS



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Please cite this publication as:

OECD Development Centre (2018), "Better Policies for Better Youth Livelihoods: A Guidance Note for Development Practitioners", EU-OECD Youth Inclusion Project, Paris.

The opinions expressed and arguments employed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the OECD, its Development Centre or of the governments of their member countries.

Acknowledgements

The report was prepared by the Social Cohesion Unit of the OECD Development Centre to summarise the key findings and policy recommendations from the Youth Inclusion project implemented from October 2014 to April 2018.

The team was led by Ji-Yeun Rim, Co-ordinator of the Youth Inclusion project, under the guidance of Alexandre Kolev, Head of the Social Cohesion Unit and Mario Pezzini, Director of the OECD Development Centre. The report was drafted by Ji-Yeun Rim, Milagros Lazo Castro, Pablo Suárez Robles, Adrien Lorenceau and Ian Brand-Weiner of the Youth Inclusion Project team drawing from the *Youth Well-being Policy Reviews* of Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Jordan, Malawi, Moldova, Peru, Togo and Viet Nam, three global reports *Unlocking the Potential of Youth Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries: From Subsistence to Performance*, *Youth Aspirations and the Reality of Jobs in Developing Countries: Mind the Gap*, *The Future of Rural Youth in Developing Countries: Tapping the Potential of Local Value Chains* and a toolkit *Evidence-based Policy Making for Youth Well-being: A Toolkit* produced by the project.

The report benefited from inputs and contributions from participants of an expert meeting on “National strategies and global responses for youth well-being” organised in Paris on 17 October 2017. We are grateful to: Samuel Asfaha, Head of the Employment Policy and Analysis Programme, International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ITC-ILO); Pernille Borgbo, Global Youth Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; Tauch Choeun, Director General of Youth Department, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Cambodia; Una Clarke, European Union Institutions Officer, European Youth Forum (EYF); Maria Rosa De Paolis, Policy Officer, Employment and Social Inclusion, European Commission (EC); Marleen Dekker, Coordinator, Secretariat of INCLUDE; José Díez Verdejo, Policy Officer, Education, EC; Werner Eichhorst, Coordinator, Labour Market and Social Policy in Europe, Institute of Labour Economics (IZA); Nadine Gbossa, Head of Global Partnerships and Policies Division, OECD Development Co-operation Directorate; Laura Hurley, Technical Advisor, CSE & Youth Services, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); Sarah Huxley, Youth Participation Expert; Mark McGinty Communication Expert, EC; Rute Mendes, Programme Officer, ITC-ILO; Christian Mersmann, Policy Advisor, Global Donor Platform on Rural Development; Françoise Millecam, Head of Section, Employment and Social Inclusion, EC; Valerie Morrica, Senior Social Development Specialist, World Bank's Europe and Central Asia Region; Valter Nebuloni, Head, Youth Employment Programme Unit, International Labour Organization (ILO); Michelle Perrot, Director of Advocacy and Youth Engagement, Plan International; Mattia Prayer Galletti, Lead Technical Specialist, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); Véronique Sauvat, Head of Division, Education, Training and Employment, Agence française de développement (AFD); and Mintwab Zelelew Tafesse, Policy and Programme Specialist, Regional Bureau for Africa, UN/UNDP Representation Office.

The Youth Inclusion project's key findings and recommendations were presented at an international conference: “Delivering on national youth strategies: a high-level policy dialogue on youth well-being” on 4 April 2018, organised at the OECD in Paris. The policy dialogue was organised with the support of the Ford Foundation project “Building Strong Foundations for Achieving Inclusive Growth Outcomes: Enhancing Children and Youth Opportunities in Advanced and Developing Economies,” and in collaboration with the OECD Inclusive Growth Initiative, to put the question of youth aspirations at the forefront of the debate and shed light on how to bring young people's expectations closer to opportunities in the real world.

The event was attended by our project's partner countries, represented by: Ion Donea, Head of Youth Department, Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, Moldova; Judith Msusa, Deputy Director of Youth Department, Minister of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower Development, Malawi; Ahmad Nawaf, Director of Youth Leadership Development Centre, Ministry of Youth, Jordan; Silvia Pedraza, Project Manager, INJUVE, El Salvador; Sidi Tiémoko Touré, Minister for the Promotion of Youth, Youth Employment and Civic Engagement, Côte d'Ivoire; Victoire Tomegah-Dogbe, Minister of Grassroots Development, Crafts, Youth and Youth Employment, Togo; Nguyen Trong Thua, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Viet Nam.

International experts on youth included: Mattia Prayer Galletti, Lead Technical Specialist/Rural Youth, IFAD; Céline Gratadour, Project Manager, Education, Training and Employment Division, AFD; Desiree Hagens, Policy Coordinator, Trade Facilitation & Regional Integration, Department for Sustainable Economic Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands; Laura Hurley, Technical Advisor, CSE & Youth Services, IPPF; Ken Lohento, Senior Programme Coordinator, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA); Christian Mersmann, Policy Advisor, Global Donor Platform on Rural Development; Niall O'Higgins, Senior Research Specialist, Youth Employment Programme, ILO; Bernd Seiffert, Local Institutions and Rural Livelihoods Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN; Natascha Skjaldgaard, Danish Youth Delegate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark; Marcel Stefanik, Global Coordinator, Youth Engagement, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; Max Trejo, Secretary-General, International Youth Organization for Iberoamerica (OIJ); Anna Widegren, Secretary-General, EYF; Clare Woodcraft, Executive Director, Woodcraft Associates Inc. and Former CEO of Emirates Foundation; and Christophe Yvetot, Permanent Representative to the European Union, United Nations Industrial Development Organization;

The Youth Inclusion project is co-financed by the European Union.

Executive summary

Young people in developing economies are taking on jobs that fall short of their aspirations. Throughout the developing world young people value similar job characteristics and employment conditions, such as job security and formal employment, and most of them want to work for the public sector and to become professionals. However, these preferences are at odds with reality: about 80% of students currently enrolled in school in developing countries wish to be in high-skilled jobs, but only 20% of young workers presently hold such jobs. This gap is particularly pronounced in Africa and Latin America, and persists even for tertiary educated youth.

In the face of such challenge, governments are promoting youth entrepreneurship programmes in an attempt to create jobs. However, this is not enough: only a tiny portion of young entrepreneurs proves to be successful. The majority remains in subsistence activities, held back by low levels of education, informality, poor physical infrastructure and limited access to finance. In fact, youth entrepreneurship, on average, is less financially rewarding than wage employment. Although the vast majority of young entrepreneurs do generate some profits, these are most often modest and below the level of income earned by their peers in wage employment. Relatively few youth businesses create more jobs. The fact that a large majority of youth are failing to succeed as entrepreneurs cautions policy makers to move carefully in promoting entrepreneurship as a solution to the youth employment challenge.

There are promising but overlooked opportunities in booming local and regional food markets of developing countries. Domestic demand for diversified and processed food in developing countries is rising. However, in many developing countries, production fails to keep pace with rising domestic demand, resulting in rising import dependence for many food products. Yet, the agro-food economy holds considerable job-creation potential for young people, especially living in rural areas. Turning this potential into real jobs will require substantial, new investment in national and regional food systems – from regulatory mechanisms to infrastructure to improve production, processing and packaging and access to markets. More vibrant, sustainable and inclusive domestic food systems articulated in local value chains may well be one of the few lasting solutions to the persistent challenge rural youth employment.

This report summarises the main findings from the global and country-level research carried out by the Youth Inclusion project between 2014 and 2018. The project worked with nine developing countries (Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Jordan, Malawi, Moldova, Peru, Togo and Viet Nam) to support them in better responding to the aspirations of young people as well as strengthening youth involvement in national development processes. The project shed light on the determinants of youth vulnerabilities and successful transitions, and enhanced national capacities to design evidence-based policies that promote youth inclusion.

In addition, the project assessed the performance of youth-specialised ministries and agencies. Despite nearly two out of three countries in the world having a national youth policy or strategy, youth aspiration gaps remain wide and youth well-being outcomes often fall short of commitments. Greater policy coherence, adequate funding and stronger institutional capacity are needed for specialised ministries to turn national youth strategies into an effective driver of youth well-being across all areas of governmental action. Countries with a track record of effectively improving the lives of young people, and their contribution to the development of their communities, are actually those where overall, broad-based and inclusive policies support economic growth.

Youth Inclusion project outputs

Policy toolkit:

OECD (2017), *Evidence-based Policy Making for Youth Well-being: A Toolkit*, OECD Development Policy Tools, OECD Publishing, Paris.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264283923-en>

Global research:

OECD (2017), *Unlocking the Potential of Youth Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries: From Subsistence to Performance*, Development Centre Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/19900295>

OECD (2017), *Youth Aspirations and the Reality of Jobs in Developing Countries: Mind the Gap*, Development Centre Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/19900295>

OECD (2018), *The Future of Rural Youth in Developing Countries: Tapping the Potential of Local Value Chains*, Development Centre Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264298521-en>

Country-level research:

OECD Development Centre (2017), *Youth Well-being Policy Review of Cambodia*, EU-OECD Youth Inclusion Project, Paris.
<https://www.oecd.org/countries/cambodia/Youth-well-being-policy-review-Cambodia.pdf>

OECD Development Centre (2017), *Youth Well-being Policy Review of Côte d'Ivoire*, EU-OECD Youth Inclusion Project, Paris.
<http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/Examen-du%20bien-etre-et-des-politiques-de-la-jeunesse-en-Cote-dIvoire.pdf>

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<http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/Estudio-de-bienestar-y-politicas-de-juventud-El-Salvador.pdf>

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http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/OECDYouthReportVietNam_ebook.pdf

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http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/Youth_well_being_policy_review_Jordan.pdf

OECD Development Centre (2018), *Youth Well-being Policy Review of Malawi*, EU-OECD Youth Inclusion Project, Paris. <https://www.oecd.org/countries/malawi/Youth-well-being-policy-review-Malawi.pdf>

OECD Development Centre (2018), *Youth Well-being Policy Review of Moldova*, EU-OECD Youth Inclusion Project, Paris.

http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/Youth_Well-being_Policy_Review_Moldova.pdf

Project website:

<http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/youth-inclusion-project.htm>

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1. Overview

As many as 600 million jobs must be created worldwide over the next decade to keep employment rates at their current level (ILO, 2012). The employment challenge is particularly pressing in developing countries, where demographic pressures are stronger, wage employment opportunities are scarce and formal job creation is insufficient to give most youth access to decent work. Weak enforcement of labour standards keeps many young people in low quality jobs and as working poor.

In this context, fostering youth entrepreneurship has gained importance on the global and national policy agendas as a way to expand employment and earning opportunities. Many governments in developing countries are also realising that good quality jobs matter for development and that dedicated efforts are needed to boost the quality of jobs and make work pay, as conveyed in Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As attractive as being one's own boss may sound, entrepreneurship is not for everyone, and not in the least for a large number of youth that is low-educated and low-skilled, which is the case in many developing countries. In addition, little is known on what actually matters for young people in terms of job characteristics and employment conditions. Many young people start a business or become self-employed by default rather than by choice. Today, in many developing and emerging economies, a key development challenge is that jobs do not live up to youth's expectations and aspirations.

The OECD Development Centre, as part of the Youth Inclusion project carried out a series of studies focused on understanding the aspirations of youth, what matters in terms of job facets, and why policy makers need to be careful in promoting entrepreneurship as a solution to the youth employment challenge. It further explored the potential of agro-food businesses and local value chain development to create decent jobs for rural youth. This chapter provides a summary of the main findings and key policy messages.

Young people have high career aspirations

“What do you want to do when you grow up?” Answer to this question has no spectrum, is not dependent on one's ethnic background, wealth or where one lives or so it should be. Although dreams may be tamed down to more realistic opportunities, large gaps between aspirations and job outcomes may fuel frustration, decrease productivity and even lead to social unrest. Placing youth employment preferences at the centre of the analysis provided new information on labour market performance and the quality of jobs in developing countries. The study on youth aspirations aimed to answer two key questions: What is the nature of youth career aspirations and what shapes their preferences? The research was based on data from school-to-work transition surveys (SWTS)¹ collected by the International Labour Organization (ILO) between 2012 and 2015 in 32 developing and transition countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin

¹ Insights on youth career aspirations were gathered from 15-29 year olds students in 32 developing countries and included information about the sector of activity and the type of occupations they would like to work in later in life.

America. The findings, published in the report *Youth Aspirations and the Reality of Jobs in Developing Countries: Mind the Gap* (OECD, 2017c), are summarised below.

In many developing countries and at all education levels, most students prefer to work for the public sector. The share of students willing to work in the public sector is particularly high in Africa, where it ranges from 65% in Tanzania to 78% in Zambia. Becoming self-employed or working for a private company seems more attractive for students in more advanced economies, in particular in Latin America where around a third of students declare ready to work in these sectors.

Most students in the 32 countries examined – 80% on average – aspire to work in high skilled occupations (i.e. belonging to levels 1 to 3 of the International Standard Classification of Occupations, ISCO). Conversely, only few students are willing to work in low to medium skilled occupations (i.e. ISCO 4-8).

Youth career aspirations are driven by the social position of young people in society, with the noticeable exception of female students that have high career preferences. Youth career aspirations are influenced by factors that affect the way one perceives oneself, commonly referred to as self-concept factors. These factors often relate to demographic or family characteristics, socio-economic status and academic performance.

High career expectations mirror the fact that today in developing countries a large number young people are more educated than their parents were. Other characteristics matter as well. Disadvantaged students tend to have high employment preferences for the public sector and little attraction for self-employment. Students from rural areas also aspire for high skilled occupations and the majority who work in agriculture want to change jobs.

As young people shape their goals about the future, their parents' jobs tend to influence this decision. Indeed, students' occupational preferences and their fathers' occupations are closely correlated. There is also a strong gender dimension in career aspirations, as being a women increases the preferences for work in the public sector and high skilled occupations, and reduces the willingness to become self-employed.

Job satisfaction matters for productivity and youth well-being and is an important measure of job quality

Traditional approaches to the measurement of job quality rely on objective indicators that influence well-being. Evidence, mostly from OECD countries, highlights the importance of several job characteristics on people's well-being, such as earnings, benefits and job security. Uncovering the link between employment characteristics and job satisfaction can further enrich the policy dialogue on job quality from a subjective well-being perspective. Little is known on this issue for low and middle income countries. Assuming that well-being is sufficiently correlated with satisfaction, it is reasonable to believe that young people who are satisfied with their job are better-off. There are inherent advantages in relying on job satisfaction measures to document job quality and employment preferences, but careful interpretation is needed.

Around half of young workers are considered satisfied with their job following the adjusted definition of job satisfaction (i.e. happy and not willing to change jobs),² against a total of 77% of young workers reporting to be satisfied, and 28% satisfied but willing to change jobs. Satisfaction displays heterogeneity across countries as the share of satisfied workers not willing to change job ranges from 17% in Zambia to 77% in Moldova.

Employment status is one characteristic that seems to matter a great deal for job satisfaction. Compared to wage employment, self-employment associates with higher level of job satisfaction among young workers across nearly all 32 countries examined, but only when it is by choice or required by the family and not when it is by default, in the absence of wage employment opportunities. The association between job satisfaction and self-employment is particularly high among female workers.

Skill intensity of jobs also explains job satisfaction. Low skilled occupations associate with a lower level of job satisfaction in all countries, and so do medium skilled occupations but only in Transition and Latin American countries.

Having the right skills for the job is a strong driver of job satisfaction. Skills mismatch (whether measured as over/under educated, or over/under skilled) creates dissatisfaction at work and even more when individuals are overqualified. Evidence points to some industries such as agriculture where young people suffer from a low level of job satisfaction.

In nearly all countries observed, job security, formality and labour earnings stand out clearly as important drivers of job satisfaction. Income appears to contribute more to satisfaction in urban areas as well as receiving training while informality is particularly detrimental to female and rural young workers' satisfaction at work.

There are large gaps between young people's career aspirations and employment reality

In most developing and emerging countries, large gaps between career aspirations and the reality of the labour market constitute a key challenge. The moment career aspirations affect young people educational choices, the alignment between youth career aspirations and the reality of the labour market becomes critical to understand youth well-being, firm productivity and youth labour market performance. Evidence from the SWTS and the International Labour Organization (ILO) employment projections indicate that youth career aspirations by skills level are overly optimistic in the light of today's and tomorrow's labour market needs.

Overall, about 60% of students willing to work in high skilled occupation will unlikely fulfil their career aspirations, while as much as 73% and 80% of those young workers who occupy respectively medium and low skilled jobs will unlikely satisfy their career preferences. Using employment projections until 2021 yields similar results and points to a large misalignment between youth career preferences by level of skills and

² In this study, facets of job satisfaction are derived from the statistical correlation between an adjusted measure of job satisfaction and a set of employment characteristics, controlling for other socio-demographic factors. Using a restrictive measure of job satisfaction that combines the information about people's willingness to change job improves measurement consistency.

projected labour demand. Career aspiration gaps by skills level are particularly pronounced in Africa and Latin America.

Strong preferences to work in the public sector are unlikely to be met. On average across countries, the proportion of students who want to work for the public sector but unlikely to end up doing so is as high as 40%.

Interestingly, the gap between career aspirations and the reality of the labour market persists for tertiary educated youth. On average across the 32 countries, around 48% of tertiary educated individuals willing to work formally in a high skilled job will unlikely be able to do so. This mismatch is less pronounced in more developed economies where employment opportunities for the highly skilled are greater. Africa has the highest share of tertiary educated working in medium or low skilled jobs.

Surprisingly, earning criteria does not seem to be the strongest motivation across occupations. In countries and territories like Armenia, Ukraine, Benin, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, West Bank and Gaza, Peru and Tanzania, the average earnings are higher for medium skilled and/or for low skilled occupations than for high skilled occupations. Earning cannot explain the large misalignment in career aspirations and the reality of jobs.

Certain facets of jobs matter for job satisfaction. Being self-employed by choice or as required by the family tends to increase job satisfaction, as observed among a non-negligible proportion of young people in low income countries. In Congo and Malawi, one out of three young workers is engaged in self-employment by choice.

Low-skilled employment in developing countries tends to bring job satisfaction down. Low-skilled jobs constitute a quarter or more of youth employment in countries like Brazil, El Salvador, West Bank and Gaza, Peru, Tanzania, Viet Nam and Zambia. Agriculture, which is the main source of jobs for more than 40% of young workers in Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Nepal and Togo, also brings job satisfaction down.

Other job facets such as the low level of job security, informality, skills mismatch and the lack of training opportunities make young workers unhappy. Job insecurity is particularly pronounced in countries such as Egypt, Malawi, Montenegro, Peru, and Viet Nam, where 50% or more of all young wage employees work as temporary employees with fixed-term employment contracts. Informality is also dominant in Africa, where it concerns 80% of young workers. In Asia and Latin America, 48% and 33% of youth workers, respectively, are in a non-registered activity. As for skills mismatch, it concerns 55% of young workers and only 20% on average are offered training opportunities.

Governments are promoting entrepreneurship but it is no panacea for the youth employment challenge

In the face of a global youth employment challenge, governments are promoting entrepreneurship among youth as a solution. However, empirical evidence from four countries – Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Peru and Viet Nam – shows that only a tiny portion (on average 5%) of youth entrepreneurs proves to be successful. A large number of youth entrepreneurs are confined to subsistence activities, especially in developing countries. In fact, the vast majority of young entrepreneurs, as high as 86% in the case of Côte d'Ivoire, records profits below the average wage earned by their peers in salaried jobs (OECD, 2017b). The fact that a large majority of youth are failing to succeed as

entrepreneurs cautions policy makers to move carefully in promoting entrepreneurship as a solution to the youth employment challenge.

Youth entrepreneurship can be defined as self-employment among youth. There is no internationally agreed definition of entrepreneurship due to the complexity of the notion and its multifaceted nature. This leaves room for a multiplicity of definitions.³ The concept of entrepreneurship encompasses a very heterogeneous reality that can be seen as a continuum of businesses operating at different performance levels, ranging from own-account workers and micro-enterprises to large companies; from necessity-driven, subsistence and informal businesses to opportunity-driven, highly profitable and innovative formal enterprises; from businesses relying on informal networks to enterprises well-connected to local and global value chains and markets.

In developing countries, informality is the norm, and therefore businesses that operate in the informal sector must be included. While data gaps and limitations make it difficult to obtain representative and reliable quantitative information on entrepreneurship in developing countries, a number of surveys, with varying levels of representativeness and detail, can be used to measure entrepreneurship. The study *Unlocking the Potential of Youth Entrepreneurship in Developing Countries: From Subsistence to Performance* uses linked labour force and enterprise surveys for Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Peru and Viet Nam to understand the role of youth entrepreneurship in generating decent employment for youth and the drivers of youth entrepreneurial performance.⁴ Youth entrepreneurs operate in different conditions in these four countries, mirroring the diversity of the developing world, in terms of both geographical location and income level. The main findings are summarised below.

Few youth entrepreneurs actually succeed in making profits and generating jobs

Youth entrepreneurship is defined in the study as comprising all non-farm household unincorporated businesses operated by youth, either as own-account workers or employers. Although it is not the dominant form of youth employment, youth entrepreneurship is a significant phenomenon in developing countries. The majority of young entrepreneurs work in rural non-farm businesses, and most of them are poorly educated.

The extent of youth entrepreneurship as the main occupation varies greatly across countries, ranging from 14% in Viet Nam to 43.9% in Côte d'Ivoire of the total youth employed (outside agriculture). The vast majority of entrepreneurs, in particular youth, are own-account workers. While youth-run businesses account for a non-negligible share of all businesses, a number of these are secondary occupations. Interestingly, there

³ Following standard practice for developing countries, in this study the OECD uses self-employment as a proxy for entrepreneurship in both the formal and informal sectors, and uses the age range 15-29 to define youth.

⁴ There is no one single indicator that can adequately assess the multifaceted aspects of entrepreneurial performance. Use of a comprehensive set of indicators is often recommended, such as those proposed in the OECD-Eurostat Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme. Due to data availability and given their importance, profitability and job creation were the two main indicators of entrepreneurial performance used in this study. Profits are measured through information on sales and expenditures. Job creation is measured by considering both business employment size growth and propensity to offer jobs to external wage workers. Depending on their level of profits and job creation, youth businesses are then classified as top performers, mid performers and low performers.

seems to be a generational transition towards wage employment as countries develop economically.

The majority of young people start a business for lack of better choice. In Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Peru and Viet Nam many young entrepreneurs declare that they are running a business by choice, but when probed further, they are more likely to be underemployed and to hold multiple jobs than their peers in salaried jobs. This reveals that youth entrepreneurship is most likely driven by necessity, notably due to the lack of wage employment opportunities. The youth employment challenge is thus primarily structural and driven by insufficient aggregate labour demand.

Few youth entrepreneurs possess basic business skills. Information shows that very few young entrepreneurs use written accounts. Available data from Madagascar highlight the lack of business practices among young entrepreneurs. Youth businesses are typically very small. They primarily operate in petty trade and services, often referred to as free-entry sectors, and almost none of them are registered with the authorities.

Youth entrepreneurship is less financially rewarding than wage employment. Although the vast majority of young entrepreneurs generate profits, these are most often modest and below the level of income earned by youth in wage employment. The distribution of profits is more unequal than in the more advanced countries. Relatively few youth businesses generate employment. When youth entrepreneurs recruit, they rely almost exclusively on family members. Only a tiny proportion, on average 5%, of youth entrepreneurs can be considered top performers, i.e. they generate both profits and jobs.

Majority of youth entrepreneurs remain in subsistence activities

Measuring youth entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial performance is challenging in the developing world. In this study, profitability and job creation were the two main indicators of entrepreneurial performance. Determinants of performance were analysed to understand what makes a successful entrepreneurs.

Education significantly increases youth entrepreneurial performance. Managerial capital and business skills are key ingredients for success. Cross- and within-country econometric analyses show that entrepreneurial performance is driven by multiple factors, which are explained below. Two groups in particular face disadvantages in terms of business performance: young women and rural dwellers.

Informality weakens youth business performance. While the quality of the business environment varies significantly across countries, informality is common everywhere and unambiguously drives youth business performance down. Depending on the country, reasons for being informal range from tax avoidance to the high cost of registration or simply lack of information. There is also evidence that the sector of activity affects performance, although this varies across countries. For instance, in more economically advanced settings, activities in manufacturing seem to offer the highest chances for youth to move up the entrepreneurial performance ladder.

Favourable physical operating conditions raise entrepreneurial performance. The vast majority of youth businesses operate on the streets or at home. Only few have dedicated premises. Favourable operating conditions – such as access to a dedicated place or office, basic infrastructure services and information and communication technologies (ICT) – often lead to higher youth entrepreneurial performance. Yet few youth

businesses have access to basic infrastructure and services such as water and electricity, and in particular to ICT (phone and Internet).

Access to finance and market integration presents major challenges. Access to credit is a primary concern for a large number of youth businesses. Youth have to deal with limited personal savings and resources; inadequate youth-friendly financial products, including micro-lending and seed funding; high credit and collateral requirements, and excessive restrictions (e.g. age limit to open a bank account); low financial literacy; and limited knowledge of financing opportunities. The fact that youth businesses are poorly integrated into markets is another barrier to performance. Youth businesses rarely interact with larger private companies, and in particular with the public sector. By and large, they buy and sell products or services to individuals and other small businesses.

Rural areas may offer some real economic potentials if local value chains can be developed

Growth in demand for value-added food and agricultural products offer great potential for investing in agro-food value chain development (da Silva et al., 2009). In recent years, household dietary pattern changes and new demands by a rising middle class in developing and emerging economies for diversified and processed foods are creating both on and off-farm employment in food-related manufacturing and services. Agro-food industries are labour-intensive and can create jobs in rural areas as well as ensure food security in the regions. Food processing is particularly relevant for job creation in rural areas because agro-industries are more likely than other sectors to locate in small towns and rural areas than in primary cities (Christiaensen and Lawin, 2017). Furthermore, this sector tends to employ low-skilled labour, which could provide wage job opportunities for the current large number of low-educated rural youth and rural women in developing countries (OECD, 2018).

Smallholder farmers can also take advantage of a growing middle class and local demand in developing countries. They will need to increase their productivity and access local and national markets in particular through farmer organisations and out-grower schemes. Agriculture can become more productive through new technologies and methods of production. Intensification of traditional farming methods in combination with modern technology-based growth can achieve high agricultural growth rates, such as done by Ethiopia, which achieved 7% growth rate (Dorosh and Mellor, 2013). This can boost food availability and incomes, resulting in broad-based socio-economic development in rural communities. But the perspective also needs to shift from food production to the broader agri-food sector, horticulture and non-farm activities to uncover other employment ‘opportunity spaces’ for rural youth (Leavy, 2014).

The global youth population today is at its highest ever and will continue to grow, driven mostly by Africa. The number of youth between the ages of 15 and 24 reached 1.2 billion in 2015. Sub-Saharan Africa in particular has the youngest and the fastest growing population of the world and the majority still lives in rural areas. However lack of decent work opportunities in rural areas will push rural youth to migrate to urban areas or foreign countries. In this context, the employment landscape along the agricultural value chains represents a huge untapped opportunity of entrepreneurship, business development and wage labour.

The study *The Future of Rural Youth in Developing Countries: Tapping the Potential of Local Value Chain* looked at the potential of local value chains in creating more,

better and sustainable jobs for rural youth and what policy makers can do to create an enabling environment. Governments can play important roles in setting legislations and regulations, incentives, support schemes and standards to identify and promote agro value chains that create farm and non-farm employment for youth. The creation of new job opportunities downstream in the value chain, in food processing and distribution for example, can help keep young people in the sector. Guidance note 2 in Chapter 2 summarises the key recommendations.

2. Priorities for national youth well-being

The Youth Inclusion project carried out nine⁵ *Youth Well-being Policy Reviews*, using the analytical framework presented in: *Evidence-based Policy Making for Youth Well-being: A Toolkit* (OECD, 2017a). The aim was to get a full picture of how youth are faring in various well-being dimensions, including health, employment, education and civic participation, identify who are the most vulnerable and understand what drives negative outcomes. Although there are large differences between countries, there are clearly common challenges countries face in the employment, education, health and civic participation domains.

Skills mismatch is a problem that most labour markets in developing countries are experiencing. Many young people leave the formal education system without basic literacy and numeracy skills, or obtain qualifications that do not match labour market needs. In addition, working poverty due to irregular or informal work and lack of social protection makes it hard for young people to get out poverty, move up the social ladder or simply pursue their ambitions. Barriers are often linked to major structural weaknesses in national economies that have a very small formal sector and insufficient job creation. Other constraints include low quality of education, and ineffective training and active labour market programmes.

Youth are also more vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and early pregnancies because they have limited access to youth-friendly health services and information about sexual and reproductive health issues. During adolescence and early adulthood, youth-friendly health services become crucial in addressing reproductive health and psychological needs through non-judgemental counselling and practical services, such as testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), access to contraceptives and HIV/AIDS prevention information (OECD, 2017a).

Civic participation is far from being an activity or right enjoyed by all youth. Youth participation in policy making and dialogues need to become more inclusive, especially of young women and rural youth and low-educated young people. Special attention and support are needed to build their confidence and leadership skills so they can engage actively in policy processes.

Finally national youth policies (or strategies) provide comprehensive frameworks for action. While two in three countries globally have produced one, their implementation is stalling, due to coordination, financing and national capacity challenges.

This chapter provides an overview of key challenges faced by youth in the countries studied and that the project considered being priority issue to be addressed urgently by governments and the development community.

⁵ Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Jordan, Malawi, Moldova, Peru, Togo and Viet Nam.

Guidance note 1: Reducing skills mismatch

Key takeaways

- ❖ A large share of young workers in developing countries are underqualified for the jobs they do.
- ❖ Skills mismatch happens because the education system is unable to respond to the requirements of the labour market, resulting in severe imbalance in terms of the distribution of students across fields of study in post-secondary education.
- ❖ Although agriculture generally represents a large share of employment in developing economy, the proportion of students actually engaging in related studies is very small.
- ❖ Despite the large qualification mismatch and the need for skilled-labour, only a small number of enterprises offer training opportunities to young workers. The share of young workers receiving such training is surprisingly similar across world regions, on average around 20%.
- ❖ Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) by itself cannot solve the skills mismatch problem. TVET can contribute to bring young people closer to job requirements, but developing relevant and high quality TVET qualifications is more challenging in developing economies.
- ❖ A strategic approach to tackle skills mismatch should be to look at the demand side, and ensure investments target sectors with a high job creation potential. In parallel, the education system should ensure the provision of skills in these sectors to facilitate their emergence.

Skills mismatch is perhaps the most challenging problem faced by the labour market in developing countries. Policy makers across the world are preoccupied with the great task of helping millions of young people find decent work, as conveyed in Goal 8 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The challenge is particularly daunting in developing countries where, in the face of insufficient job creation, large informal labour markets and weak enforcement of labour standards, many young people are forced to take low-quality jobs to survive and end up as working poor. In parallel, many young people leave the formal education system relatively early and without acquiring sufficient and relevant skills to transit to productive jobs in the labour market. As a result, youth experience skills mismatch in their occupation and are not satisfied with their employment situation.

Early school dropout is a common phenomenon in low income and some lower middle income countries (Table 2.1). In Cambodia 63% of youth of secondary and tertiary school age (12-22) have already left the formal education system. Several drivers of early school dropout reinforce each other in a vicious cycle. Parents and youth themselves place low value on education. This is due to the poor employment outcomes youth often get after completion of secondary school. Poor employment outcomes are the result of both labour demand and supply side factors, but poor quality of education is an important driver. Low incentives for teachers and low-skilled teachers perpetuate the low quality of education. Thus, the overall opportunity cost education for poor families is high, because employment of the children contribute to household basic needs. In fact, for some low-skilled occupations, primary school dropouts earn more

than their equivalent graduates. Other factors such as informal school fees add to the financial burden of poorer households. Financial constraint is the number one reason for dropping out of school of early (OECD Development Centre, 2017a).

Table 2.1. Youth educational outcomes, by country

Viet Nam	Cambodia	Côte d'Ivoire	Togo	Malawi	Peru	El Salvador	Jordan	Moldova
Enrolment rate								
LS: 84%	P: 94%	LS: 34%	S: 49%	P: 88.7%	S: 83%	S: 38%	P: 89%	S: 76%
US: 63%	LS: 39%	US: 12%	T: 12%	S: 11% (net)	T: 65%	T: 31%	S: 81%	T: 41%
T: 29%	US: 19%	T: 9%		35% (gross)			T: 45%	
	T: 20%			T: 0.8%				
Dropout rate								
P: 9%	LS: 20%	P: 31%	P: 46%			LS: 8%		
LS: 10%	US: 24%	(girls), 22%				US: 10%		
S: 25%	OOS (12-22): 63%	(boys)						
Attainment rate (25-29 unless indicated)								
P: 22%	P: 40%	None: 35%	None: 24%	< P (incl. no	(20-29)	(15-24)		T: 38%
LS: 30%	LS: 29%	P: 28%	P: 22%	schooling):	None: 5%	None: 14%		
US: 16%	US: 15%	S: 32%	S: 42%	47%	P: 15%	P: 50%		
T: 8%	T: 13%	T: 5%	T: 12%	P: 37%	S: 31%	S: 33%		
				S: 14%	T: 49%	T: 3%		
				T: 0.8%				
Standardised tests/Literacy rate								
PISA 2015 ranking: 8/72.	Literacy rate(15-24): 91% (71% for total population)	Pupils (CP2) score: 83 % language, 66% maths.	Pupils (CP2) score: 80 % language, 59% maths.		PISA 2015 ranking: 66/72.	Literacy rate(15-24): 98% (83% for adults)		
Literacy rate (15-24): 98% (95% for total population)					National Student Evaluation: 12% satisfactory			

Note: 1) P: primary. S: secondary. LS: lower secondary. US: upper secondary. T: tertiary. OOS: out-of-school. 2) PISA: Programme for International Student Assessment. 3) Attainment is the highest level of education achieved among the indicated age group.

Source: *Youth Well-being Policy Reviews* of Viet Nam (VNM), Cambodia (KHM), Côte d'Ivoire (CIV), Togo (TGO), Malawi (MWI), Peru (PER), El Salvador (SLV), Jordan (JOR) and Moldova (MDA).

The concept of skills (or qualification) mismatch is very broad and refers to a variety of frictions in the labour market causing imbalance between the type or level of qualification needed for an individual to work well in a given job or occupation. Manifestations of skills mismatch include *vertical mismatch*, when an individual is over (or under) educated or over (under) skilled compared to what her current job requires; *skills shortage*, when it is difficult to fill some vacancies in a specific sector; *horizontal (or field of study) mismatch*, when individuals do not work in an occupation for which they were trained originally; and *skills obsolescence*, when workers' skills become obsolete over time.

Skills mismatch happens because the education system is unable to respond to the requirements of the labour market, resulting in an unbalanced distribution of students across fields of study in post-secondary education. In particular, in developing countries there is often over representation of students in literature, social sciences, administrative

and business majors in higher education, and in service-oriented fields of study in the technical and vocational education and training (TVET). For example, although agriculture absorbs a large share of youth, the proportion of students actually engaging in related studies is very small. Critical skills needed to succeed as self-employed workers are also often overlooked. Self-employment is widespread among the youth in low and middle-income countries and requires a specific set of skills including financial literacy, leadership, management skills and soft skills.

Addressing the problem of skills mismatch is particularly challenging in developing countries where several types of mismatches accumulate and labour markets are complex. On top of relatively traditional challenges related to the quantity and quality of education, youth in developing countries have to be ready to work informally and very often as self-employed, in labour markets with limited sectors of activities and lack of job creation. In light of the diverse drivers behind skills mismatches, policy makers have to carefully adapt policy responses depending on whether the problem is due to supply side factors (i.e. insufficient level of education, poor training quality or the wrong allocation of students in different fields of study) or mainly demand side factors, which limit job creation and labour market opportunities. Moreover, information about the labour market is scarce and human and financial resources in public institutions are limited, which calls for innovative policy responses.

TVET has been hailed as the solution to reduce skills mismatch and while TVET can contribute to bring young people closer to job requirements, developing relevant and high quality TVET qualifications is more demanding in the context of developing economies. Indeed, TVET studies are more expensive to offer, require frequent adjustments to match changes in businesses practices, face higher shortage of qualified teachers and important management investment. Consequently, post-secondary TVET graduates generally yield high (and quick) returns on the labour market, unlike pre-secondary TVET graduates who often follow traditional apprenticeship with limited value added to local (and global) value chains.

The lack of job creation is also a major driver of skills mismatch. In developing economies, far more young people join the labour force than there are jobs created. In a context of low social protection coverage, this results in large skills mismatch as young people are constrained to take on jobs for which they are not qualified. A strategic approach to tackle skills mismatch should therefore be to look at the demand side, and ensure investments prioritise sectors with a high job creation potential. In parallel, the education system should ensure the provision of skills in these sectors to facilitate their emergence.

In the nine countries reviewed by the project, the problem of qualification mismatch was prevalent in all countries (Table 2.2.). Most of them were affected by under-qualification. Other employment challenges were related to the quality of jobs, such as low pay, time-related underemployment, informality, and unstable and poor working condition (own account work and unpaid family work). Skills mismatch calculated for 32 developing countries, using a normative approach, shows similar results with 55.3% mismatch, of which 36.4% underqualified and 18.9% overqualified (OECD, 2017c). The results vary widely across regions and countries, with Africa having the largest share of underqualified youth workers, sometimes as extreme as 89.4% in Uganda.

Table 2.2. Youth employment challenge by country (2013 - 2015 data)

YOUTH (15-29)	VNM	KHM	CIV	TGO	MWI	PER	SLV	JOR	MDA
Skills mismatch	43.5%	68.6%	80%	77.7%	83%	44.5%	48.1%	33.9%	52.8%
Underqualified	31.1%	45.6%		74.2%	81%	26.6%	31%	6%	43.3%
Overqualified	12.4%	23.0%		3.5%	2%	18%	17%	27.9%	9.5%
NEET	9.8%	6.4%	35.7%	21.9%	17.6%	15%	26.8%	28.9%	28.7%
Wage workers	50%	59%	18%	14.6%	22.4%	28.5%	64.8%	74.8%	92.7%
Vulnerable employment	49%	40%	55%	71.9%	77%	67%	16.9% (UFW)	25.1%	4.3%
Informality	50%		92%	93.3%	93%	82%	73%	30.7%	37.5%
(Time) Under-employment			21.3%	29%				9%	
In agriculture	33%	50%	40%						
among rural youth	58%							38%	

Note: Vulnerable employment refers to own account workers and unpaid family workers (UFW). NEET is the share of youth not in employment, education or training. Informality includes both jobs in the informal sector and informal jobs in the formal sector. NEET average in OECD countries=13.9%

Source: Youth Well-being Policy Reviews of Viet Nam (VNM), Cambodia (KHM), Côte d'Ivoire (CIV), Togo (TGO), Malawi (MWI), Peru (PER), El Salvador (SLV), Jordan (JOR) and Moldova (MDA).

Policy recommendations

Governance of education system

Improve the governance of the education system by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders and training providers. It is important to clarify the role and prerogatives of key governmental actors, including public and private providers of education to improve co-ordination and monitoring of skills provision. An important objective of the lead institution should be to ensure the coherence and the standards across post-secondary education courses, TVET, private, informal and public providers. These providers must be co-ordinated, along with national and district-level representatives from the ministries and public TVET institutions. The government could also support and supervise their activities by providing specific guidelines, offering specific technical assistance and evaluating their performance. Another objective should be to make skills system easy to understand for both employers and employees by providing a simple qualification framework.

Develop a comprehensive information system on education and the labour market. A sound governance and informed policy making requires collecting a variety of information on people's trajectory in the education system and the labour market. Governments should follow how many students engage in various fields of study at different levels, follow the quality of educational resources, including pedagogical materials and teachers, and eventually track how students perform in the labour market. In parallel, information about the skills needed by the private sector should be collected. This can provide an accurate picture of the quantity and type of skills available and needed, and inform on the types and sources of skills mismatch in the country.

Strengthen mechanisms to improve industry engagement in curriculum development, training provision and financial contribution. Reinforcing the relationship between the education system (and TVET in particular), students and the private sector can significantly improve the relevance of education and facilitate

students' transition into the labour market. The private sector can be involved at various steps of education provision, starting with consultation on curriculum development. Indeed, the private sector can identify up-to-date skills and knowledge students should acquire to work in various occupations and make sure there are no training gaps in the curricula. It can also be involved in delivering training through internships and apprenticeships. Governments should support these private sector efforts through incentive mechanisms. Finally, the government could increase partnerships with strategic sectors to develop specific skills in exchange of the financial contribution of enterprises.

Education quality and relevance

Improve education quality at all levels, notably by investing in teachers. The lack of adequately trained teachers constitutes a major drawback to provide quality education at all levels. Governments should make sure they have sufficient training capacity to maintain adequate teacher-student ratio. Particular attention should be given to the training and recruitment of TVET teachers to supply the needs in high demand fields of study. Training should ensure teachers possess sufficient knowledge of theories and practical application of up-to-date equipment and production techniques. It is also crucial for teachers to receive pre-service training in pedagogy and teaching methodologies and gain experience through in-service training. In addition, remedial support and training should be available to teachers throughout their careers to ensure they keep up with technology and develop their competencies. To attract and retain qualified individuals, the system should offer competitive salaries and interesting career opportunities. Special incentives should be provided to teachers posted in rural areas.

Provide skills development and second-chance programmes for rural youth. Despite the potential for new jobs in agro-food value chains and non-farm activities in rural areas, the majority of rural youth in developing countries are low-educated and low-skilled. Skills mismatch, mostly related to under-qualification hinders any attempt at moving up the value chain or getting better jobs. At the same time, private sector employers including small and medium enterprises (SMEs) struggle to find qualified candidates to fill posts, even in promising sectors where labour demand is high. Traditional TVET programmes either fail to reach out-of-school and low educated youth or do not train in subjects relevant for the labour market. There exist various training modalities and a wealth of information on what works and does not in TVET. Collaboration with the private sector to train young workers should be further explored. For example, more financial incentive schemes for SMEs to invest in youth skills development should be offered.

Increase and diversify the supply of quality TVET opportunities. In many developing countries, the share of TVET in total enrolment is extremely small in comparison to the share of young people leaving the education system with post-secondary education. Investing in the training capacity in technical education should therefore be a priority. Yet, governments should invest strategically, in co-ordination with the private providers of education in order to make the most of the TVET system. In particular, they should aim at diversifying the type of training provided, and the public sector should make sure they set high standards.

Inclusive education

Support the skills development of disadvantaged groups. Governments should ensure that the youth population not in employment, education or training (NEET) receive second chance programmes and targeted training opportunities. Targeting the youth in transition to the labour market is of particular importance. Moreover, targeted training programmes should be provided to young women together with specific support mechanisms such as children’s day care and basic social protection to make sure family responsibilities do not become a hindrance. Rather than providing low-skilled job training, governments should focus on teaching topics such as entrepreneurship, business management or diverse agricultural skills with higher effect on productivity. Training opportunities in rural areas should also be increased, with a specific attention to provide training relevant to the local labour market needs.

Keep children in school until they finish secondary education. Primary school net enrolment in the developing world increased from 83% in 2000 to 91% in 2015. Despite this achievement, one in four young persons is unable to read a sentence (UNESCO, 2014). Low quality of education in developing countries leads to low returns to education and motivates early school dropout. Dropping out of school before completing secondary school is a common phenomenon in most developing countries. Financial constraints and low returns to education push children to take up gainful work earlier. However, persisting beyond secondary school can give higher returns. In fact, returns to education are higher in developing countries (11% avg, 13% in SSA) than in developed countries (7%) for each additional year of schooling (Psacharopoulos, 1994). In addition, returns to education are not only monetary: health benefits, non-cognitive skills and social capital are assets that can help employability. Investing in education brings positive returns to youth in terms of wages and access to ‘better’ jobs (ILO, 2014).

Recognise the importance of informal training and support traditional apprenticeships. Informal training, notably apprenticeships, constitutes a major source of training for school dropouts and low skilled youth. To improve the quality and relevance of informal training, the government should engage with the informal providers and help them find opportunities to develop their capacity (including pedagogical skills), support them financially to acquire modern equipment and promote community involvement to reduce the administrative and organisational burden of training. Developing certification for informal trainers and disseminating guidelines about required competencies for apprentices to obtain official certification could also improve functioning.

Career guidance

Guide student learning and career choices. While it is important that young people do not give up on their dreams or curtail their ambitions, policy makers need to ensure that young people can access accurate information about labour market prospects and receive effective guidance on the best way to get closer to their goals. Better and well-informed career guidance and counselling is thus necessary.

Unlock youth entrepreneurship potential. While self-employment stands out as a key driver of job satisfaction when it is by choice, it is important to recognise that, in many developing countries, only a tiny number of young entrepreneurs with specific characteristics prove to be successful and the majority end up in subsistence activities. A comprehensive approach is needed to address the diversity of enabling and disabling

factors to higher entrepreneurial performance, and this includes well-designed entrepreneurship promotion programmes. Recent evidence (OECD, 2017b) makes a strong case for redirecting entrepreneurship programmes towards young people with the highest entrepreneurship potential and refocusing such programmes on business development services and on a package of training and access to finance services that have proven to work best for micro-entrepreneurs.

Guidance note 2: Promoting entrepreneurship and decent rural youth employment

Key takeaways

- ❖ Governments are promoting entrepreneurship but it is no panacea for the youth employment challenge. Empirical evidence shows that only a tiny portion of youth entrepreneurs prove to be successful, while most of them are confined to subsistence activities.
- ❖ The majority of youth entrepreneurs remain in subsistence activities due to low level of education, informality, poor physical infrastructure and limited access to finance. Successful entrepreneurs have specific profiles: they are highly educated, possess management and soft skills, have access to social networks and capital.
- ❖ Entrepreneurship should be promoted with care by investing in comprehensive programmes. Many self-employed youth should be re-trained to find wage jobs.
- ❖ Rural areas may offer some real economic potentials and wage jobs and self-employment opportunities if local value chains can be developed.
- ❖ Youth do not want to work in agriculture. Employment in the sector must first be transformed into decent jobs to attract youth, starting with better incomes for farmers and the modernisation of agriculture practices that address environmental concerns.
- ❖ Agriculture represents a largely untapped reservoir of employment opportunities and can become more productive through new technologies and methods of production.
- ❖ Growth in demand for value-added and processed food and diversified agricultural products in developing countries offer great potential for domestic investment in agro-industries.
- ❖ There is little empirical evidence of successful youth employment creation along agricultural value chains, particularly downstream.

Faced with the daunting youth employment challenge, many governments in developing countries are turning to entrepreneurship as a solution. However, entrepreneurship is not for everyone (see Chapter 1), and not in the least for a large number of youth that are low-educated and low-skilled. Many start a business or become self-employed by default rather than by choice. The Youth Inclusion project's study on youth entrepreneurship based on empirical data from four countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Peru and Viet Nam) shows that there are distinct profiles of successful entrepreneurs (OECD, 2017b).

The concept of entrepreneurship encompasses a very heterogeneous reality that can be seen as a continuum of businesses operating at different performance levels, ranging from own-account workers and micro-enterprises to large companies; from necessity-driven, subsistence and informal businesses (see Box 2.1) to opportunity-driven, highly profitable and innovative formal enterprises; and from businesses relying on informal networks to enterprises well-connected to local and global value chains and markets.

Currently, projects and programmes aimed at supporting youth inclusion in agriculture value chains focus mostly on agricultural production (i.e. farming). Examples of supporting youth in downstream activities such as adding value or processing, where the bulk of wage labour may be generated, is less common. Empirical data is largely missing on youth participation in agriculture value chains, particularly downstream (OECD, 2018).

Box 2.1. Rural youth entrepreneurs in Malawi

Rural youth entrepreneurs in Malawi generally start a business out of necessity in the absence of job opportunities. Unemployment, together with the inability to find a job, is the most frequent reason reported for opting to start a business (38%). Rural youth entrepreneurs have low education levels – 74.7 % have primary education at best – and acquire business skills informally (80.3%), either by being self-taught (43.9%) or through family members (36.5%).

Typically, rural youth businesses are small (68.9% of individual entrepreneurs), agricultural retailers that add no value to the products and thus generate low profits. In most cases (40.5%), products sell in the same form as when they were bought, meaning rural youth entrepreneurs are mainly vendors.

The poor income-generating capacity of rural youth businesses raises serious concerns since most of them have been in operation for years. Overall, most young entrepreneurs in Malawi are unable to generate employment or make their businesses grow. Informality is the norm among rural youth businesses (98.1 %), along with poor operating conditions and very limited access to infrastructure and ICT.

Access to financing (36.1%) and market integration (24.1%) are the main challenges when starting a business for rural youth entrepreneurs. Many rural youth entrepreneurs are not supported by business organisations or networks (47.9%); most get support primarily from informal networks, especially religious groups (32.9%).

Source: OECD Development Centre (2018), *Youth Well-Being Policy Review of Malawi*.

Increasing domestic demand for diversified foods is rising in many developing countries and agro value chain development presents a real opportunity to support local enterprises, improve market structures and business environment that can result in more entrepreneurs as well as wage jobs. Building capabilities of rural youth to integrate agro-food industries remains largely underexploited. As productivity of farm labour increases, opportunities for job growth will happen in service provision, upstream (provision of inputs, machinery) and further downstream in the food value chain (e.g. processing, packaging, transport, retail, etc.). In particular, food processing is expected to grow rapidly. The development of local agro-processing businesses can create employment for low and medium skilled jobs while it can also attract educated young entrepreneurs to invest and/or manage these enterprises. The below recommendations

are from the two Youth Inclusion project's studies on youth entrepreneurship and rural youth employment (OECD, 2017b and OECD 2018).

Policy recommendations

Entrepreneurship programmes

Support youth entrepreneurs with the most potential and re-train those that are struggling on subsistence activities to find wage jobs. The high heterogeneity observed among youth entrepreneurs calls for policy solutions and interventions that should be carefully targeted to profiles with real entrepreneurial potential, while those engaged in subsistence activities should be trained and redirected to transition into the labour market or public works programmes. Recent evidence makes a strong case to redirect entrepreneurship programmes to those young people with the highest entrepreneurial potentials and offer programmes on business development services as well as on a package of training and access to finance services that have proven to work best for micro-entrepreneurs.

Invest in comprehensive entrepreneurship programmes. Impact evaluation shows that adopting a comprehensive, integrated approach works well, while stand-alone programmes are generally found to be less effective. Entrepreneurship programmes are indeed more successful when they provide comprehensive packages offering multiple services simultaneously. Business development services have an established track record of contributing effectively to business performance and employment generation, and there is a strong case for supporting them.

Entrepreneurship education

Integrate entrepreneurship education in formal schooling. Education policy and the formal schooling system must integrate comprehensive entrepreneurship education into the national curriculum at all levels. Comprehensive curricula need to be developed to provide young people with different sets of competencies, including technical, non-cognitive and life skills as well as entrepreneurial behaviour. More attention should also be paid to business development skills and real-world knowledge in vocational training. In addition, the schooling system must include a TVET-level qualification for the agricultural sector, and introduce agriculture education at the primary and secondary level.

Promote youth entrepreneurship spirit through success stories and role models. The talent of young entrepreneurs should be highlighted by organising conferences and highly visible summits, and by supporting youth entrepreneurship competitions, awards and events to raise the profile of young entrepreneurs and create awareness about entrepreneurship. The development of networks of young entrepreneurs must be encouraged through peer networks grouping youth entrepreneurship organisations, business associations, youth-led organisations and other stakeholders. Entrepreneurship potential can also be promoted via knowledge exchange between established businesses and aspiring young entrepreneurs. Ultimately, young entrepreneurs must be given more visibility. To this end, media and other communication tools and platforms can be used, in particular to promote role models.

Formalisation

Simplify administrative procedures. This can be achieved by making business registration quicker and less expensive, simplifying tax filing requirements and accounting methods, and reviewing bankruptcy laws to make them more tolerant of risk taking and business failure. Tax regimes must be rendered more supportive, for instance by lowering tax rates or introducing tax and social contribution exemptions for young entrepreneurs. In addition, the business regulatory environment needs to be more predictable. Since lack of knowledge about business registration and licensing strongly drives informality, improving access to information on the regulatory framework and better communicating the benefits of formalisation are important.

Encourage formalisation as a way to support business expansion. A right mix of incentives and sanctions is needed to encourage formalisation. Formalisation allows businesses to access financing and increase their scale of operation. However, not all enterprises benefit in the same way, and among the smallest and precarious production units, the effect of formalisation is still unclear. Rather than strict enforcement of formality, which is often socially costly and rarely efficient, the way to go is probably to encourage registration, especially through fiscal incentives, awareness-raising campaigns, simplification of business regulations, and business advice and training for informal entrepreneurs.

Reduce incentives for remaining informal. This requires careful monitoring of the impact of taxes and social contributions. For youth entrepreneurs, the benefits of operating formally often relate to the possibility to enjoy the legal ownership of their place of business and means of production, to benefit from enforceable commercial contracts and tax breaks, or to be covered by affordable social protection schemes, while the costs of entry into the formal economy encompass the need to pay taxes and social security contributions, obtain a license, or register their accounts. The cost-benefit ratio may be different for informal wage workers, for whom formalisation mostly means obtaining a formal wage job with a secure contract and statutory social protection.

Local value chain development

Promote local value chains as an engine for decent jobs and food security. The growing domestic demand in agro-food products both in quantity and diversity is largely underexploited. Promoting local value chain development is not only necessary for youth inclusion but also to ensure food security in the context of rapid urbanisation, increasing dependence on food and feed imports and growing domestic demands. Policy actions are needed at macro, meso and micro levels. At macro level, there are regulatory frameworks, national development strategies and trade policies that will support or hinder certain value chains. At meso level there are industry standards and businesses that will determine the channels and efficiencies of the value chains. At micro level are the small-scale producers and young people who need capacity building, skills and equipment upgrades and access to capital in order to integrate the value chain as self-employed or wage workers.

Link rural with urban development with a territorial approach. Focusing resources and investments in the development of secondary towns would offer new markets to small farmers and processors while creating job opportunities e.g. in the service and retail sector for rural youth. In Africa, the growth of towns and intermediary cities has strengthened the reciprocal linkages between rural and urban development. Investments should go into strengthening rural-urban linkages and prioritising transport and

marketing infrastructure to improve market access and value addition, reduce post-harvest losses and expand input markets and support services in rural areas.

Support SMEs in the agricultural sector along the value chain through youth-sensitive approaches. Policies and public and private investments can be designed to intentionally support local value chains that create decent youth employment. Policies and programmes can support the strengthening of smallholders and small and medium agro businesses and create specific incentives for youth, for example by supporting and legally empowering youth cooperatives and youth participation in mixed cooperatives and providing financial and/or technical support to businesses that hire young people. Employment services should also support motivated young entrepreneurs in rural areas to develop new value-added products and services along the agro-food value chain. Access to finance and social protection will be crucial to enable rural youth to become entrepreneurs and develop SMEs.

Adopt a comprehensive approach to rural development to develop regional advantages. Growth in productive sector wage employment will need to be stimulated to address youth employment challenge. The regions that have successfully increased demand for labour are those where the share of productive sector wage earners in total employment has been rising. Unless demand for labour expands it is difficult to design and implement programmes to increase the inclusion of disadvantaged youth. Investments to promote growth sectors in rural areas in line with comparative advantage of the territory (e.g. Geographic Indicators) and to support access to markets can contribute to the creation of farm and off-farm wage employment.

Agriculture investment and diversification

Invest in agriculture and rural infrastructure. FAO estimates that net investments of more than USD 80 billion a year are needed if food production is to keep pace with rising demand as incomes grow and population exceeds 9 billion in 2050. UNCTAD's survey of investment promotion agencies (IPAs) in developing and transition economies consider the best targets in their countries to be in the agricultural and agribusiness industry, along with the transport and telecommunications, hotels and restaurants, construction and extractive industries. Rural and market infrastructures need to be improved with a view to improve access to education, training, inputs, markets, technology (including ICT) and finance. What will attract young people is not only the profitability of agriculture but also the basic services and the amenities that local rural areas and small towns can provide (IFAD, 2014).

Green and diversify rural economies. Rural populations often depend directly on the environment and natural resources for their livelihoods, such as in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining and tourism. However, the ecosystem on which they rely is increasingly threatened by excessive and unsustainable exploitation. Greening the rural economy will be key to boosting resource and labour productivity, reducing poverty, increasing income opportunities and improving youth well-being in rural areas. The modernisation of agriculture, the expansion of ICTs and products and services around renewable energies (e.g. solar, biogas) therefore hold employment opportunities for youth, especially rural youth. The ILO estimates that a transition to a greener economy could create 15–60 million additional jobs over the next two decades, which would lift millions of workers out of poverty (ILO, 2012).

Exploit the opportunities in regional and international markets. Despite the large share of agriculture in GDP, many developing countries are increasingly dependent on

imports. About 85% of global value chain trade in value added takes place in and around three regional hubs: East Asia, Europe and North Africa. Global agro-industrial exports have diversified significantly over the last two decades towards processed and high-value horticultural products. In Africa, the diversity of agriculture and climate provides major opportunities for regional trade. However, currently only about 10% of agricultural trade is from within the region. Border trade continues to incur high transaction costs from administrative red tape and bribes. Simplification, greater transparency and harmonisation of procedures are required.

Guidance note 3: Improving sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and youth

Key takeaways

- ❖ Young people have very specific health and developmental needs – and challenges. Some of the main issues affecting them are early pregnancy, HIV, malnutrition, tobacco use, alcohol abuse, violence and road traffic injuries.
- ❖ Poor health conditions limit access to education and employment and have life-changing consequences, particularly for girls.
- ❖ Programmes that promote healthy practices at a young age and prevent health risks among youth are essential to the social cohesion and health infrastructure of any country.
- ❖ There is a need to implement multidimensional, comprehensive and flexible sexual and reproductive health (SRH) programmes targeting young people, especially the most vulnerable groups such as young women, young migrants and LGBTI youth.
- ❖ Comprehensive SRH education should be implemented in schools and communities to overcome negative social norms that prevent young people from accessing family planning services and seeking treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- ❖ Youth-friendly SRH services help young people, especially young women, address a range of sexual and reproductive health needs. These should include non-judgemental counselling and practical services, such as testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), access to contraceptives and HIV/AIDS prevention information, obstetric and antenatal care for young pregnant women, among others.

Youth is a stage in life full of opportunities to adopt a healthy lifestyle, and young people are often portrayed as the very emblem of health. Yet, it is also a time of vulnerability to HIV infection, and exposure to diseases because of risky behaviours in terms of sexual relations and substance abuse. SRH issues for adolescents are often not discussed in schools and considered taboo in many societies. Poor SRH awareness and care lead to early pregnancies and sexually transmitted illnesses with life-changing consequences, particularly for girls. Globally, more than 2 million young people aged 10-19 are living with HIV. One in seven of all new infections occur during adolescence. One in three girls in developing countries is married before the age of 18. Poor health or early

pregnancies can have life changing effects, often preventing from further education and productive employment.

Adolescents, in particular, face additional challenges. UNFPA estimates that 42% of all new HIV infections were amongst adolescents and youth (UNFPA, 2013). The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 1.2 million adolescents died in 2015, over 3 000 every day, mostly due to preventable causes. More than two-thirds of these deaths occurred in low- and middle-income countries in Africa and South-East Asia. Some of the main issues affecting young people include malnutrition, road traffic injuries, alcohol abuse, tobacco use, violence and unprotected sex which can lead to a variety of adverse outcomes, from STIs to early pregnancies.

Reviews of the nine Youth Inclusion project countries conclude that the importance of SRH for youth well-being is largely underestimated in policies and in schools. Adolescent birth rates in Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Malawi are much higher than in other countries. In recent years, Côte d'Ivoire witnessed a rise in the number of teenage pregnancies. This trend comes at the same time as an increase in early school dropout among girls. In 2013, primary school dropout among girls was 30.6% (compared to 21.8% for boys). These two phenomena reinforce each other to have long term negative effects on young women's higher education and employment outcomes. In Moldova, few young people are aware of the existence of youth-friendly health services, which have been expanding. Even among those who know about them, only 17.1% make use of them. Social norms and stigma play a big part in making youth shy away from these services.

Table 2.3. Youth health outcomes by country (2015)

YOUTH (15-29)	VNM	CAM	CIV	TGO	MWI	PER	SLV	JOR	MDA
Mortality rate per 100 000	104	150	575	332	295	113	207	72	70
Adolescent (15-19) birth rate in 1 000 births	45	57	129	166	136	54	65	22.7	25.6
Deaths by HIV/AIDS ('000)	2.3	0.2	2.0	0.5	4.1	0.2	0.06	0.04	0.01
Leading cause of death	Road injury	Road injury	CD	CD	HIV/AIDS	CD	Injuries from violence	Road injury	Road injury

Note: CD: Communicable Diseases. OECD average for adolescent birth rate = 21.7.

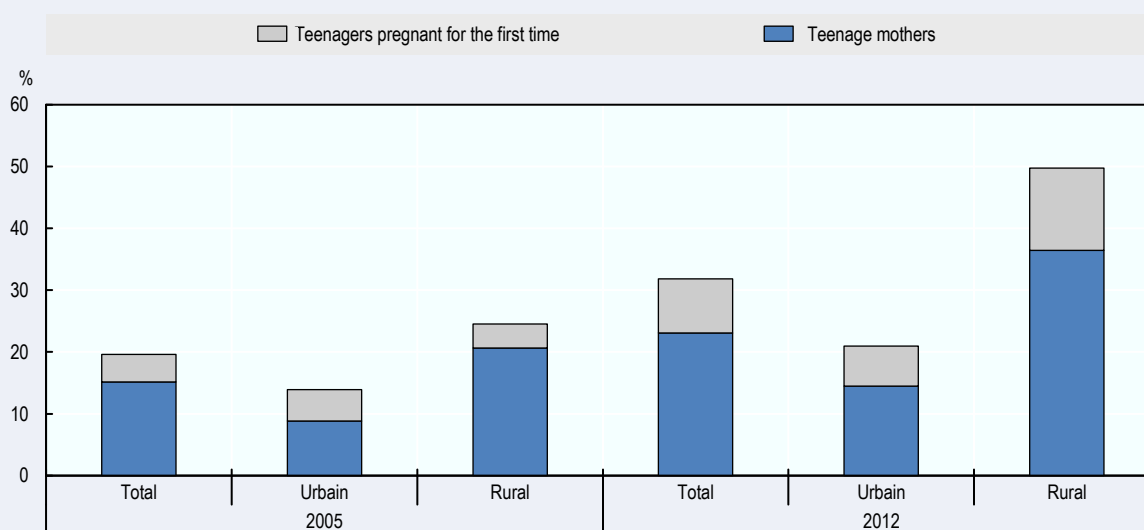
Source: Youth Well-being Policy Reviews of Viet Nam (VNM), Cambodia (KHM), Côte d'Ivoire (CIV), Togo (TGO), Malawi (MWI), Peru (PER), El Salvador (SLV), Jordan (JOR) and Moldova (MDA).

Other rising health problems among youth include mental health which is associated with school dropout, grade repetition, and risky behaviours such as unprotected sex. Safety issues such as road accidents are a major cause of death among young men in Jordan, Cambodia, and Viet Nam.

Box 2.2. Teenage pregnancies on the rise in Côte d'Ivoire

In Côte d'Ivoire, the rate of teenage pregnancies has sharply increased from 19.6% in 2005 to 31.9% in 2012. This is particularly worrisome as early pregnancies can have subsequent negative effects on education and employment prospects. In fact, the country is experiencing a decline in enrolment rate among girls in primary and secondary school.

Figure 2.1. Teenage pregnancies in Côte d'Ivoire by place of residence, %



Source: OECD Development Centre (2017), *Youth Well-being Policy Review of Côte d'Ivoire*

Policy recommendations

Access to sexual and reproductive health services and information

Promote comprehensive sexuality education in schools and communities. School curriculum should be revised in order to better integrate SRH education, and teachers need to be trained in the subject. In addition, since family is an essential element in the education of children and youth, it is important to promote the involvement of parents in SRH education and encourage them to communicate more with their children so that sexuality and other SRH related issues are not taboo subjects. Moreover, community leaders and religious groups should also be involved.

Implement youth friendly health services. Youth friendly health services can increase young people's access to SRH services, especially when they include: young peer educators (peer-to-peer education); the use of new media – such as social media, mobile phones, etc. to maximise outreach to adolescents; non-formal delivery of SRH through after-school clubs or extra-curricular activities, as well as in youth clubs, drop-in centres, or through community-based outreach.

Involve and support mentors, families, and communities. Youth development requires the involvement of multiple actors and systems, including families, schools, faith-based groups and community-based organisations as well as businesses and

government institutions. Families and communities provide the primary level of support for youth development that is reinforced by health, education, and other systems. At the same time, attention and effort should be applied to ensure adults are prepared to listen to and effectively work with young people.

Clearly establish in legislation the confidentiality of accessing SRH services for young people, independently of parental or other consent. This will ensure that confidentiality and access is respected and taken seriously by service providers, which, in turn, will encourage young people to approach these services. Service providers and practitioners should be informed about the importance of behaving in a non-judgmental manner and be sensitive to the needs of adolescents.

Listen to the voices of young people to ensure that information and education is responsive to their specific needs. It is important to involve young people, particularly from vulnerable and marginalised groups in SRH programme development and implementation. Young people know what messages and methods are most appropriate for other youth.

SRH campaigns and services should target both young women and men. Engage men and boys as partners in programmes on sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls.

Examine, through rigorous research, the links between sexual and reproductive health and the empowerment of women and girls. Establishing these links can contribute to improve policy and programme interventions related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls.

Develop or strengthen legal provisions protecting LGBTI young people from discrimination in accessing health care services. Including the right to access specialised services, such as gender reassignment surgery and hormone supplements.

Implement multidimensional, comprehensive and flexible sexual and reproductive health programmes targeting displaced youth. Humanitarian actors and sectors helping displaced youth should work together to for a holistic, multi-sectoral response to increase SRH utilisation and improve health outcomes for displaced youth. More specifically, aid workers should be trained to deal with pregnancy, childbirth, reproductive health and the aftermath of rape and violence.

HIV/AIDS and STIs

Involve young people in HIV/AIDS and other STIs messaging. Young people should be actively involved in the development and communication of HIV and other STIs prevention messages since they are well aware of the challenges they face and the needs they have. In the case of young people living with HIV, they should be involved in the design, implementation and assessment of programmes aimed at addressing their needs.

Provide adolescents with better access and knowledge about condoms. Greater knowledge and promotion of condoms, including female condoms, as well as a social environment that does not stigmatise condom are critical to reduce STI and HIV among youth.

Better access to testing and treatment for HIV and other STIs. These services should be linked with other reproductive health services. Moreover, adolescent women, particularly those at high risk for HIV should be able to access to HIV testing outside

the context of pregnancy-related care. Adolescents living with HIV should have better access to treatment and care services that are tailored to meet their particular needs.

Early pregnancies and abortions

Organise information campaigns and improve access to modern contraceptive methods. Young girls should receive complete information about sex, pregnancy and contraception, tailoring such messages to meet the diverse needs of adolescents, in order to prevent future unintended pregnancies and unsafe abortions, regardless of the legality of the abortion. This would allow adolescent girls to better control their fertility and limit the extent of early pregnancy. Adolescent girls need to be better integrated into existing family planning programmes and services.

Improve support systems to young pregnant women and teenage mothers. Girls who do become pregnant need access to quality antenatal care. This can include basic social benefits, child care support for young women who are working or studying. Provide assistance to adolescent mothers to stay in school or integrate second chance programmes. Training programmes could also be developed to help young women who have no choice but to work to develop and acquire new skills in order to facilitate their access to better jobs.

Make legal provisions to protect pregnant young girls from school expulsion or from harassment that will lead to school dropout. Gender-based discriminatory social norms prevent young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, from accessing family planning services and seeking treatment for STIs. Pregnant teenagers will become victims of social stigma and seek counselling or help through unsafe methods.

Implement youth-friendly abortion services (where this right exists) that are sensitive to the needs of young people, including affordability and confidentiality. Such services should be promoted through non-stigmatising messages and communication campaigns to improve young people's access to safe abortion and post-abortion care. Where permitted by the law, parents or spouses should be involved only at the request of the patients. Educate adolescent women about the dangers of unsafe abortion. Discussions on abortion in education programmes for young people should be supported.

Early marriage and harmful social norms

Establish a policy framework to prevent early marriage and allocate the necessary budget. Governments should need to take leadership in developing and implementing comprehensive national strategies and action plans to tackle early marriage.

Mobilise families and communities to change attitudes and behaviours concerning early marriage. To end early marriage, as well as domestic violence, it is important to work with members of the community and encouraging them to change attitudes and behaviours concerning early marriage, rather than just focusing on enforcing laws that define the minimum age of marriage alone. This can be done through sensitisation activities, awareness-raising campaigns, public events and discussions, involving the media, legal professionals and religious and traditional leaders.

Enforce the law against early marriage and domestic violence. Laws prohibiting early and forced marriage exist but are not always enforced. Civil society organisations can be more involved to raise awareness about these laws and the consequences of early marriages and early pregnancies. Domestic violence is usually not reported by the

victims and such practices are often accepted in many societies. More sensitisation against domestic violence and possible sanctions should be done, especially among vulnerable groups.

Enforce laws that support the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young women to tackle harmful gender norms. Programmes that support young women's health and socio-economic development should be prioritised and they should have a strong focus on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation (FGM).

Support young women in rural areas and out-of-school. These women are more likely to fall into abusive and unequal relationships or engage in sex work. Focusing limited resources on this vulnerable group is a smart investment, for example expanding conditional cash transfers to adolescent girls to provide incentives to keep them in school.

Guidance note 4: Making civic participation inclusive

Key takeaways

- ❖ Youth participation is far from being an activity enjoyed by all youth.
- ❖ Freedom of expression is an issue in many developing countries with the majority of youth fearing punishment or fines.
- ❖ Youth participation and empowerment are important rights for the well-being of youth and society.
- ❖ Alternative forms of civic participation are playing an increasing role. Worldwide, student movements, most often originating in universities, have been instrumental in supporting major social and political changes.
- ❖ Trust in policy makers and institutions, as well as social network support are key dimensions of social capital, an important d young people's participation.
- ❖ In areas where crime rates are high or social norms induce young people to criminal and risky behaviours, it is unlikely that social capital can be built and young people can engage in civic and political activities.
- ❖ Social networks support positive transitions and function as personal safety nets.

Civic participation and empowerment are important rights for the well-being of youth and society. Participation and empowerment are, however, only made possible by the existence and enforcement of legal frameworks that protect youth rights to participate in civic and political activities and allow freedom of expression. In many developing countries, these concepts are usually only practiced by a few elite and educated youth while rural and low-educated are often left out of the process. In places where young people do not feel safe and crime and violence rates are high, young people are unlikely to develop social capital and to actively participate in society. This is the case of El Salvador where gang violence paralyses social engagement, resulting in barely 15% of youth participating in any kind of civic activity (see Box 2.3).

Participation looks at a young person's level of engagement in political and social activities. Civic participation can take many forms, including volunteering to an organisation, donating money to a charity or helping a stranger in need of help. Likewise, political engagement relates usually to youth voter turnout. Often, both terms are used interchangeably. Civic engagement allows people to express their voice and to contribute to the political functioning of their society (OECD, 2011).

In many countries, formal opportunities for political participation and active citizenship have been promoted through advisory youth assemblies, councils or parliaments. The European Youth Forum, the Latin American Youth Forum, and the African Youth Parliament are examples of regional structures through which young people have cooperated with decision makers. However, some studies indicate that the motivation to join formal youth organisations is declining, and membership is increasingly perceived as a way to promote individual careers rather than to promote youth issues (UN, 2005 world youth report). Other evidence further indicates that a large number of young people remain outside of the mainstream of political and social life. While the right to vote in free and democratic elections has long been a symbol of social and political justice, young people are less likely to vote than adults and youth voting rates have been falling in high and middle income countries (World Development Report, 2007).

Social capital is an important factor for young people's participation and a successful transition into adult life. It can be interpreted as personal relationships, social network support at the individual level or civic engagement and trust in co-operative norms at the collective level (Scrivens and Smith, 2013). One of the key dimensions of social capital is the level of social network support – the feeling or experience of having others to turn to for help in times of need, but also as an everyday occurrence in personal relationships (Barnes and Duck, 1994). Oftentimes, networks facilitate young people's access to relevant information that enables them to navigate their opportunities. Networks support positive transitions and function as personal safety nets. Youth who lack social support networks are isolated and often excluded from society and, as such, experience a form of deprivation of well-being.

In the Youth Inclusion project countries, civic participation rate varied between 15% (El Salvador) to 54% (Viet Nam), but in general stayed at around half or less. Trust in government was most countries studied, was low (except in Viet Nam). Voting rate varied between 34% (Côte d'Ivoire) to 71% (Viet Nam). Freedom of expression was an issue in all countries with the majority of youth fearing punishment or fines.

Table 2.4. Youth civic participation by country (data between 2012 and 2016)

YOUTH	VNM	CAM	CIV	TGO	MWI	PER	SLV	JOR	MDA
Voting (18-29)	67%	37% registered	37.2%	71.6%	71%	71%	52%	37.9%*	11.1%*
Civic engagement	54%	49%	54.3%	51%	77%	24%	15%	62.7%	18.1%
Social network support	89.5%	16%	77.6%	55%	56%	87.8%	88.7%	88.2%	80.2%
Trust in government	86.7%	No data	42.8%	47.8%	59.4%	31.6%	57%	58%	5.2%

Note: Civic engagement means volunteered time to an organisation, donated to a charity or helped an unknown person in need. Social network support refers to those who can rely on a family or friend for help. *age18-25.

Source: Youth Well-being Policy Reviews of Viet Nam (VNM), Cambodia (KHM), Côte d'Ivoire (CIV), Togo (TGO), Malawi (MWI), Peru (PER), El Salvador (SLV), Jordan (JOR) and Moldova (MDA).

Box 2.3. Youth crime and violence in El Salvador

Salvadorian youth are both offenders and victims of crimes. The country is strongly marred by violence and insecurity, due to rivalling gangs. These gangs (or *maras*) have become criminal structures with a high level of territorial power. After the end of the truce (2012-15) between the two largest gangs and government forces, the level of violence and insecurity started rising again, becoming a major concern for the population and social cohesion.

The violence in El Salvador manifests itself in homicides, kidnapping, extortion and other forms. Young people are affected morally and physically by the level of violence and insecurity: in 2013 18.4% of adolescents (age 13 to 17) reported being physically attacked in the last 12 months. Young girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual aggression. The young age of most gang members and the often negative portrait of youth in media coverage influences the image of youth in the country, stigmatising those who live in neighbourhoods with high crime rates.

This climate makes free movement difficult and limits community activities (sports, arts, public spaces, etc.) which erodes the social fabric. Moreover, public responses towards young offenders remain inadequate. Often, young offenders are vulnerable to arrest and detention for small offences and end up in prisons for months or sometimes for years before having the possibility to encounter a lawyer. Excessive detention increases the possibility of failed citizenship.

Source: OECD Development Centre (2017), Youth Well-being Policy Review of El Salvador

Policy recommendations

Civic education

Integrate human rights education and civic activities into primary and secondary school. Experience has shown that human rights education, which aims at building a universal culture of human rights, provide students with knowledge about human rights and the mechanisms that protect them, but also help young people and adults to play an active part in democratic life and exercise their rights. Having civic activities as part of the regular school curriculum can help young people gain soft skills and learn about both politics and citizenship.

Develop youth-friendly information and materials and use multiple forms of communication to reach the widest possible audience. Materials could be developed with young people themselves, through both traditional and inclusive technology mediums. This information could be communicated through specific radio, television, social media, local and state newspapers and through promotion to community groups, cultural spaces and organisations frequented by young people and those that deliver services to young people of diverse backgrounds, including low-educated and rural youth.

Provide training about youth engagement. Training can be provided in a specific competency (e.g. programme evaluation) or content area (e.g. early grade reading), or as part of general skills building (e.g. public speaking or financial management).

Organise campaigns to raise awareness about how youth can become well-informed and engaged citizens. Governments could use the social media to create innovative participatory reforms and organise awareness activities on policy-making processes.

Civic and political engagement

Facilitate the combination of extracurricular activities and school as well as volunteerism. Governments should support the participation of young people in independent initiatives that operate alongside schools. Another way to boost participation skills is to promote volunteer work and offer incentives for the registration of such schemes. Such incentives might include giving greater official recognition to volunteer work, creating a single certification system that could eventually be eligible for extra points in university applications, and recognising volunteer work as work experience. Community service also allows states to undertake needed projects and provide young people with opportunities for out-of-classroom learning.

Enable premises free of charge for recreational activities and for youth organisations to meet. Often, because of the limited resources, many youth organisations do not have the premises where they can meet and hold their activities. Many countries have opened youth centres to cater for this demand. If it is not possible to invest in such premises, one alternative could be for municipal councils to make places available to the youth.

Provide moral and financial support to youth for the implementation of community development projects through the establishment of dedicated structures. Examples include prizes and institutional support to follow and help sustain promising projects.

Organise youth forums and ensure respect for freedom of speech so that youth can voice their opinions without fear of retribution. Forums gather together large groups of people to explore and share ideas about a topic or an issue. They are facilitated and usually involve the development of solutions and decisions. Freedom of expression should be guaranteed without fear of punishment or retribution.

Establish surveys for consultation. Surveys are a formal process in which young people respond to a set list of questions. Implementing surveys can contribute to get young people's views and recommendations as part of the evidence-base and values of a programme. They can be physical (on paper or by telephone) or electronic via an email link or posted on a website. Other examples include young people conducting site visits to programmes and providing their feedback, soliciting input from program beneficiaries, and conducting youth consultations on specific topics.

Develop strategies that encourage young people to run for electoral office. Low eligibility ages, setting youth quotas and connecting and supporting networks of young parliamentarians may foster representation of young lawmakers in parliaments.

Foster representation of young lawmakers in parliaments. A variety of strategies could be developed to elect more young people to parliament, including lowering the minimum age to run for office, setting youth quotas, connecting and supporting

networks of young parliamentarians, and building up the next generation of leaders through youth parliaments affiliated with national parliaments. Young people can also serve as members of youth committees and commissions about youth-related issues in local or national governments.

Social capital

Implement mentoring programmes. These programmes provide guidance and support to young people in need to encourage behavioural change. Mentoring provides the young individual with a role model that guides his/her social, professional and academic life.

Make young people aware of the existence of associations in their communities and the importance of getting involved. This could be done, for example, through the organisation of recreational activities; depoliticise the associative life; improve the management and effectiveness of associations through the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and capacity building of members; and build reunion centres and organise leisure activities in associations to arouse the interest of young people.

Strengthen transparency in public life to improve the perception of young people about public institutions and politicians. This could be achieved by establishing a mediator at the level of each ministry to collect complaints from young citizens dissatisfied with the actions of the administration. Such a measure would facilitate dialogue between the public service agents and users. Moreover, bad practices adopted by some of these agents, such as corruption, bribery, discrimination and nepotism, should be severely tackled.

Improve government's communication and engagement with young people. Young people usually believe that youth-oriented policies are few, patchy and badly publicised. Many young people do not have access to the right information and are often excluded from these programmes. It is therefore essential to make information on youth programmes accessible to young people through new media such as the internet, but also using traditional media platforms such as television, fairs in schools and visual campaigns.

Establish official and institutionalised consultations with youth to strengthen the relationship with governments. The representativeness and consequently the legitimacy of the decision-making bodies should be strengthened with a greater. New frameworks and means of expression have to be created so that young people can give their opinions, share their experiences, appreciate their needs as closely as possible to what is at stake in the public debate, and participate actively in decision making. This could be done through youth advisory councils or through the establishment of a youth parliament.

Crime and violence

Reform the juvenile justice system to facilitate the reintegration of young people in conflict with the law. This could be done by creating an information system to monitor the juvenile justice system and social reintegration programmes to identify what works; improving the technical capacities of officials and technical staff working directly with youth in conflict with the law; and increasing funding and support from key actors such as families and communities.

Implement comprehensive safe community-based programmes. These can modify the environment in which young people live and grow up and prevent them from engaging in risky behaviours. The most effective community-based interventions are those that emphasise family interactions and build the skills of a juvenile’s parents or other caretaker. First, governments should strengthen and adapt police response, including setting up targeted police patrols in high-risk areas; second programmes should offer diverse supervised activities for young people living in unsafe neighbourhoods as healthy alternatives to crime and violence. Governments should also invest in local services and infrastructure and restrict access to firearms.

Establish juvenile justice services that support active citizenship among the youth population. These services should focus on risk factors that can be changed, such as low skills, substance abuse, defiant behaviour, and friendships with delinquent peers; tailor each program to the clients’ needs; and 3) focus interventions on higher-risk youth. The rationale is that citizenship cannot be fully exercised in areas where crime rates are high and social capital is low.

Create second chance opportunities. Second chance programmes – which for many are “first chance” programmes – provide hard-to-reach youth with opportunities to develop skills, broaden their social networks, and experience a greater sense of safety and belonging. By successfully responding to the exploitation and abuse of youth, whether from armed groups, criminality, child marriage, or human trafficking, communities not only build individual opportunity but provide a foundation for long term social stability and prosperity.

Guidance note 5: Delivering on youth priorities through national youth policies

Key takeaways

- ❖ Two in three countries globally have adopted a National Youth Policy (or strategy).
- ❖ Youth policies were traditionally never high on national agendas and as such youth strategies and programmes remain under-funded.
- ❖ Lack of co-ordination of actions between youth ministry and other sectoral ministries hinder effective implementation of national youth policies.
- ❖ A national youth policy often stands alone and is not integrated into national development plans.
- ❖ Youth participation in policy processes remains usually at the informing or consultation level but not in joint implementation.
- ❖ No much evidence exists yet on the effectiveness of national youth policies on youth employment or other well-being outcomes.
- ❖ Knowledge about youth-sensitive approaches on health, employment and civic participation will need to be stylised and further shared.

A national youth policy refers to a policy, strategy or law that lays out a comprehensive plan of action across sectors aimed at improving youth well-being. Progress in the formulation of cross-sectoral and integrated national youth policy has been slow, particularly in developing countries, partly because youth policy has traditionally never been high on national agendas. A national youth policy too often stands alone and is not integrated into overall national development plans. Lack of horizontal or vertical co-operation and co-ordination among sectoral actors can and often does distort policy outcomes (OECD, 2017a). Nonetheless, globally, two out of three countries have a National Youth Policy or National Youth Strategy.

Youth issues cut across a number of sectors, and the challenge is to link government agencies responsible for youth with other ministries, such as education, employment and health. The difficulty of coming up with a coherent and multidisciplinary strategy has been the norm rather than the exception in most countries (OECD, 2017a). The Youth Inclusion project's *Youth Well-being Policy Reviews* looked into the institutional and organisational challenges faced by ministries or administrations responsible for implementing national youth policies and/or youth programmes.

Seven out of nine countries studied have a national youth policy: Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Malawi, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Moldova and El Salvador. Common challenges in implementing national youth policies include:

Low national priority: Youth policies were traditionally never high on national agendas and as such youth strategies and programmes remain under-funded. Youth ministries have lower financial capacity than other sectoral ministries making their tasks difficult.

Policy co-ordination: As youth issues are cross-cutting, sectoral ministries are usually responsible for their respective areas (education, health, employment). Ministries of youth have the mandate to coordinate and promote programmes specific for youth, but lack of co-ordination of actions between youth ministry and other sectoral ministries hinder effective implementation of national youth policies.

Policy coherence: A national youth policy often stands alone and is not integrated into national development plans.

Youth participation: Institutional and legal difficulties to involve youth in the formulation and implementation of national youth policy.

Weak evidence of impact: national youth policy is a fairly recent phenomenon. Not much exists in terms of evaluation of national youth policies and youth-specific programmes. Evidence of impact, in particular on employment and SRH, is slowly emerging.

Weak knowledge about youth-sensitive approaches: youth mainstreaming is the new gender mainstreaming and as such, governments and development practitioners are learning new approaches to ensure that employment, health and civic participation programmes are youth-sensitive and benefit the youth population, especially disadvantaged youth.

Table 2.5. National youth policies

	National youth policy (NYP)	Action Plan	Budget	Responsible entity
VNM	Youth Law 2005 Vietnamese Youth Development Strategy 2011-20	Implementation plan 2011-20	Unclear	MOH
KHM	National Youth Development Policy 2011	National Youth Action Plan 2015-18	Unclear (MOEYS 2016 budget: 507 million USD)	MOEYS
CIV	Politique Nationale de la Jeunesse 2016-20 Plan stratégique nationale pour l'emploi des jeunes 2013-17	Travail Budgétisé Annuel (Annual work and budget plan)	32 billion FCFA (2016) 22 billion FCFA (2016)	MPJEJSC AEJ
TGO	Politique Nationale de la Jeunesse 2014-17 (1st adopted in 2007)	Plan d'action opérationnel 2014-2017 Plan stratégique national pour l'emploi des jeunes 2013-2017	25.5 billion FCFA (2016) 2.5% of total expenditure	MDBAJEJ
MWI	National Youth Policy 2013	NA	5.9 billion MWK (2015-16)	MOLYSMD
PER	No NYP	NA		SENAJU
SLV	National Youth Policy 2010-24	National Youth Action Plan 2010-14	Unclear	INJUVE
JOR	National Youth Strategy 2005-09 (extended to 2011)	NA	Unclear (MOY 2017 budget: 23.5 million JOD)	MOY
MDA	National Strategy for Youth Sector Development 2014-20	NA	Unclear	MECR (previously MYS)

Note: MOH : Ministry of Home Affairs. MOEYS: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. MPJEJSC : Ministère de la promotion de la jeunesse, de l'emploi des jeunes et du service civique (Ministry for the promotion of youth, youth employment and civic service). AEJ: Agence Emploi Jeunes (Youth Employment Agency). MDBAJEJ: Ministère du développement à la base, de l'artisanat, de la jeunesse et de l'emploi des jeunes (Ministry of grassroots development, artisans, youth and youth employment). MOLYSMD: Ministry of Labour, Sports, Youth and Manpower Development. SENAJU: Secretaría Nacioanld e la Juventud. INJUVE = Instituto Nacional de la Juventud. MOY : Ministry of Youth. MECR: Minsitry fo Education, Culture and Research. 1 Euro=845.31 MWK. 1 Euro=656 FCFA. 1 Euro=0.87 JOD
Source: Youth Well-being Policy Reviews of Viet Nam (VNM), Cambodia (KHM), Côte d'Ivoire (CIV), Togo (TGO), Malawi (MWI), Peru (PER), El Salvador (SLV), Jordan (JOR) and Moldova (MDA).

Policy recommendations

Adopt a national youth policy. In countries where national youth policies have not been adopted yet, a multi-sectoral programme to support youth would be necessary. This would help raise funds for budgetary support. In fact, in countries that already have a comprehensive strategy for youth as demonstrated by the existence of a national youth policy framework, such youth support programmes can contribute to a more efficient allocation of the available or needed resources to implement the youth strategy. Cross-sectoral co-operation should also be developed with local and regional actors.

Engage in a multi-sectoral youth policy dialogue. Establish inter-ministerial committee co-chaired by youth ministry and the prime minister's office or cross-cutting ministry like planning or finance. This will allow convening power and better co-ordination between line ministries working on youth.

Introduce youth specific performance indicators to monitor youth programmes. The inclusion of youth-specific performance indicators and progressive targets could be

an important way to ensure that youth issues are integrated in the sector policy dialogue and part of the monitoring process. Data will need to be disaggregated, ensuring that youth indicators can be regularly collected and used for the design of policies and programmes, and their monitoring and evaluation.

Conduct impact evaluations of youth programmes, including information on their cost-effectiveness. Proper impact evaluation of youth investments can help understanding whether or not these programmes have been effective and provide the basis for sound policy making and bilateral dialogue. The goal of a quantitative impact evaluation is to attribute specific outcome indicators to a programme in close coordination with leading authorities and building upon (or contributing to) specific youth oriented indicators and targets.

Include youth as main actors in youth programming. Youth concerns, capacities and interests need to be explicitly understood and recognised in the process of problem identification, objective setting and strategy selection in order to accomplish successful interventions. Involving young people in all stages of programming ensures ownership of the process and promotes the social inclusion of youth. In order to do this, it is important to establish a dialogue with youth NGOs and NGOs working with youth issues and to include these organisations in the stakeholder analysis. Internet and new technologies should be used to engage with youth, e.g. social media.

Account for youth differences and commonalities. Youth are a heterogeneous group. Their ability to thrive and succeed is affected by such factors as age (younger and older cohorts have different needs), economic status, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religion. At the same time, the transmission of global culture through media, technology and migration unite youth and promote shared generational experiences. Targeted assessments are needed to develop youth strategies and programmes that respect and respond to different youth needs, capitalise on commonalities, and ensure protection and opportunity for all young people, especially those who are marginalised and vulnerable. Programmes must also respond to existing policy directives related to specific groups such as LGBTI or disabled youth.

Build capacity of youth workers on youth-sensitive approaches. Youth mainstreaming is the new gender mainstreaming. Ministries or national authorities in charge of youth affairs are often new to youth-sensitive approaches and measurements. Disaggregated data for youth by age groups is also not readily available within national statistics office. This makes it difficult to collect basic indicators to measure youth well-being. Youth programming requires understanding youth-specific indicators, knowing how to collect them, selecting key indicators to monitor and evaluate.

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Annex. International frameworks and EU instruments

Over recent years, various policy agendas on youth have been adopted at the international level. This shows that international actors are becoming aware of the fact that adequate frameworks are needed to respond to young people's concerns and needs. The United Nations (UN) has long been committed to youth development through a diverse range of action plans, programmes and activities. The UN World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) provides a policy framework and guidelines for national and international action on youth development around the world and identifies the minimum policy areas in which young people should be specifically considered, such as employment, poverty, leisure, participation, HIV/AIDS, girls and young women, and armed conflict. In addition to the WPAY, various UN agencies have their own thematic frameworks.

At the European level, the framework for co-operation in the youth field has been continuously developed since the European Commission adopted a White Paper on youth in 2001. Young people are more often identified as a priority target group for co-operation activities under geographic and thematic programmes for European Union (EU) external co-operation.

The rights of young people in international legal frameworks

At the international level, there are two legal instruments that set the standard for the protection of youth: the Ibero-American Convention on youth rights⁶ and the African Charter on Youth.⁷ The Ibero-American Convention came into force on 1 March 2008. It recognises young people (15-24) as key actors in development and establishes specific rights for them in a number of categories such as: sexual and reproductive health, political participation and the right to conscientious objection, among others, adopted by the African heads of States in Banjul on 2 July 2006. The Charter defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years old. It provides a strategic framework for developing activities and policies that address major issues affecting youth, including employment, sustainable livelihoods, education, skills development, health, youth participation, national youth policy, peace and security, law enforcement, youth in the diaspora and youth with disabilities.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁸ and the International Covenants on Human Rights, as well as other international human rights treaties and declarations, are also relevant for young people. These include the Convention on the Rights of Persons

⁶ Regional Treaties, Agreements, Declarations and Related, *Ibero-American Convention on Young People's Rights*, October 2005, available at:

[https://www.unicef.org/lac/IberoAmerican_Convention_on_the_Rights_of_Youth\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/lac/IberoAmerican_Convention_on_the_Rights_of_Youth(1).pdf)

⁷ African Union, *African Youth Charter*, 2 July 2006, available at:

http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/african_youth_charter_2006.pdfhttp://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/african_youth_charter_2006.pdf

⁸ UN General Assembly, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948, 217 A (III), available at: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

with Disabilities,⁹ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination¹⁰ and the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 169).

At the European level, Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union of 2000/2007 stipulates that “young people admitted to work must have working conditions appropriate to their age and be protected against economic exploitation and any work likely to harm their safety, health or physical, mental, moral or social development or to interfere with their education.”

Regarding the Council of Europe, there are a number of Conventions that are relevant for youth, such as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the Convention on the Exercise of Children’s Rights and the European Social Charter. Furthermore, the *Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life*, adopted by the Congress of the Council of Europe in 2013, promotes youth participation at the local level and has become a key reference policy document for the political participation of youth. In 2008, the youth ministers of almost 50 European States adopted the Agenda 2020 which established the three priorities of European youth policy until 2020: human rights and democracy; the promotion of cultural diversity; and social inclusion. The general objective of the Agenda 2020 is “ensuring young people’s access to quality education and training, to decent work and living conditions, as well as developing the conditions to enable them to contribute to the development of society”.¹¹

Youth and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Young people are at the heart of the SDG framework. The 2030 Agenda is of particular importance and represents an unprecedented opportunity not only because it has specific goals and targets that are of particular interest to youth development, but also because it recognises the importance of young people as partners towards their implementation. In fact, young people were actively involved in the process of consultations leading to the development of the agenda. These contributions were made formally through the UN Major Group of Children and Youth, and through informal channels. (Mendeley_Dd1mRAhRxDK7FTEkGS8acw)

According to the SDG Agenda, “all people, irrespective of sex, age, race, ethnicity, and persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations, should have access to life-long learning opportunities that help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and to participate fully in society.” The document commits “to provide children and youth with a nurturing environment for the full realisation of their rights and capabilities, helping our countries to reap the demographic dividend including through safe schools and

⁹ UN General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106, available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2.html>

¹⁰ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 660, p. 195

¹¹ Resolution on youth policy of the Council of Europe (Agenda 2020) related to the Youth Ministers conference in Kiev (UA in 2008).

cohesive communities and families.” It describes young people as ‘critical agents of change’ who will find in the new Goals a platform to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world.”

Among the 17 SDGs and their targets, several make explicit reference to young people. This is particularly the case for Goal 4 (a more inclusive and equitable education), Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 8 (decent work and inclusive growth). Moreover, other goals are of particular relevance to youth, for instance, Goal 2 (hunger), which calls for active solutions to address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls; Goal 10 (inequality), which tackles inequality; and Goal 13 (climate change), which call for the promotion of mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on youth.

Youth in EU internal policies

Youth as a concept in European policy is a relatively new phenomenon. It was in 1993 that the Treaty of Maastricht introduced the “youth” field for the first time in EU policies. In its chapter, the Treaty stated that “Community action shall be aimed at encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors”.¹² Until 2001, the activities of European institutions only focused in the implementation of specific youth programmes. But this eventually changed and a new consensus emerged among European nations, highlighting the necessity and importance of working for and with young people. This new idea became a reality when, in 2001, the European Commission (EC) adopted the *White Paper on youth: A new Impetus for European Youth* which is considered the founding document of the framework for European co-operation in the youth field.

Following the White Paper, the European Council established, a Framework for co-operation in the field of youth in 2002. The framework invited member States and the Commission to cooperate on the basis of the open method of coordination (OMC) and by mainstreaming of youth issues in other relevant policies, including policies in the areas of education, lifelong learning, mobility, employment, among others. It included a proposal to increase co-operation in four thematic priority areas: participation, information, voluntary activities and greater understanding and knowledge of youth. In addition to these priority areas, the framework also took into consideration the mobility of young people and recognition of non-formal experiences. Soon after the adoption of the Framework, the European Council proposed common objectives for participation by and information for young people.¹³ In 2004, the European Commission similarly proposed common objectives for a better understanding and knowledge of youth and for voluntary work for young people. Several resolutions for the implementation of these

¹² European Union, *Treaty on European Union (Consolidated Version)*, Title II: Provisions amending the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community with a view to establishing the European Community - Article G - Article G D 36, available at: https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/treaty_on_european_union_en.pdf

¹³ Council resolution of 25 November 2003 on common objectives for participation by and information for young people (2003/C 295/04). See also COM(2003) 184 final

common objectives were issued in the years that followed. In 2005, the Framework was updated to take into account the European Youth Pact.¹⁴

That same year the EC adopted a Resolution that complemented the Framework. The Resolution aimed at promoting active citizenship of young people by establishing a structured dialogue between the European institutions and young people and their organisations on policy actions affecting them.¹⁵ Two other instruments reinforced the Resolution in the following years, a Council Resolution adopted in 2006, to “Implement common objectives for participation by and information of young people in view of promoting their active European citizenship” and the Communication on “Promoting young people’s full participation in education, employment and society” issued in 2007.

In the same year, the Council of Europe (CoE) and the European Union (EU) took the decision of institutionalising the joint work undertaken in the youth field since 1998 by establishing a Framework Partnership Agreement. The Youth Partnership was created as a way to promote development co-operation and create synergies between the two partner institutions. It covers member countries of the European Union and Council of Europe, as well as other signatory states of the European Cultural Convention and neighbouring South Mediterranean countries. In 2014 a new partnership agreement was signed and in 2017 the Youth Partnership decided to focus its work in three specific themes: participation and citizenship, social inclusion and youth at work.

The Treaty of Lisbon, signed by EU member States in 2007, reinforced the relationship between the EU and youth. The Treaty underlines the necessity of investing in youth education and training, conducting an active policy for employment, and fighting social exclusion in order to ensure the sustainability of the EU social model.¹⁶ A Youth Convention, gathering young people and youth organisations, was organised as part of the preparatory work for the Treaty. The results of the Convention influenced Article 165 which encourages the participation and involvement of young people in the democratic life of Europe by enhancing the exchange between European institutions and youth. The Treaty also contains significant developments regarding the relations between European institutions and youth organisations.

The centrality of combating the many dimensions of social exclusion of young people was addressed by the EU in the following years. In 2008, the EU Health Strategy identified the health of children and young people as a priority for action. This strategy was confirmed by the Council resolution on the Health and Well-being of young people. In the same year, the Council resolution on the Participation of young people with fewer opportunities was adopted.¹⁷ This Resolution supported youth in vulnerable situations by helping them to realise their full potential and strengthening their participation in

¹⁴ The Pact considered youth as a valuable asset for societal development. It emphasised the need for having policies and measures addressing the challenges facing young Europeans, as well as the importance of the involvement and participation of young people and their organisations on the development of national reform programmes for the Lisbon strategy and follow-up action.

¹⁵ Addressing the concerns of young people in Europe — implementing the European Pact for Youth and promoting active citizenship (2005/C 292/03)

¹⁶ The European Social Model is a common vision that many European countries have about the way in which society functions within a state. It represents a combination of economic growth with high living standards and good working conditions. According to this model, taxation, the welfare state, public services, employment are essential features of the “social system” of the EU.

¹⁷ http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2008.141.01.0001.01.ENG

society. Later that year, the EC adopted a Renewed Social Agenda which identified “Children and youth” as one of its seven priority areas, recognizing young people as the future of Europe.

In 2009, the EU Council of Youth Ministers adopted the Resolution on a Renewed Framework for European Co-operation in the Youth Field (2010-2018), the so-called EU Youth Strategy. This Resolution built on the European Commission’s Communication of April 2009 “An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering” and on the previous Framework adopted in 2002, the Framework for European Co-operation in Field of Youth for the period 2002-2009. The main objective of the Strategy is to improve co-operation between member States by providing better opportunities for young people. Considering common problems faced by young Europeans, the EU Strategy set common objectives, priorities, working methods and approaches for member States to follow at policy levels.

Young people figure prominently in the “Europe 2020” strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, adopted in June 2010 by the EC. One of the seven Flagship initiatives of the strategy was the “Youth on the move” initiative which was a package of policy initiatives on education and employment for young people in Europe. The Youth on the move campaign ended as of December 2014.

Youth in EU international co-operation

The EC has developed a number of external development co-operation strategies and political priorities particularly pertinent to youth issues, such as:

Education and training

- The Communication on "Education and Training in the context of poverty reduction in Developing Countries" (2002) sets out the Commission's policy and priorities in this domain
- The Commission staff working paper on "More and Better Education in Developing Countries" (2010) highlights the key role of education (not only primary but also post-basic) in reducing poverty

Employment and social cohesion

In recent years, following the European Consensus, a joint effort at EU level has been produced in order to address employment, decent work and social inclusion. Major Communications and staff working papers on the subject are:

- The Communication on “Promoting decent work for all” (2006) - The EU contribution to the implementation of the decent work agenda in the world” (2006)
- The Commission staff working document "Report on the EU contribution to the promotion of decent work in the world"(2008)
- The Commission staff working document on "Promoting employment through EU development cooperation" (2007), which clearly identifies women and young people as the most vulnerable groups
- The Communication on the “Draft 2012 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the renewed framework for European co-operation in the youth field (EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018)” (2012)

Health

External relations in the field of Health are traditionally well developed in the EC as demonstrated by the following documents:

- The Communication "Health and Poverty Reduction in Developing Countries" (2002), which promoted investments in areas of tremendous importance for children and adolescent health.
- The Communication "A Coherent European Policy Framework for External Action to Confront HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis"(2004)
- The Communication "A European Programme for Action to Confront HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis through External Action 2007-2011 (2005)
- The Communication "The EU role in global health"(2010) which highlights the role of young people as stakeholders and the development of education and youth empowerment in health strategies

Gender equality

Ensuring gender equality is an important concern of the EU. The European Consensus (2005) defines gender equality as one of the cross-cutting issue in the EC external aid.

- Among important recent EU policy papers referring to gender equality, it is worth reminding the Communication "Gender Equality and Women Empowerment in Development Cooperation (2007)" and the related Council Conclusions
- In addition, the EC has recently produced the Staff Working Paper "EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development 2010-2015"(2010)
- The recent Council Conclusions "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development EU Plan of Action 2010-2015" (2010) deserves priority attention to girls

The European Union has a long history of international co-operation with non-European Union countries. Collectively, the European Union and its member States remain the largest donor of official development assistance (ODA) in the world in 2015. The EC alone disbursed over EUR 10.3 billion in official development assistance (ODA) and the European Development Fund (EDF) of an amount of EUR 30.5 billion for the period 2014-2020, became fully operational. Moreover, the Commission provided relief assistance of over EUR 1.4 billion including food, shelter, protection, healthcare and clean water to more than 120 million people in over 80 countries.

The New European Consensus of Development

On May 2017, the European Council adopted a new European Consensus on Development.¹⁸ The Consensus is a new framework that guides the action of EU institutions and member States in their co-operation with all developing countries. Youth is identified as one of the key drivers of the strategy with a great cross-cutting

¹⁸ The European Consensus on Development is a shared vision and framework for action for development co-operation for the European Union (EU) and its member States. For more information: <http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove/>

transformative potential, that need to be taken into account in planning and implementing external development co-operation actions. Moreover, young people are seen not just as beneficiaries, but as drivers of development and change.

The Consensus calls the EU and its member States to place more attention on youth and help them improve their future prospects. This means focusing on concrete actions to meet the specific needs of youth by increasing quality employment and entrepreneurship and supporting effective education, vocational training, skills development, and access to digital technologies and services. The EU and its member States are also invited to contribute to youth empowerment and participation, notably through youth organisations, by implementing targeting policies and appropriate investment to promote young people's rights.

EU funding instruments for external co-operation

The EC has a list of funding instruments which rule EU external co-operation with developing and transition countries and provide the legal basis for the implementation of various co-operation programmes. These instruments cover key areas affecting youth issues either directly or indirectly. These funding are divided into those with a geographical focus and those with a thematic one. Each instrument has specific national, regional or thematic programmes.

Geographic instruments

Geographical instruments are used for bilateral and regional co-operation. The extent to which youth and social inclusion-related issues are taken into consideration in the main geographical instruments varies, depending on the instruments and the region's/country's priorities. Below are some examples of geographic instruments and programmes that focus on youth:

- *The European Development Fund (EDF)*: The EDF is the EU's main instrument for providing aid to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and to overseas countries and territories (OCTs). The Cotonou Agreement establishes youth as one of the areas of co-operation between the EU and the ACP countries. A number of initiatives have been implemented for all Cotonou countries. One example is the Intra-ACP academic mobility scheme. The objective of this programme is to increase access to education of ACP students, including those from disadvantaged groups, by promoting co-operation between higher education institutions within the ACP regions and supporting students' mobility. Moreover, the collaboration between the EU and the African region is guided by the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, based on the Joint Africa-Europe Strategy adopted by Heads of Government at the second EU-Africa Summit in 2007.
- *The European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI)*: This instrument provides funding to 16 countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In the field of youth, the ENI funded the Erasmus Mundus and Tempus programmes, active during the period 2007-2013, targeting the ENP countries and Russia. More recently, the ENI has been funding the Eastern Partnership (2014-2020). The EaP is a joint policy initiative that aims to strengthen relations between the EU and six Eastern countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The Partnership has a strong focus on youth, especially under its Thematic Platform 4 "People to people". This platform highlights the necessity of collaborating in the

fields of education, in particular in terms of developing youth's skills, civic engagement and fostering their employability. The ENI also provides financial support to the Regional co-operation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners. The Co-operation has some youth specific programmes, including the Euro-Med Youth Programme which focuses on the mobility of young people, non-formal education and intercultural learning and exchange of knowledge, and the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF) which supports the promotion of educational, protection and engagement opportunities for children and young people.

- *Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI)*: After the EDF, the DCI is the second-largest financial instrument for funding EU development co-operation. It finances both geographic and thematic programmes in areas that affect youth such as education, employment, inclusion, among others. Two thematic programmes with an impact on youth are included in the DCI – the Programme on Global Public Goods and Challenges¹⁹ (GPGC) and the Programme on Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities²⁰ (CSO-LA). Moreover, the DCI provides funding to the new pan-African programme. This programme covers issues linked to gender equality, women empowerment as well as youth. Some of the activities funded by the programme are the Erasmus + programme and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions which foster access to centres of excellence and mobility of students, researchers and qualified persons, with a particular attention to women's access to higher education.

Thematic instruments and programmes

Complementary to the above geographic programmes, the EU supports development through programmes with a specific thematic focus. A number of key youth inclusion dimensions are becoming an important focus under several of these thematic programmes.

- *Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) 2014-2020*: The GPGC supports two specific areas – Health, Education, Knowledge and Skills and Employment, skills, social protection and social inclusion – that aim at enhancing the capacities of developing countries to develop policies that benefit young people and children and that encourage their participation as key actors for development. The Young Mediterranean Voices programme, aimed at facilitating the dialogue between young leaders and civil society representatives, is a key programme in this area.
- *The Partnership Instrument (PI)*: The PI supports the Decent Work Agenda, the Social Protection Floors, the Agenda for new skills and jobs and the development of youth employment and social investment policies. In this context, the PI funds a number of youth initiatives. For instance, together with the U.S State Department, the PI co-funds the Fulbright-Schuman Fellowships Programme.²¹

¹⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/devco-aap-thematic/dci-global-public-goods-and-challenges-gpgc_en

²⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/tags/civil-society-organisations-and-local-authorities-cso-la_en

²¹ http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/2016-aap/20160527_1_a8_-_c_2016_2989_f1_annex_en_v1_p1_850180_en.pdf

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- *The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)*: The EIDHR provides financial assistance to projects in the area of human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms in non-EU countries. Many of EIDHR projects support the reintegration, recovery and rehabilitation of former child soldiers and other youth affected by countries in war by providing training and education on human rights and democratisation. For instance, the Leaders – Young Roma in Action project (LYRA) promotes respect for the human rights of Roma children and youth in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
 - *The Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)*: The IcSP provides support to security initiatives and peace-building activities in partner countries. One of its main objectives is to support individuals and communities resilience to violent extremism propaganda through socio-economic opportunities. This work includes helping young people to build a positive sense of identity and recognize the dangers of terrorism.

Better Policies for Better Youth Livelihoods

A GUIDANCE NOTE FOR DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS

As many as 600 million jobs must be created worldwide over the next decade to keep employment rates at their current level. The employment challenge is particularly pressing in developing countries, where demographic pressures are stronger, wage employment opportunities are scarce and formal job creation is insufficient to give most youth access to decent work. The majority of young people in developing economies are in jobs that fall short of their aspirations. Weak enforcement of labour standards keeps them in low quality jobs and as working poor. In the face of such challenge, governments are promoting youth entrepreneurship programmes in an attempt to create jobs. However, only a tiny portion of young entrepreneurs proves to be successful. The majority remains in subsistence activities, held back by low levels of education, informality, poor physical infrastructure and limited access to finance. There are promising but overlooked opportunities in booming local and regional food markets of developing countries. Turning this potential into real jobs will require substantial, new investment in national and regional food systems – from regulatory mechanisms to infrastructure to improve production, processing and packaging and access to markets. More vibrant, sustainable and inclusive domestic food systems articulated in local value chains may well be one of the few lasting solutions to the persistent challenge rural youth employment.

This report summarises the main findings from the global and country-level research carried out by the Youth Inclusion project between 2014 and 2018. The project worked with nine developing countries (Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Jordan, Malawi, Moldova, Peru, Togo and Viet Nam) to support them in better responding to the aspirations of young people as well as strengthening youth involvement in national development processes. The project shed light on the determinants of youth vulnerabilities and successful transitions, and enhanced national capacities to design evidence-based policies that promote youth inclusion.



This project is co-funded by
the European Union