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USAID/GUINEA YOUTH ASSESSMENT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT

July 29, 2020

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By

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

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

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BDS	Business Development Skills/Services
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CSYA	Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment
DG	Democracy and Governance
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
DO	Development Objective
EG	Economic Growth
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FP	Family Planning
FTF	Feed the Future
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GOG	Government of Guinea
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labor Organization
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
KII	Key Informant Interview
KSA	Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOY	Ministry of Youth and Youth Employment
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PASANDAD	Accelerated Program of Food and Nutritional Security and Sustainable Agriculture
PNDES	National Economic and Social Development Plan
POC	Point of Contact
PRODEG	National Education Program
PYD	Positive Youth Development
SDP	Service Delivery Point
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SOW	Scope of Work
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar
VLSA	Village Savings and Loan Associations
VYA	Very Young Adolescent

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Africa is the youngest continent in the world, with over 200 million citizens aged fifteen to twenty-four years. This figure is projected to double by 2045. In Guinea, 75 percent of the country's thirteen million citizens are under the age of thirty-five.¹ In a society where age commands respect, Guinean youth continue to be marginalized from accessing quality education and health services, finding employment, and participating meaningfully in decision-making. Youth face various challenges that limit their ability to fully participate and benefit from development efforts.



"Without support from the international community, we risk a massive reversal of gains made over the last two decades and an entire generation lost, if not in lives then in rights, opportunities, and dignity,"

Achim Steiner, UNDP administrator, April 2020

To inform the next version of USAID/Guinea Country Development Cooperation Strategy (2020–2025), the Mission decided to conduct a cross-sectoral youth assessment (CSYA) that would identify opportunities for a more strategic engagement of youth in shaping Guinea's journey to self-reliance. This CSYA aimed to capture the experiences, aspirations, challenges, and assets of Guinean youth ages fifteen to thirty-five² and to identify effective programs, organizations, and partnerships supporting youth to reach their full potential. USAID/Guinea will use the findings from this assessment to inform its youth approach by working in greater alignment with the Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework. The findings and recommendations outlined below are based on the primary and secondary data obtained from research conducted between March and May 2020 that included twenty-one key informant interviews (KIIs) and twenty youth-led FGDs with 125 youth in the eight administrative regions of Guinea: Boké, Conakry, Faranah, Kankan, Kindia, Labé, Mamou, and Nzérékoré. Before COVID-19 restrictions took place, the assessment team was able to conduct in-person youth FGDs in all regions except Faranah and Nzérékoré. All KII interviews were conducted remotely.

METHODOLOGY

This assessment used a PYD lens to understand the status and aspirations of Guinean youth in their journey from adolescence to adulthood, a transition that includes starting a productive working life, developing a healthy lifestyle, and exercising citizenship. This assessment focused on the following primary research questions:

1. What are youth life goals, and what are the factors that hinder them from achieving their goals?
2. Which investments by USAID, the government of Guinea (GOG), and other stakeholders (donors, private sector, international organizations) have been important and promising in youth development to date?
3. What do youth development stakeholders perceive as specific, strong opportunities for promoting private-sector engagement in issues impacting youth?
4. What do youth perceive as specific, strong opportunities for advancing self-reliance in Guinea, and how do they envision their role in this journey?

¹ 2018 demographic health survey data.

² Guinea is a signatory to the African Youth Charter, which defines "youth" as fifteen to thirty-five years old.

5. Going forward, how can USAID best address positive youth development in both current and future programming over the next five years?

A full list of secondary questions can be found in Annex A.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

The results of the Guinea CSYA provide insights into different youth cohorts, including vulnerable youth and their experiences accessing education and health services, starting families, finding employment, spending their free time, feeling safe/unsafe, and engaging civically. Highlighted findings are included in the following ‘key takeaways’ box and a fuller explanation of results follows.

Key Takeaways

- Guinean youth vary in terms of the assets they possess; however, the most common gaps are in access to quality education, practical skills, work experience, access to finance, and access to youth-friendly health services.
- A quality, market-driven education is the number-one priority of all surveyed youth. The education-to-employment transition is difficult.
- Youth lack experience and opportunities to obtain practical, hands-on training including internships and apprenticeships.
- Youth lack access to youth-friendly health services related to sexual and reproductive health (SRH), family planning, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- Youth experience many different forms of violence including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), assaults, online harassment, and criminal activities connected to human trafficking.
- Youth crave opportunities for civic engagement, but opportunities are limited due to age discrimination, nepotism, corruption, and a lack of community-level activities.
- Safe spaces are lacking in Guinea, particularly for young women and rural youth.

Characterizing employment for Guinean youth

The Guinean economy is gradually recovering from two major shocks: the Ebola epidemic and a worldwide decline in commodity prices. The economy has been growing at a rate of 6–7 percent annually; however, this relatively high economic growth has not translated into poverty reduction or increased opportunities for youth.

The Guinean youth experience is driven largely by poverty, lack of access to quality, market-driven education and health services, high unemployment, underemployment, and a lack of meaningful inclusion in civic and political life. Unemployed youth are “**stuck**” in the “**waithood**,” the transition from adolescence to adulthood—and they are growing frustrated by the limited number of opportunities in both formal and informal sectors.

Characterizing Guinean Youth

- More than half of Guinea's youth are illiterate.
- Only an average of 35 percent of youth pass the BAC exam each year.¹
- Rural youth have less access to services than urban youth, and many of them continue migrating to Conakry and other cities in search of income, adding stress to an already overwhelmed urban labor market and infrastructure.
- Most youth have no choice but to enter the informal labor market and accept less productive and lower-paid jobs. Moreover, the labor market is marked by high structural unemployment and underemployment.¹
- Unemployment is high among youth at all education levels, and a majority work informally and are underemployed.
- Young Guinean entrepreneurs suffer from a lack of entrepreneurial training, access to capital, market experience, and networks.
- Rural youth, particularly young, rural, female entrepreneurs, experience additional barriers such as unfavorable social and gender norms, pressure of early marriage, teen pregnancy, and domestic violence.

Barriers to youth aspirations and goals

Youth in Guinea have two goals: to have access to a quality education and to find a job that allows them to provide for themselves and their families. The following barriers prevent youth in Guinea from reaching these goals.

The lack of quality education keeps youth from acquiring the skills and practical experience they need to get good employment.

Guinean youth crave access to market-driven education, technical training, practical experience, and entrepreneurial skills. These are assets that they know they need to be successful but that they fail to get in Guinea due to the low quality of education available to most Guineans. The private sector confirms that youth graduating from local schools and universities have low levels of hard and soft skills, including a mismatch in technical skills³ and poor language, writing, analytical, information and communication technology (ICT), critical thinking, and communication skills. Entry-level job seekers usually come with low or no practical training/experience.

The formal engagement of the youth within a private sector is limited as formal job opportunities are very scarce, as are formal internships and apprenticeships.

Youth believe it is a government role to engage with the private sector to create more jobs for the youth, provide youth workforce training, provide funding for tools and equipment, and offer practical, on-the-job experience. This represents sunk costs of upskilling for any potential employer. Several international donors pledged their support to grow a private sector in Guinea (for example, Islamic Development Bank [IsDB]) while other donors strongly advised supporting diversification of the economy and private-sector engagement.

Securing capital or financing remains a major hurdle for Guinean youth, particularly young entrepreneurs.

Some youth who are

³ For example, finding youth with mining equipment operator skills is very hard, and the jobs are usually sourced from international candidates.

underemployed aspire to starting their own businesses. However, formalizing youth businesses in Guinea is difficult, and setting up and managing a new business is a lengthy process with heavy administrative procedures. The business environment is not conducive to youth enterprises, and obtaining financing or capital remains difficult. The result is that the majority of young entrepreneurs operate in the informal sector.

Youth in Guinea suffer from poor-quality health services and poorly equipped, non-youth-friendly health facilities. Only 2 percent of the Guinean population has health insurance. Young people report a lack of safe spaces to access health services, particularly for sexually transmitted diseases. Young women experience significant social and economic barriers limiting their access to SRH and FP services. These limitations, coupled with a culture of early marriage and pressure to have a large family, places additional stressors on the youth population, especially women and girls.

Guinean youth continue to suffer from high rates of early marriages, teen pregnancies, and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). FGM/C rates in Guinea are the second highest in the world, with prevalence ranging from 92 percent for younger youth to 95 percent for older youth cohorts with no differences between rural and urban regions. Child, early, and forced marriages and adolescent pregnancies count among the highest in West Africa, with more than 60 percent of girls being married before the age of eighteen.⁴ Consequently, the adolescent fertility rate is the third highest in West Africa, with 137 out of 1,000 girls giving birth between the ages of fifteen and nineteen. Contraception usage is low, driven by a preference for large families and lack of access to contraceptives.

Overall, youth feel relatively safe in their home communities but report different forms of violence throughout the country. Violence prevents girls from traveling distances to go to school and work and creates barriers to finding good employment for all youth. Youth report higher crime levels in Conakry, where youth are more likely to experience assaults, residential and business burglaries, strikes, and political riots. Guinea's border areas remain porous, and on the eastern border with Mali, rural youth are exposed to criminal and potentially extremist activity. The youth living in the Guinea forest region experience levels of ethnic violence due to overlaps between political affiliation and ethnicity. Young, urban males are more likely to experience street violence connected to political protests. Young females suffer from high levels of FGM/C and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

Guinean youth are looking for safe spaces that allow them to engage and grow.⁵ Safe spaces are necessary for emotional growth and confidence building as well as peer-to-peer communication and opportunities to learn conflict resolution and other communication skills. In some urban areas, government-run youth centers exist (Maisons des Jeunes), but these spaces are missing in rural areas.

Types of Violence Youth Experience

- Assaults and street violence
- Burglaries
- Political riots
- Ethnic violence
- Sexual and gender-based violence
- Cyberbullying
- Sexting
- Online harassment
- Crime related to human trafficking

⁴ 2018 DHS data and World Bank, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.M18.2024.FE.ZS?locations=GN>.

⁵ Safe space - a physical or virtual space, where youth can meet other peers and freely express themselves without fear of retribution and violence and build their social network and support systems.

Youth, particularly young women, are looking for safety in online spaces and need to be trained in those skills.

Youth aspire to be engaged in their communities and with government in decision-making, but issues such as violence and political instrumentalization present barriers to their engagement. Guinea's experience with multiparty politics in recent years has been marked by a rise in ethnic-political tensions,⁶ leading to fears around becoming politically active. Male youth noted they experience political instrumentalization by being financially rewarded for supporting political leaders from their ethnic groups, exposing their lives to danger, rather than voicing their own opinions. Youth are also generally excluded from decision-making due to their age (and lack of respect from the elders) and lack of opportunities to participate in community activities. Youth believe that politicians explore youth frustration for their political gains. Ethnicity/nepotism and corruption interfere with youth development, except for those youth who are connected to strong political or elite networks. Youth are being paid to raise support for their ethnic leaders in pre-election demonstrations, which often end up violent. As a result, the participation rate of young people in community activities is very low.

Despite ongoing exclusion from decision-making, Guinean youth have found ways to be civically engaged. Youth leaders were successful agents of behavior change during the Ebola crisis, and youth served as connectors and peacebuilders promoting social cohesion within and across ethnic groups in Guinea during recent ethnic conflicts.

Youth say that their success is connected to support from parents. Parents in Guinea are being increasingly stretched thin by multiple stressors, such as rising food prices, poverty, unemployment, health issues, and political uncertainty, so they have difficulty providing the positive psychosocial support they normally would. This leaves Guinean youth to figure out life on their own, increasingly through the confusing influences of the internet and social media.

Young women in Guinea also aspire to complete their education and obtain employment, but low rates of school enrollment and gender discrimination limit their chances for educational access and success. The gender gap in educational attainment in Guinea is the third largest in the world.⁷ The primary school enrollment rate for girls is 84 percent. Close to a third of girls (31 percent) are enrolled in secondary education compared to almost half of boys (47 percent).⁸ Girls' and young women's completion rates are undermined by early marriage, teen pregnancy, and late entry into the school system.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Young people in Guinea have displayed perseverance, resilience, and courage despite these challenges. If equipped with appropriate knowledge, skills, and assets, they can contribute immensely to the positive development of their communities. We recommend considering the following opportunities to make a difference in the lives of Guinean youth.

Increase Youth Access to Practical Training. Support programming that integrates hands-on, practical training, apprenticeships, and internships throughout all levels of education (primary, secondary,

⁶ Complex issues of national belonging and ethnic antagonisms were key issues in the 2010 and 2015 elections. Violent clashes between militants from different political parties and/or the armed forces occur regularly during election times. World Bank, 2018.

⁷ World Economic Forum, 2018.

⁸ "Guinea," UNESCO, <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/gn.2014.education.data>.

and tertiary). Improve quality of education by investing in teachers' training at all levels. Focus on connecting class learning with building market relevant skills.

Build Market-Relevant and Soft Skills at All Levels. Weaknesses in the Guinean educational system have led to a lack of hard and soft skills, which is detrimental to economic growth and poverty reduction. The lack of appropriate skills is observed at all levels – primary schools, secondary schools, technical schools (polytechnical lycées), universities, and technical universities. Connect teachers with the private sector to better understand skills supply/demand needs. Integrate soft skills and social–emotional learning throughout education, invest in building soft-skills curricula, and incorporate experience-based learning. Use technology as appropriate to enhance youth learning.

Strengthen Technical and Vocational Education by Investing in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Teachers and TVET Infrastructure, particularly in rural centers focused on agribusiness. Programs need to make the agricultural sector and rural life more attractive for rural youth. Programs should be holistic and address skills-building, market systems, and other barriers faced by rural youth, including access to better education and health services, parental support (so young mothers can attend TVET training), access to rural financing, access to internet (access to both mobile phones and internet networks), as well as incorporate the use of new technologies.

Increase Youth Earnings through Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship. There is a great unmet demand for programs that offer skills, assets, and supports for youth to obtain a stable source of income through self-employment and entrepreneurship in the informal sector. Successful youth livelihood interventions require integrated support using flexible, modular components that can be tailored to the needs of different youth segments. Besides agriculture, other growing sectors recommended for similar interventions include mining, tourism, commerce, handicrafts, and ICT. Provide targeted entrepreneurship training to young people who already run microenterprises, display entrepreneurial characteristics, and are willing to take risks and grow their businesses, potentially employing other youth.

Increase Youth Access to Finance. Youth need access to financial services. Self-employed youth, entrepreneurs, girls, and young women need opportunities to save money for their livelihoods and support their families. Further investigation is needed to identify ways to utilize financing alternatives that support youth livelihoods. The preliminary recommendations emerging from this assessment are to work with savings groups (VSLAs, youth savings groups, women's savings groups), youth-friendly microfinance institutions, value-chain actors who are willing to provide internal credit or pre-financing, and commercial banks where public or private institutions buy down risk of credit for the youth and support matched savings accounts. There is significant space for the government and the financial sector to work together to develop better youth access to financial instruments.

Support Improvements in Business-Enabling Environment. Formalizing business in Guinea is difficult not only for young entrepreneurs but also for established, adult-run businesses. Main constraints to businesses identified by the private sector in Guinea are political instability, customs and trade regulations, theft and disorder, and tax rates. Although the environment has slightly improved in the past five years, the institutional framework is not conducive to private-sector development. Provide support and capacity-building to line ministries and government agencies to improve business environment, particularly for youth-run micro and small enterprises.

Increase Youth Access to SRH Information and Youth-Friendly Services. Invest in school-based SRH education integrated into a broad soft-skills training. Ideally, target very young adolescents (ten to fourteen years old) since early adolescence marks a critical transition between childhood and older adolescence, setting the stage for future SRH and gendered attitudes and behaviors. Invest in platforms discussing SRH, fully engaging the public sector, other donors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs),

and civil society. Provide support to youth-friendly health centers offering integrated adolescent, teen pregnancy, and youth-friendly SRH services. Invest in training of health staff in youth-friendly customer services.

Provide Support to Youth Victims of Gender-Based Violence. Provide support to centers such as service delivery points (SDPs) that provide support to girls and young women in need and that are equipped with post-rape kits. Provide support to centers working with survivors of sexual violence.

Increase Youth Engagement in Community. Foster the development of youth-led community projects while working with youth, parents, elders, government officials, and community and religious leaders. Equip young people with advocacy skills and civic and peacebuilding skills and strengthen youth-focused institutions. Work on the adult–youth power structure. Support capacity-building of line ministries and local NGOs supporting youth engagement.

Invest in Youth Leadership. Given the size of the youth population, youth participation and leadership in public affairs is critical to the future development of Guinea. Meaningful youth engagement and leadership in local and national government institutions will support demand-driven service provision and oversight as well as accountability, leading to development of trust between citizens and the government. Identify and engage young, nonpolitical leaders who are already engaged in their communities as role models.

Provide Youth with Safe Spaces Where They Can Socialize. This could be a physical space or building or a virtual space such as an online chat group in which youth share ideas and experiences, thereby learning from their peers. Encourage government actors to expand youth centers (Maisons des Jeunes) beyond urban areas. Sports also serve as a safe space and vehicle to bring youth together. Besides using them for sports activities and resilience-building, sports centers can also help with development of soft skills.

Apply Holistic, Cross-Sectoral Approaches within Youth Programs. This assessment underscores the cross-sectoral interdependencies of youth success. Youth in Guinea place enormous importance on gaining a market-relevant education that leads to improved livelihoods. Education and livelihoods are interdependent and exigent, but youth’s education and livelihood success are affected by other factors, most notably lack of livelihood opportunities, poor quality of education, early marriage and teenage pregnancy, and poverty that perpetuates a vicious cycle of youth dependence. Youth want to be partners in youth-driven programs in Guinea, not just beneficiaries. To enhance a positive, youth-enabling environment, engage other adult stakeholders, such as parents (who often are youth themselves), teachers, health workers, religious leaders, community leaders, local government officials, elders, and local NGOs, who play important roles in the lives of youth.

Finally, an investment in the youth is essential. **In the post-COVID-19 world**, the strategic investments of international donors such as USAID/Guinea will be imperative to not losing the development gains achieved over the past twenty years.

II. INTRODUCTION

In February 2020, USAID/Guinea commissioned the USAID YouthPower Learning project to conduct a cross-sectoral youth assessment. Using a PYD lens, the assessment sought to better understand the status and aspirations of Guinean youth ages fifteen to thirty-five in their journey from adolescence to adulthood, a transition that includes starting a productive working life, developing a healthy lifestyle, and exercising citizenship. PYD “engages youth along with their families, communities, and governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential. PYD approaches build skills, assets, and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems.”⁹

USAID’s current Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) targets youth by engaging youth organizations across all programs. While there are no stand-alone activities or projects, youth are integrated into all USAID/Guinea programs in health, agriculture, democracy, governance, and conflict mitigation sectors. The current CDCS expires in December 2020.

Findings and recommendations from this assessment will serve as the basis for decisions on strategic planning and future programming targeting or including youth in the 2020–2025 CDCS. The Mission will also use this information to better address PYD in sectoral programs, including identifying opportunities for synergistic effects across programs and/or identifying opportunities for a specific design for youth programs. Understanding the context of youth in Guinea, as well as identifying opportunities for which a PYD approach can strengthen the quality or impact of existing and future programs, will directly benefit the development of the upcoming CDCS.

A. BACKGROUND

Youth in Guinea face a number of challenges, including high levels of unemployment, violence (particularly against women and girls), poverty, political manipulation, migration, low school enrollment rates, high illiteracy rates, and a general sense of disempowerment. In the capital, Conakry, two-thirds of higher education graduates under age thirty are unemployed. Youth are further aggravated by political instability and slow economic transformation. Despite equality under the constitution, women and youth are often treated as second-class citizens and bear the consequences of political and ethnic violence. Whether in modern courts or under customary authority, they receive insufficient protection. Violence against young women includes SGBV, forced marriage, and FGM/C. Guinean women and youth also bear the brunt of poverty. Despite “disempowerment,” Guinean youth have historically been unafraid to express themselves and can play an important role in improving livelihoods and promoting social cohesion within and across ethnic groups.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an analysis of the status and landscape of youth, including their characteristics, aspirations, goals, barriers; youth models and approaches that are currently working well in Guinea; and future opportunities to support youth programming. While USAID defines “youth” as those aged ten to twenty-nine, Guinea is a signatory to the African Youth Charter and therefore defines “youth” as fifteen to thirty-five years old. Therefore, this assessment is focused on the youth between fifteen and thirty-five years old.

⁹ USAID Youthpower.org

The report describes the guiding research questions and assessment methods used and explains the situation of young people in Guinea based on secondary source documents and primary data collection from youth and other key informants. It presents youth priorities, bright spots where youth programming is going well, and opportunities for USAID and other stakeholders to better support youth in achieving positive outcomes.

III. METHODOLOGY

The assessment is based on the PYD framework, which has had a positive impact across an array of outcomes and sectors in the United States and other high-income countries. Donors, governments, practitioners, and policymakers are increasingly looking to PYD to provide more holistic support for youth in low- and middle-income countries.

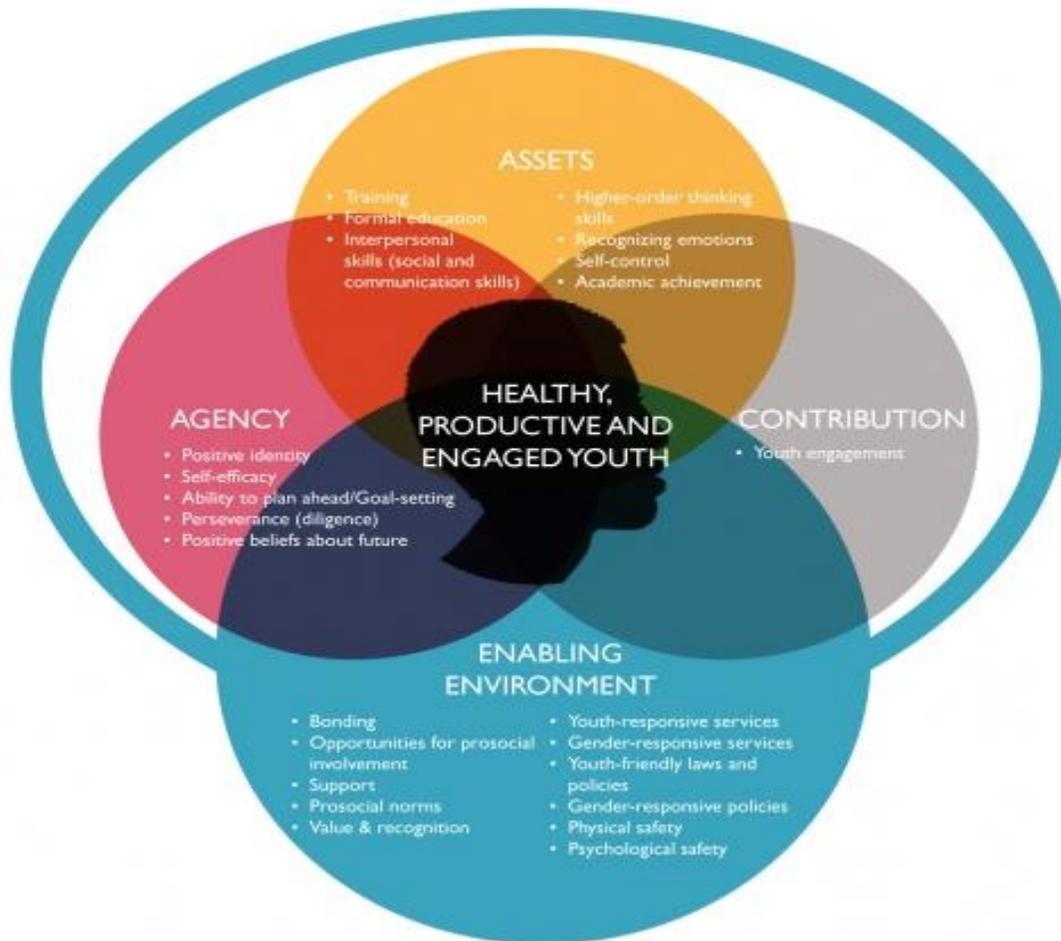
The PYD framework (see Figure 1) offers four domains through which the vision of healthy, productive, and engaged youth can be achieved:

1. *Assets*: Youth have the necessary resources, skills, and competencies to achieve desired outcomes.
2. *Agency*: Youth perceive and can employ their assets and aspirations to influence their own decisions about their lives and set their own goals, as well as to act on those decisions to achieve desired outcomes.
3. *Contribution*: Youth are engaged as a source of change for their own positive development and for that of their communities.
4. *Enabling Environment*: Youth are surrounded by an environment that develops and supports their assets, agency, and access to services and opportunities and that strengthens their ability to avoid risks; stay safe, secure, and protected; and live without fear of violence or retribution.¹⁰

These domains come together to create healthy, educated, productive, and engaged youth who are ready to help their countries in the development process.

¹⁰ An enabling environment encourages and recognizes youth while promoting their social and emotional competence to thrive. The term “environment” includes four key domains: 1) social relationships with peers and adults; 2) normative attitudes, norms, and beliefs; 3) structural laws, policies, programs, services, and systems; and 4) safe, supportive physical spaces.

Figure 1. PYD Framework



The assessment identifies opportunities to optimally support youth and guide USAID/Guinea toward a more strategic engagement with youth as 1) beneficiaries and participants of sustainable, Guinea-owned development solutions that can be brought to scale over time, and 2) key actors empowered to identify and prioritize challenges related to the lack of livelihoods and propose innovative solutions.

A. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The assessment included a list of five primary research questions with fifty-four secondary research questions that are addressed throughout the report. A full list of research questions is found in Annex A. The Mission identified the following primary research questions:

1. What are youth life goals, and what are the factors that hinder them from achieving their goals?
2. Which investments by USAID, the GOG, and other stakeholders (donors, private sector, international organizations) have been important and promising in youth development to date?
3. What do youth development stakeholders perceive as specific, strong opportunities for promoting private-sector engagement in issues impacting youth?

4. What do youth perceive as specific, strong opportunities for advancing self-reliance in Guinea, and how do they envision their role in this journey?
5. How can USAID best address PYD in both current and future programming over the next five years?

B. DATA COLLECTION

The assessment team conducted a desk review of fifty-one documents, twenty-one KIIs with various stakeholders, and twenty youth-led FGDs, which reached 125 youth (64 males, 61 females). See Annex B for a list of organizations included in the KIIs. The assessment team collected data from eight administrative regions representing both urban and rural contexts to capture a range of youth opinions and experiences across the country: Conakry, Boké, Kindia, Mamou, Labé, Kankan, Faranah, and Nzérékoré.

Criteria for field site selection

Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the team was not able to conduct in-person FGDs in the regions of Faranah and Nzérékoré. Therefore, the FGDs for these regions were conducted remotely. Within each region, the team selected two sites based on physical accessibility (at least fair road conditions and security/safety considerations), concentration of youth, and diversity of socioeconomic characteristics among the total sample population (e.g., rural/urban, education level). See Annex C for more details on FGDs disaggregated by region, sex, age, and rural/urban location.

Youth FGD respondent recruitment strategy

Given COVID-19 restrictions, the focus groups consisted of no more than six to eight youth participants to minimize risk of infection. The small groups, known as “youth cohorts” or “youth segments,” represented relatively homogenous backgrounds. “Youth segmentation” means that the research (and the project) acknowledges different groups of youth by key defining characteristics, such as gender, age subgroups, education level, economic background, ethnicity/religion, community, disability, or other salient factors. Health Focus Guinée, our local research partner, led the selection of youth in consultation with local youth-led associations, NGOs, and youth umbrella organizations.

To capture information about the fifteen-to-seventeen-year-old age cohort, the assessment team conducted KIIs with youth-serving organizations working with younger adolescents and held dedicated FGDs with near peers who were ages eighteen to nineteen to inquire about their experiences, and/or the experiences of friends/family, as younger adolescents. Consent restrictions for the under-eighteen age group prevented the assessment team from speaking with them directly.

Assessment limitations

The research team had to remain flexible as the primary data were collected during the volatile time of Guinea’s 2020 parliamentary elections and the COVID-19 pandemic. The elections were held on March 22, 2020, after being postponed four times from the original date in January 2020. The postelection violence delayed some of the data collection activities. Also, the team had to adjust the data collection approach in the middle of our field work due to COVID-19 travel and social-distancing restrictions. After several weeks of adjustments, the team completed the majority of the planned KIIs remotely via Skype and phone. We conducted youth FGDs in person in all regions but Faranah and Nzérékoré. FGDs in those two regions were conducted remotely.

IV. THE SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN GUINEA

This section examines secondary sources on a variety of topics, including youth demographics; education; employment, entrepreneurship, and agriculture; health; safety and security; youth participation and civic engagement; and vulnerabilities of youth.

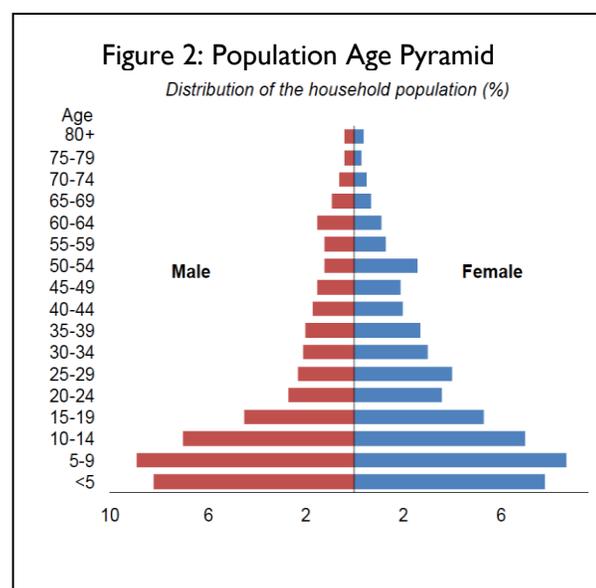
A. YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS IN GUINEA

For the past five years, the Guinean economy has been gradually recovering from two major shocks—the 2014–2015 Ebola epidemic and the worldwide decline of commodity prices. During this period, the Guinean economy experienced a strong rebound, growing at 7.3 percent annually,¹¹ and was projected to grow by an average of 6 percent until 2023.¹² Unfortunately, this relatively high economic growth did not translate into poverty reduction or benefits to the youth. In addition, the economic growth projections will most likely change due to the massive damage to the global economy caused by the COVID-19 economic slowdown. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has estimated that nearly half the jobs in Africa could be lost post-COVID-19.¹³

Guinea has a youthful demographic similar to other sub-Saharan African countries. With a total population of about 13 million in 2020,¹⁴ Guinea’s population structure is composed predominantly of children and youth under thirty-five years of age. In fact, young people and children aged thirty-five years and below make up close to 75 percent of the total population. Within the 75 percent, youth aged fifteen to thirty-five make up approximately 28 percent of the population.¹⁵ See Figure 2.

By 2024, the general population of Guinea is projected to reach just over 14 million people, with an annual growth rate of 2.8 percent and a gender breakdown of 53 percent female and 47 percent male.¹⁶

Poverty and Food Insecurity. Poverty is linked to a lack of education. According to a World Bank report,¹⁷ low-educated Guinean households represent nearly 80 percent of the total poor population. Approximately 60 percent of these households are considered to be below the poverty level. Post-Ebola social losses resulting from the outbreak exacerbated poverty,¹⁸ so it is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will lead to increased levels



¹¹ “Guinea GDP Annual Growth Rate,” Trading Economics, <https://tradingeconomics.com/guinea/gdp-growth-annual>.

¹² WB GDP growth and WB Country Partnership Framework 2018–2023.

¹³ Carin Smith, “Nearly Half of Jobs in Africa Could Be Lost Due to Coronavirus, UN Warns,” *fin24*, March 30, 2020, <https://www.fin24.com/Economy/Africa/nearly-half-of-jobs-in-africa-could-be-lost-due-to-coronavirus-un-warns-20200330>.

¹⁴ “Guinea Population,” World Population Review, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/guinea-population/>.

¹⁵ 2018 DHS data.

¹⁶ *Country Strategy, 2019–2024* (Conakry: Plan International Guinea, 2019).

¹⁷ Household heads with no education have a poverty rate of nearly three times that of households where the heads had some higher education. *Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

¹⁸ A post-Ebola survey of nearly 2,500 households conducted in September 2015 showed that poverty has increased, with economic damage outlasting the immediate epidemiological effects. The southeast of the country and the areas around

of poverty. Food insecurity, which is directly linked to extreme poverty, is relatively high in Guinea. Approximately 85 percent of the food-insecure population account for the bottom 40 percent¹⁹ of the population. The poorest populations tend to be agricultural workers (66 percent), followed by workers engaged in commerce and industries (36 percent), with public-sector employees' poverty level at 25 percent.²⁰ It is likely that in post-COVID-19, rural youth engaged in agriculture will be hardest hit. There is a “triple strike” for low-educated youth living in rural areas and engaged in agriculture. These are the poorest households in the country.

Urbanization. In 2018, slightly over one-third of the Guinean population lived in the cities.²¹ Youth are moving from rural areas, where they work primarily in agriculture due to a lack of livelihood opportunities, for better access to education and health services. However, rural youth lack the skills necessary to obtain a better livelihood in urban areas, where unemployment is already high, and nepotism makes opportunities for migrant youth nearly impossible to acquire. This situation leads to a “transfer of poverty” and increased youth frustration. Unregulated and rapid urbanization, an undiversified labor market, and demographic stresses conspire to produce youth frustrations and grievances and lead to sociopolitical unrest similar to recent events in Dalaba.²²

Migration. Unemployment, extreme poverty, and the lack of socioeconomic opportunities are the main drivers of youth migration. In addition, Guinean cities' infrastructure is poorly planned and unable to cope with ongoing youth migration. Between 2015 and 2018, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) recorded over twenty-five thousand Guinean youth migrants (ages fifteen to twenty-four) in Italy's borders. Research shows that close to one-third (27 percent) of young, returned migrants are from Conakry, but half of them settle back in the capital upon their return (51 percent). Sixty percent of young migrants reached the secondary level of education.²³ The primary reason for international youth migration is the mismatch between their education and labor market needs. There is a loss of confidence in the education institutions.²⁴ Two-thirds of young migrants (67 percent) were born into polygamous families.

Polygamous Marriages. Less than half of women in Guinea live in polygamous marriages (42 percent), and this trend has been declining for past twenty years. Urban women marry later than rural women; median ages are 20.0 and 17.8 years, respectively.²⁵

Early Marriages. Girls and young women marry early. Half of girls get married before the age of eighteen.²⁶ The median age for girls and young women to marry is 18.5 years old. The median age for

Conakry were particularly badly affected. Urban employment decreased, and rural incomes declined. Ali Zafar et al., *Republic of Guinea: Socioeconomic Impact of Ebola using Mobile Phone*, Report No ACS18659 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2016).

¹⁹ *Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

²⁰ *World Bank Report on Employment, Productivity, and Youth Inclusion* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2019).

²¹ “Population urbaine (% de la population totale), Guinée,” *Perspective monde*, <http://perspective.usherbrooke.ca/bilan/tend/GIN/fr/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS.html>.

²² In Dalaba, the youth drove all militaries out of the city and destroyed most of the administrative buildings. Although the demonstration was led mainly by the youth, there was some element of adult influence.

²³ “Migrate to Succeed: Understanding Youth Migration Trajectories in Guinea,” IOM, November 2019.

²⁴ *Ibid.* Sixty-nine percent of young migrants highlighted the lack of economic opportunities as the main reason for leaving the country to go to Europe.

²⁵ 2018 DHS data; 53 percent of Guinean women lived in polygamous marriages in 2005 compared to 42 percent in 2018.

²⁶ In 2016, among women aged twenty to twenty-four years, 51 percent were first married or in a union before the age of eighteen. UNICEF global databases and 2018 DHS data.

young men to marry is 27.5 years old. Early marriages and adolescent pregnancies count among the highest in West Africa and in the world.²⁷

Gender. The gender gap in educational attainment is the third largest in the world.²⁸ The primary school enrollment rate for girls is 82 percent, compared to 93 percent for boys.²⁹ One-third of girls are enrolled in secondary schools compared to 47 percent for boys.³⁰ Low rates of school enrollment and gender discrimination limit girls' and young women's chance for educational access and success. They are undermined as well by the overall quality of education in terms of facilities, teachers' training, content, and methodology. Girls' completion rates are also believed to be undermined by social and gender roles, child marriage, and adolescent pregnancy.³¹

The gender gap is present in access to finances, land, electricity, media, and internet; phone ownership; and how girls and young women spend their free time. Young women have difficulties inheriting land as it is passed on to the sons in the family; they are also less likely to have and use a bank account (8 percent male versus 4 percent female). Additionally, twice as many men use the internet (32 percent) versus women (15 percent), more than half of women are not exposed to any media (57 percent) versus men (41 percent), and close to 87 percent of men own cell phones versus 69 percent of women. Girls and young women are also more likely to engage in household duties and taking care of siblings and elders, which leads to less time to prepare for school, contributing to the growing gender gap from the early age.

Infrastructure, Electricity, and Roads. Access to basic services is low, with a small share of the population having access to electricity. Approximately 87 percent of men reported access to electricity while only 23 percent of women had access.³² One-third of the rural population have access to improved sanitation (33 percent).³³ According to the 2015–2016 Global Competitiveness Report, firms identified the inadequate supply of infrastructure as the third most problematic factor for doing business in Guinea. Moreover, Guinea had the worst ranking in terms of overall quality of infrastructure due to the poor quality of roads, ports, transport infrastructure, and electricity. Rural roads are in a dilapidated condition, limiting young farmers' access to markets. Guinean agribusinesses have a perception of being particularly affected by poor transport infrastructure along critical corridors, such as the Kindia–Conakry axis.³⁴

²⁷ *Country Strategy, 2019–2024* (Conakry: Plan International Guinea, 2019).

²⁸ World Economic Forum, 2018.

²⁹ Ministry of Education, Annual Statistics on Primary Education, 2018/19 school year

³⁰ UNESCO data.

³¹ *Country Strategy, 2019–2024* (Conakry: Plan International Guinea, 2019).

³² 2018 DHS data.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ *Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

B. YOUTH AND EDUCATION

Education and Poverty in Guinea

Between 1990 and 2017, Guinea's life expectancy at birth increased by 10.7 years, mean years of schooling increased by 1.4 years, and expected years of schooling increased by 6.2 years. While Guinea's GNI per capita increased by about 70.8 percent between 1990 and 2017, this did not translate into the general reduction of poverty. UNDP, 2018 Human Development Index

Access and Quality of Education. Despite progress achieved for the past fifteen years, much remains to be done to improve the quality, equity, and efficiency of education. Education is free and compulsory between the ages of seven and thirteen. Children attend six years of primary, four years of lower secondary, and three years of upper secondary school. Guinea's nine-year compulsory education was established in 2014. However, the actual years of schooling have been quite stagnant, averaging 2.7 years. The low levels of school acquisition are raising concerns among parents, children, and youth around the quality of education.³⁵

In reality, few children complete their schooling. More than **half of Guinea's youth are illiterate**, and even among successful candidates

who earn a baccalaureate, the high school diploma, only an average of 35 percent pass the BAC exam each year. The illiteracy rate increases with the age of the youth cohort. Half of thirty- to thirty-four-year-olds are illiterate (51 percent), while one-third of fifteen- to nineteen-year-olds are illiterate (31 percent). The lowest illiteracy levels are reported in Conakry (31.9 percent), with the highest in rural areas (73.2 percent).³⁶

Education Completion Levels by Gender. Completion levels are highest among the youngest youth cohorts, suggesting that education quality may be improving. The gender gap in educational attainment is the third largest in the world.³⁷ The primary school enrollment rate for girls is 69.4 percent (compared to 84 percent for boys), and only 26.2 percent of girls are enrolled in secondary school (compared to 39.6 percent for boys).³⁸ Direct and indirect costs, low rates of pre-school enrollment, and gender discrimination all limit the chances of girls' educational access and success. Girls' completion rates are affected by social and gender norms, child marriage, and adolescent pregnancy³⁹ as well as the overall quality of education, including facilities (including sanitation facilities), content, and pedagogical delivery.

Reasons for Guinea Youth Dissatisfaction with Education

- Lack of books and supplies
- Large classroom sizes
- High school cost
- Lack of teachers' training
- Teacher absenteeism
- Low quality of education

Education-to-Employment Transition. To increase opportunities for both the present and future Guinean workforce, it is imperative to focus on the quality of education. It is the way to ensure the development of valuable technical, market-relevant skills and soft skills among students. Currently, it takes a long time for Guinean graduates to find jobs. Only a third of the most educated Guinean youth find jobs

³⁵ UNDP data.

³⁶ 2018 DHS data.

³⁷ *Country Strategy, 2019–2024* (Conakry: Plan International Guinea, 2019).

³⁸ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) 2013.

³⁹ *Country Plan 2013–2017* (New York: UNICEF Guinea, 2013).

Challenges to Youth Employment

- Education disconnected from job market needs at all education levels.
- No connection between education sector and employers.
- No functioning labor market information system.
- No labor market survey that includes future trends and employment opportunities.
- Nepotism; jobs are mostly acquired through family connections and word-of-mouth.
- Lack of soft skills such as problem-solving and planning, social interaction and teamwork, conflict resolution, time management, communication, and positive self-concept (including gender equality and positive masculinity).
- Lack of pre-employment competencies such as preparing for interviews, completing CVs and applications, professional attitudes and behaviors, being an employee, and customer service.

upon graduation, and for most, finding a job can take years.⁴⁰ Employer surveys show that youth with technical and professional degrees (for example, veterinary doctors) are likely to wait over a year to find a job, and a third of youth with a lower professional degree (for example, journalists) wait for over two years. Similarly, almost half of high school graduates cannot find jobs within one year of graduation, despite the relatively low expectations of employers in the work force.⁴¹ This is an indication that the transition from school to work is hard for young Guineans.

C. EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND AGRICULTURE

In West Africa, most young people and wider society only recognize a job as a formal position that offers an individual and family status and a sustained and sufficient source of income.⁴² The idea of a formal job is characterized by a contract, a regular salary, social security, income tax, and perhaps some additional benefits providing a certain level of security. However, these types of formal jobs in the Guinean economy are rare and are usually associated with a public sector, large, formal private companies, or international organizations. Only 5 percent of Guinea's job market is in the formal sector.⁴³

It is estimated that over 60 percent of young Guinean graduates are unemployed.⁴⁴ This statistic suggests very high levels of unemployment, but in reality, many young people are occupied/earning their living. Few young people in Guinea have the luxury of idleness, and the vast majority work to feed, shelter, and clothe themselves, often simultaneously contributing to family welfare. The "unemployed" majority are either employed in agriculture (small-scale family farms) or in the informal sector (informal household enterprises).⁴⁵ DHS data in 2018 revealed that 66 percent of women and 81 percent of men ages fifteen to forty-nine "worked" during the seven days preceding the survey.

⁴⁰ World Bank Systematic Country Development Report 2018 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Van Gyampo and Obeng Odoom, 2013; Kakwagh and Ikwuba, 2010.

⁴³ Guinea and SDG reporting. Ninety-five percent of the labor market is dominated by the informal sector. The social protection systems are exclusively reserved for employees in the formal sector. Less than 3 percent of the Guinean population is covered by social protection.

⁴⁴ Guinea: Facilitating Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2019).

⁴⁵ Rethinking Youth, Livelihoods, and Fragility in West Africa: One Size Doesn't Fit All (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2015).

Employment

For the past twenty years, the Guinean economy has experienced slow structural transformation characterized by low agricultural productivity and a rapidly growing informal sector. The gap between education and training received by young people and the skills demanded by the job market have continued to grow, representing a big challenge for employers and a source of frustration for young jobseekers. In fact, educated youth face higher rates of unemployment than their lower educated peers: secondary education or more (45 percent); primary educated (30 percent); no education (23 percent).⁴⁶ Additionally, unemployment rates in urban areas average 36 percent for females and 25 percent for males. The unemployment rates in rural areas amount to 25 percent for females and 7 percent for males.⁴⁷

Existing Educational Institutions, Universities, and TVET Centers Fail to Meet the Needs of Youth and the Market. The curricula are too theoretical, outdated, and unaccompanied by practical training. There is a lack of tools and materials in the laboratories and workshops. The GOG is aware and is working with some donors on tertiary education reforms to close the vast skills gaps in science, technology, math, and engineering.⁴⁸ As per the World Bank Employer Survey, businesses in the agriculture sector recommended focusing on skills development in the following areas: 90 percent of agricultural cooperatives suggested greater investment at the university level and in agricultural skills training at the higher levels. In agriculture, 14 percent of cooperatives currently provide skills training for new hires, and 60 percent would like to. In other sectors—70 percent of government workers, 40 percent of construction workers, and 30 percent of workers in manufacturing and commerce—undertake initial on-the-job training. The average training duration is eighteen months. This is generally funded by employers, but occasionally by employees.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ 2018 DHS data.

⁴⁷ 2018 DHS data.

⁴⁸ *Guinea—Stepping Up Skills Project (English)* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2014).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Challenges to Youth Entrepreneurship

- Lack of entrepreneurship training including market assessment and analysis, marketing and customer service, operations and management, production and quality control, financial literacy, and financial management
- Disrupted knowledge-sharing from one generation to the next
- Lack of financing and business-enabling environment
- Corrupt practices and nepotism
- Lack of coaching and mentoring
- Lack of access to information
- Poor infrastructure

Entrepreneurship/Self-Employment

Poor numeracy and literacy skills, low levels and quality of secondary and tertiary education and technical education, and high dropout rates hinder development of entrepreneurship and ability of young Guineans to compete in local and regional markets. The current education system does not focus on building an entrepreneurial mindset and soft skills or providing practical, hands-on experience. Instead, it focuses on preparing students for employment in the formal sector, which is extremely limited. Nevertheless, **access to and cultivation of entrepreneurship opportunities** is one of the most critical youth assets. The majority of young Guinean entrepreneurs remain informal as the process of setting up and managing a business is very lengthy, with heavy administrative procedures.⁵⁰

Young Guinean **entrepreneurs** suffer from a lack of **access to capital, experience, and networks** in addition to having **low-quality education and skills gaps**. Rural youth, particularly young, rural, female entrepreneurs, experience additional barriers such as unfavorable social and gender norms, pressure of early marriage, and domestic violence.

Access to Finance. The limited access to networks plays itself out in a fundamental scarcity of capital. Securing financing remains a major hurdle for Guinean youth and particularly for young entrepreneurs. According to a business executives survey carried out for the *Global Competitiveness Report 2015–2016*, Guinean

respondents ranked access to finance as the most problematic factor for doing business. Bank accessibility is low, with only 1.9 branches per 100,000—most of which are mainly concentrated in urban areas. Compared to sub-Saharan Africa, fewer Guinean firms have a bank loan/credit line (3.9 percent of firms in Guinea compared to 22.8 percent in sub-Saharan Africa). Long-term financing is virtually unavailable in the country, and mobile banking is in its infancy, its substantial potential notwithstanding. Nominal interest rates are prohibitive, reaching 22 percent annually. Microfinance, for which there is considerable demand and potential, suffers from a poor regulatory regime and low coverage.⁵¹ The development of a range of financial instruments that consider the type of entrepreneur, enterprise, and capital needed would provide

⁵⁰ In ease of doing business, Guinea scores 156 out of 190 countries. The private sector in Guinea is adversely impacted by bad governance in a multitude of ways. Guinea does not rank highly in many areas of the IFC's Doing Business surveys. Its performance with regard to many indicators, especially the time required to execute a contract and the time required to register property, is poor. According to the 2016 Enterprise Survey, the main constraints identified by the private sector in Guinea are political instability, customs and trade regulations, theft and disorder, and tax rates.

⁵¹ *Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

young entrepreneurs with more direct access to funding and lessen their reliance on personal and family networks,⁵² thus increasing their potential to grow their businesses.

Poor Infrastructure. According to the 2015–2016 *Global Competitiveness Report*, firms identified the inadequate supply of infrastructure as the third most problematic factor for doing business in Guinea. Moreover, Guinea had the worst ranking in terms of overall quality of infrastructure due to the poor quality of roads, ports, transport infrastructure, and electricity. Rural roads are in a dilapidated condition, limiting young farmers’ access to markets. Access to electricity is extremely low in both rural (3 percent) and urban areas (11 percent), and power outages are common. Guinean agribusinesses are particularly affected by poor transport infrastructure along critical corridors, such as the Kindia–Conakry axis.⁵³

Agriculture

Challenges for Young Farmers

- Lack of access to land ownership, particularly for young women
- Lack of access to finance
- Lack of access to entrepreneurship training
- Limited experience with modern agriculture and irrigation practices
- Low protection against subsidized imports
- Limited connection to markets, buyers, intermediaries, and information

Agriculture remains the main source of employment for rural youth in Guinea. The sector accounts for 20 percent of GDP but involves over 70 percent of the population. Although agriculture labor productivity has been steadily increasing for the past twenty years, agricultural productivity per worker in Guinea is half that of Senegal and one-fourth that of Mali.⁵⁴ Agriculture in Guinea provides income for 57 percent of rural households and employs 52 percent of the rural workforce.

Cultivable land amounts to 6.2 million hectares, of which only 25 percent is farmed. Despite this high potential, the agricultural sector remains unproductive, characterized by low use of machinery and irrigation and shortage of technical skills, management capabilities, tools, and qualified labor.⁵⁵ Relatively few Guinean households are using modern farming practices. Production is mainly intended to meet the household’s food needs.

Skills Gap. The poor technical skills of most young farmers may explain in part the low use of modern technologies and inputs, especially since their technical knowledge is not updated and extension services are

limited. Young farmers demonstrate limited experience with modern agriculture and irrigation practices such as nutrition-sensitive/climate-smart agriculture, animal fattening/breeding, paraveterinary skills, off-farm food transformation, animal butchering, installation of irrigation systems, water points for animals, and potable water pump/distribution system maintenance.

Despite the existence of agricultural schools and professional training centers, few young farmers have modern agriculture competencies, and few graduates from agricultural schools/centers work in the agricultural sector. Young farmers also have limited knowledge of business, and decisions are made mostly based on the family’s subsistence needs rather than a broader business model. Furthermore, the lack of

⁵² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Youth Report 2016* (New York: United Nations, 2016).

⁵³ Klaus Schwab, ed., *Global Competitiveness Report 2015–2016* (Geneva: World Economic Forum; 2015).

⁵⁴ *Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

business skills prevents young farmers from obtaining information on markets and entering into business relationships with big clients (such as hotels and restaurants), leaving them at the mercy of traders and intermediaries.⁵⁶ They also need to compete against some subsidized, imported inputs (inputs from Morocco were mentioned by surveyed youth).

D. YOUTH AND HEALTH

Guinea has poor youth health outcomes, which can be attributed to a weak public health system that is inaccessible, inequitable, and inefficient.⁵⁷ Young people report a lack of safe spaces in which to access health services, particularly for SRH and STDs. Access to health facilities is also hindered by high fees relative to incomes and distance, with large disparities between rural and urban areas and across regions. About 34 percent of sick individuals fail to visit a health center due to high medical costs.⁵⁸ Malnutrition and stunting continue to be widespread,⁵⁹ especially in rural areas. Rates of FGM/C; child, early, and forced marriages; and adolescent pregnancies continue to be some of the highest in the world. The risk of epidemic disease outbreaks (such as Ebola, cholera, Lassa fever, and yellow fever) remains high.

Family and Reproductive Health Care. Young women experience significant social and economic barriers limiting their access to family and reproductive health and FP services. All adolescents lack access to SRH education prior to become sexually active. DHS data from 2018 confirm that among adolescents aged fifteen to nineteen, 13 percent of girls and 6 percent of boys had their first sexual intercourse before the age of fifteen. In the same age group, 11 percent of girls were married and 4 percent had a child before reaching the age of fifteen. The proportion of adolescents who have already started their fertile life increases rapidly with age, from 4 percent at the age of fifteen to **52 percent at the age of nineteen**, at which point almost half (47 percent) of young girls have already had at least one child.

FGM/C rates are the second highest in the world. According to 2018 DHS data, the prevalence rate for the youngest girls (ages fifteen to nineteen) is 92 percent, peaking at 95 percent for the oldest female cohort (ages thirty to thirty-four).⁶⁰ The prevalence varies for different regions, with the highest levels in Kindia (98 percent) and the lowest in Labé and Nzérékoré (84 percent). There is no significant difference between urban and rural communities, and this practice affects all religious affiliations. It is anchored in social norms, especially at the level of rites initiation, i.e., transition from childhood to adolescence and adulthood and, in certain communities, marks the moment for young women to enter the workforce.⁶¹ Fear of being excluded from the community and the need to preserve family reputation keep the practice alive. Affected girls and young women face infection and problems with menstruating and are at heightened risk of obstructed labor and death during childbirth.

Teen Pregnancy and Family Planning. Between 2012 and 2018, Guinea experienced a decrease in teen pregnancy and an increase in the use of modern family-planning methods, which is a promising trend. According to 2018 DHS data, the percentage of adolescent girls aged fifteen to nineteen who have already started their reproductive life has decreased from 34 percent in 2012 to 26 percent in 2018. Teenage

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ *Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ A 2015 World Food Program (WFP) study indicated that about 17.5 percent of the Guinean population is food insecure. A 2015 WFP comprehensive nutrition survey highlighted that the chronic malnutrition rate in Guinea is around 25.9 percent.

⁶⁰ According to 2018 DHS data, the FGM/C prevalence is at 91.7 percent for the fifteen-to-nineteen-year-old age cohort, 94.4 percent for twenty- to twenty-four-year-olds, and 95 percent for twenty-five- to thirty-five-year-olds.

⁶¹ *Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

pregnancy is much higher in rural areas (33 percent) than in urban areas (17 percent). Use of condoms is low: 18 percent among women and 21 percent among men (ages fifteen to forty-nine). Among women (ages fifteen to forty-nine), 11 percent used a modern family-planning method in 2018 compared to 5 percent in 2012.

Child, Early, and Forced Marriage rates in Guinea count among the highest in West Africa. They are driven primarily by poverty as 64 percent of rural girls and 70 percent of girls living in the poorest quintile households marry before the age of 18.⁶²

HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS knowledge is low; it is associated with stigma, and general awareness is decreasing.⁶³ Twenty-one percent of young women and 25 percent of young men (ages fifteen to twenty-four) have complete knowledge of HIV/AIDS.⁶⁴ Young women ages twenty to twenty-nine have better knowledge of HIV/AIDS than the general population (85 percent). Urban and more educated youth have demonstrated more knowledge. In contrast, the lowest knowledge is observed among young boys ages fifteen to nineteen. Among young men, it is generally noted that the percentage of those who have heard of AIDS tends to increase with age, from 83 percent (ages fifteen to nineteen) to 95 percent (age thirty and above). Half of Guinean men (49 percent) and less than a half of women (43 percent) know about mother-to-child transmission. There is stigma about children and youth living with HIV/AIDS, and 63 percent of the population think HIV-positive and -negative children and youth should not be together in the same school.⁶⁵ Similarly, three-quarters of Guinean women and men would not buy fresh vegetables from a merchant who has HIV/AIDS.

WASH: Hygiene, Sanitation, and Access to Water. Almost the entire urban population has access to improved sources of water (98 percent) compared to 70 percent of the population in rural areas. However, the urban population experiences more frequent water outages (58 percent) compared to rural households (31 percent). About half of Guinean households (52 percent) use improved toilets (33 percent in rural areas, 87 percent in urban areas)⁶⁶. Girls and young women continue to suffer from a lack of access to clean sanitation facilities at school.

Drug Abuse and Tobacco Use. Overall tobacco use is low; only 1 percent of the adult population reported smoking cigarettes or using tobacco in 2018. Use of alcohol by women is not very widespread.⁶⁷ However, a bit more alarming is the drinking situation and use of marijuana among Guinean students. Young males are reported to smoke marijuana, and surveyed youth reported increased drug consumption. There is a lack of reliable and recent data in this area, and there is need for more investigation.⁶⁸

⁶² Guinea voluntary reporting against SDGs, 2018.

⁶³ The percentage of the Guinean population that has heard of HIV/AIDS has decreased from 2012 to 2018: 95 percent to 81 percent for women, and 95 percent to 91 percent for men. 2018 DHS data.

⁶⁴ "Complete knowledge" means youth know that not only regular use of condoms during intercourse but limiting intercourse to only one faithful, noninfected partner will reduce the risk of contracting HIV. They also know that a healthy person can contract HIV and reject the two most common local misconceptions about transmission or prevention of HIV/AIDS. 2018 DHS data.

⁶⁵ Among women and men aged fifteen to forty-nine, 43 percent and 49 percent, respectively, know that a mother can transmit HIV to her child during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding. There is stigma toward children living with HIV: 63 percent of women and 63 percent of men think that HIV-positive children should not go to school with HIV-negative children.

⁶⁶ 2018 DHS data on WASH.

⁶⁷ Only about 1.6 percent of women aged fifteen to forty-nine had had at least one alcoholic drink at any time during the previous month. 2018 DHS data.

⁶⁸ A survey carried out in educational establishments in 2001 reported a drug prevalence rate of 17 percent.

E. YOUTH AND SAFETY AND SECURITY

Depending upon where they live, youth feel more or less safe. There is a considerable amount of crime in Conakry, a city that experiences a wide spectrum of criminal activity ranging from pickpocketing, purse snatching, theft of valuables from vehicles, assaults, and residential burglaries to SGBV, strikes, and political riots. Regions with mining industries have experienced riots as well. Guinea's border areas remain porous. Rural youth may get exposed to criminal activity associated with illegal migration and human trafficking. The youth living in the Guinea forest region experience increased levels of violence due to overlaps in political affiliation, ethnicity, and migration from neighboring countries. Young males experience increased violence during political protests at times of local and national elections. Young females and other marginalized youth continue suffering from high levels of SGBV. The poor quality of the roads in Guinea leads to many motorcycle and car accidents, contributing to death and disability of Guinean youth. Worldwide, the top cause of youth deaths is traffic accidents.

Gender-Based Violence is widespread. Guinea's legal framework provides citizens with a number of mechanisms to solve justice problems. However, local culture considers it unacceptable for a woman to file a complaint against her husband due to domestic violence. If a woman files the complaint, she is immediately ordered by her own family or by other community members who have a certain influence over her to renounce the complaint and resolve the matter informally.⁶⁹ Eight out of ten women are victims of domestic violence.⁷⁰ In 2016, 87 percent of adolescent girls stated that men were justified in beating their wives or partners.⁷¹ According to 2018 DHS data, 67 percent of women and 55 percent of men (ages fifteen to forty-nine) agreed that it is justified for a man to beat his spouse/partner for one of the following reasons: spouse leaves house without permission, neglects care of children, argues, refuses sex, or burns meal.

Political Unrest and Street Violence. High youth unemployment and a lack of economic opportunities is a push factor toward the social unrest and street violence that is experienced by young males.

Online Bullying and Sexting. Surveyed youth reported increased levels of online harassment, bullying, and sexting. Surveyed youth in Labé reported instances of an entire family bearing the consequences of a young daughter's sexting by being moved out of their apartment.

F. YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

It is generally accepted that youth civic participation and political engagement are essential components of a healthy, functioning society. The exclusion of young people from formal political processes threatens the legitimacy of political systems and structures, as a huge cohort remains unrepresented or underrepresented—which, in many cases, leads to alternative means of political engagement. An alternative to positive youth engagement may simply be apathy and disengagement, which remains a significant problem worldwide.⁷²

⁶⁹ *Guinea: Domestic Violence, Including Legislation, Protection Provided to Victims and Support Services* (Ottawa: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2015).

⁷⁰ A 2013 report by Guinea's Ministry of Social Action and Promotion of Women and Children (Ministère de l'Action sociale, de la Promotion féminine et de l'Enfance [MASPFE]); MASPFE's summary of the 2009 national survey findings on gender-based violence.

⁷¹ UNICEF Guinea Statistics, 2016.

⁷² *Enhancing Youth Political Participation throughout the Electoral Cycle: A Good Practice Guide* (New York: United Nations Development Program, 2013): 11, http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/electoral_systemsandprocesses/enhancing-youth-political-participation-throughout-the-electoral.html.

The transition from youth to adulthood marks a key period characterized by greater economic independence, political involvement, and participation in community life. However, the socioeconomic and political environment in which young people live has a serious impact on their ability to engage.⁷³ Given that most people in Guinea are under the age of thirty-five, youth participation and engagement in civic and political issues are critical to individual, community, and national development.

Guinean youth want to be engaged in their communities and in government decision-making beyond issues that affect youth alone. Although ethnicity is socially unproblematic in everyday life, Guinea's experience with multiparty politics in recent years has been marked by a rise in ethnic-political tensions.⁷⁴ Youth feel excluded from leadership roles except in rare cases in which they may have authority regarding a youth-focused issue. Despite this exclusion, Guinean youth have not been afraid to express themselves historically. If the youth are included meaningfully in the dialogue, they can play important roles not only in improving their livelihoods but also by serving as connectors to promote social cohesion within and across ethnic groups.

Youth Participation in Local Governance. Despite the establishment of the National Youth Policy and its focus on youth civic engagement, the youth voice in public policy remains weak. A number of barriers prevent young Guineans from meaningful participation, including a lack of awareness about their potential civic contribution, their lack of capacity to engage local governments, and the lack of a youth-friendly place at the decision-making table where adults listen and consider their input. Young women and vulnerable youth remain on the fringes of political engagement.

Social Cohesion. Despite tensions, the Guinean society displays a strong resilience and social cohesion through traditional community mechanisms such as *sanankounya*, moderate Islam teaching, and cross-religion sharing. Traditional authorities also steadily remind young Guineans of their common history and their ancestors' interethnic pacts. As such, these practices have successfully de-escalated critical situations involving recent ethnic violence.⁷⁵ Young people also successfully play the role of peacebuilders and community connectors in programmatic activities in Guinea forestry.

Access to Phone, Internet, and Computer. Mobile phone penetration is a useful indicator of the potential for economic and political engagement of the youth. Mobile phone penetration in Guinea is relatively high and has been steadily increasing for young women. Four women out of five own a mobile phone; 8.3 percent own a smart phone.⁷⁶ The use of ICTs by young women is strongly linked to their place of residence, their level of education, and the level of economic well-being of the household in which they

The sanankounya (a joking kinship)

This tradition links individuals and groups across ethnic lines by a quasi-kinship alliance, allows joking kin to tease each other abundantly—but forbids them to be angry with one another. People across Guinea practice this widely, relaxing conflictive situations in everyday life. Islam also provides an important spiritual, normative, and cultural framework that most Guineans can commonly relate to. Socioeconomic mechanisms of sharing among families and relatives constitute another important reservoir of resilience.

Republic of Guinea Risk and Resilience Assessment, World Bank, 2017

⁷³ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement* (New York: United Nations, 2016).

⁷⁴ Complex issues of national belonging and ethnic antagonisms were key in the 2010, 2015, and 2020 elections. Violent clashes between militants from different political parties and/or the armed forces occur regularly during election times. World Bank, 2020.

⁷⁵ *Republic of Guinea Risk and Resilience Assessment* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2017).

⁷⁶ Guinea voluntary reporting against SDGs, 2018.

live.⁷⁷ According to 2018 DHS data, fewer than one in ten girls (8 percent) ages fifteen to twenty-four had ever used a computer. One in five young women (19.4 percent) ages fifteen to twenty-four used internet.

Youth Are Engaged through Radio, TV, and Social Media. Radio remains the most important source of information for the public, and the only one to reach the entire country.⁷⁸ According to 2018 DHS data, close to a third of young women (ages fifteen to thirty-five) and half of young men (ages fifteen to thirty-five) are getting their information from **TV or radio**. However, half of young women and 40 percent of young men (ages fifteen to thirty-five) have no access to media. Access to information gets more difficult for rural youth. More than two-thirds of rural young women (71 percent) and half of rural young men have no access to media.⁷⁹ However, the country's growing internet penetration from 0.4 percent in 2010 to 33.0 percent in 2018⁸⁰ is favorable for the free flow of information through online spaces such as blogs and social networks.

G. DEFINING VULNERABLE YOUTH

Guinean youth are not a homogenous group, and it is important to distinguish among different youth cohorts based on their level of assets including level of education, school completion, urban/rural access to services, possessing networks or family support, physical assets (e.g., access to finance, land ownership, livestock, access to phone, access to internet), gender, and disability. The following groups of youth are considered the most vulnerable, based on the results of interviews with key informants:

- **Young boys and girls between the ages of fifteen and nineteen** (especially those living in rural areas), youth with disabilities, and returning migrants are **most vulnerable** and are often excluded from governmental decision-making processes.
- **Girls** tend to drop out of school and marry early, especially girls from polygamous families, who often have fewer opportunities.
- Youth who **drop out of school** tend to find work in the informal sector, and many young people who complete their education find themselves without jobs and are very vulnerable.
- Those who can find jobs are paid less or work fewer hours (**underemployed**) and need to look for additional employment to meet their needs (for example, providing transport such as a moto-taxi).
- **Youth with disabilities** typically do not go to school as schools are not equipped with the necessary materials, personnel, and infrastructure. There are not enough special schools for students with disabilities, such as schools for students with visual impairments (there are only two schools for visually impaired students in Guinea).
- **Youth from rural areas** also fall into the vulnerable category—they are often illiterate (their parents value education to a lesser extent), unemployed, and have less access to internet and social services. Some rural youth may decide to become engaged in agriculture or commerce but often lack the necessary skills to succeed. Both boys and girls who live in rural areas tend to migrate toward urban areas to continue their education in high school or university, as rural areas often lack these opportunities. The quality of education in rural areas is generally lower compared to urban areas. Girls aged eighteen to twenty-four from

⁷⁷ Ibid.

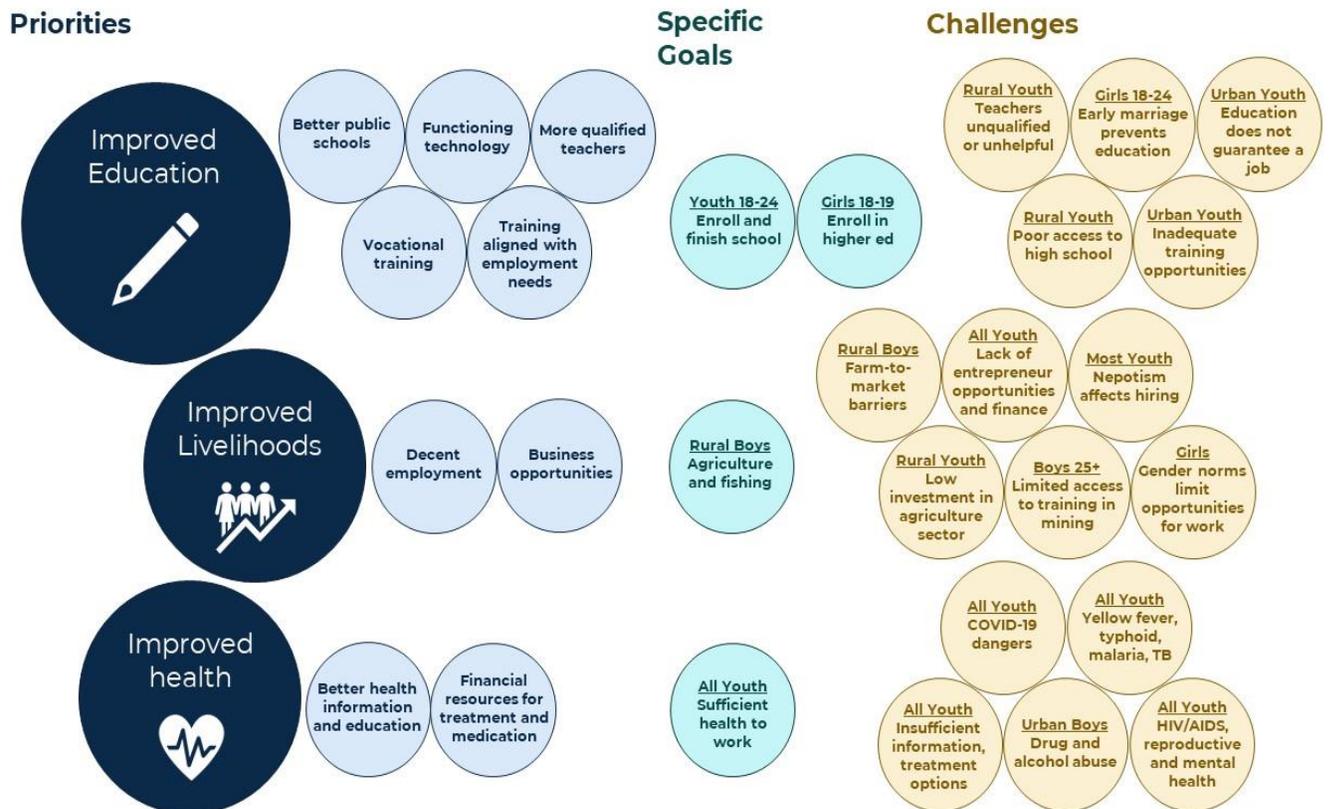
⁷⁸ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 2014).

⁷⁹ 2018 DHS data.

⁸⁰ *Guinée: Le taux de pénétration internet est passé de 0,4% en 2010 à 33% en 2018* (Ministre guinéen des Télécommunications et de l'Economie, 2019).

opportunities and improved safety and security.⁸¹ Figure 4 below provides an overview of specific youth goals and challenges.

Figure 4. Priorities, Goals, and Challenges Facing Guinean Youth



A. EDUCATION

Improved education is the number-one priority for both young women and young men in rural and urban areas. Youth would like to see **better-equipped public schools and vocational training centers, more qualified teachers, training programs aligned with employment needs, and functioning technological equipment.** The goal of younger youth (eighteen to twenty-four years old) is to enroll in school and complete their education. These youth understand that education is a critical component of meeting their life goals and want to ensure they gain the best foundational skills they can from the education system.

⁸¹ Surveyed youth prioritized the areas as follows: improved education (38 percent), improved health (29 percent), better employment/livelihood (28 percent), improved social and civic opportunities (3 percent), and safety and security (2 percent).

YOUTH COHORT	PERSPECTIVES RELATED TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM
YOUNG WOMEN, 18–19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe education from high school and enrollment in higher education will facilitate better employment
URBAN YOUNG WOMEN, 25+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe youth who complete their education have better prospects than those who drop out • Believe completing education does not necessarily translate into employment • Education currently only assists approximately 50 percent of girls in finding employment opportunities
URBAN YOUNG MEN, 25+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs are typically temporary and unable to meet the needs of youth
RURAL YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN, 18-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of rural education is very low compared to urban areas • High school education is typically not offered in rural areas • Rural schools lack qualified teachers, and there is favoritism toward students with more resources • Both men and women often need to migrate to urban areas to continue their studies • The education quality and access issues lead to high dropout, which for women often leads to early marriage

Youth Voices on Education

“We look good ‘on paper’ when you see our résumé. However, we have no practical, market-relevant skills when we graduate.” – Male, university graduate, thirty-four years old, AVENIR graduate, Conakry

“Given the lack of practical training at engineering and professional schools, due to a lack of equipment it is very likely to meet an electrical engineer who cannot recognize a transistor.” – Male participant from Boké

“Without education, you cannot have a decent job in the twenty-first century.” – Female participant from Minière, Conakry

“When you are well-trained, money looks for you, but when you are not well-trained, you look for money and find it difficult.” – Male participant in Boke

B. LIVELIHOODS, BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES, AND AGRICULTURE

“Improved livelihoods” is the second priority for young women and the third priority for young men. Youth in rural and urban areas dream of decent employment and business opportunities that can help them meet their needs, become independent, improve their livelihoods, and support their parents. All participants need **better access to job information, entrepreneurial training, soft-skills training, practical training/internships/apprenticeships, finances, connection to markets, and business-enabling environments.** They noted that when there are job opportunities, family members are often the preferred candidates, regardless of their qualifications.

Key stakeholders noted that younger siblings who see their older siblings struggle to find employment are often discouraged from pursuing education and employment opportunities themselves. They also confirmed that even those who complete their education may not always have the opportunity to find jobs and may decide to leave the country in search of improved livelihood opportunities. Migrants who are unable to succeed abroad return to Guinea, but they often face difficulties reintegrating into the country's economic and social structures. Key informants noted that **family poverty** hinders youth economic empowerment and development. Young people's development is not always the family priority. Young girls are more vulnerable, and they are likely to drop out of school and get married early. These issues are exacerbated in polygamous families; youth coming from such families face more difficulties completing their education and finding employment opportunities.

The ability to use media platforms allows youth to access information about jobs, training sessions, and other activities that can help them improve their livelihoods. Most participants, regardless of their age, gender, and location, indicated that they **access and share information** through media (radio and television), social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.), and telephone (phone calls or text messages). The second most cited method for accessing and sharing information by both girls and boys in rural and urban areas was "word-of-mouth in cafés, bars, or on the street." A few older girls from Boké mentioned they access local information through community meetings and discussions. A few older girls from urban Minière, Conakry, noted that young people are not always well-informed and are often manipulated on social media.

YOUTH COHORT	PERSPECTIVES RELATED TO LIVELIHOODS
RURAL MEN OVER 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural opportunities are mainly available in rural areas and some urban areas. Rural youth more interested in pursuing agribusiness opportunities. • Need better agriculture skills in processing, storing, transporting, and accessing markets. • Need specialized mining training to increase their job opportunities in the sector.
YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need better protection from more influential economic operators within value chains. • Need more direct connection to local and international buyers.
URBAN WOMEN OVER 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek internship opportunities without any help from school or government. Internship opportunities in rural areas are scarce. • Some have access to micro-credit.
ALL YOUTH ON GENDER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys and men are still the main decision-makers when it comes to finances. Parents often make decisions for girls in terms of spending their earning/savings. Boys are encouraged to make these decisions on their own. • Girls and young women tend to work in jobs traditionally performed by women. A few young women expressed interest in working in traditionally male-dominated jobs (e.g., mining), but they noted there is a lack of training for women.

Youth Voices on Livelihoods

“Most of the young people who have succeeded through education in our community were supported either by their family or mentor, as well as their persistence.” – Male participant in Dixxin, Conakry

“After their studies, young people would like to gain decent jobs in order to achieve their goals.” – Female participant in Boffa

“To live better, we need good wages.” – Female participant in Kindia

“It is often said that even if you put someone in a garden, if he is not educated, the garden will be transformed into a desert. On the other hand, when you put a well-trained person in a desert, he can transform the desert into a garden.” – Male participant in Boké

C. HEALTH

Improved health is the third priority for young women and the second priority for young men. All youth believe that improved health outcomes serve as the basis for achieving their main objectives. Youth discussed the danger stemming from the **current global COVID-19 pandemic, HIV/AIDS, and reproductive health issues** and highlighted the importance of health for success in life. Health issues negatively impact disadvantaged rural and urban youth who do not have resources for medication or live in mining areas where dust causes various respiratory diseases. Common diseases among youth are yellow fever, typhoid, malaria, and tuberculosis, as well as mental illnesses and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS.⁸² Boys and girls in rural and urban areas mentioned there is not sufficient information or education about STDs. In addition to diseases, young men reported that drug and alcohol abuse is widespread in urban areas.

YOUTH COHORT	PERSPECTIVES RELATED TO HEALTH SYSTEM
YOUNG MEN, 18–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illnesses prevent youth from achieving their life goals • Lack of access to testing, particularly for STDs
URBAN GIRLS, 18–19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of trust in health professionals, lack of youth-friendly facilities/services • Lack of access to testing for STDs
URBAN YOUNG MEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread use of drugs and alcohol abuse

⁸² Republic of Guinea Overcoming Growth Stagnation to Reduce Poverty: Systematic Country Diagnostic (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018).

Key stakeholders confirmed that the Guinean health system is inadequate. It lacks the psychological support for vulnerable youth who are victims of SGBV. They believe information about sexual and reproductive health and the impact of early marriage should be disseminated to young people. It is not

Youth Voices on Health

“Whatever the level of education, the wealth, or the will of a person to succeed or reach his goals, without good health everything is doomed to failure.” – Male participant in Dixxin, Conakry

“When we go to the hospital right now, there are a lot of young girls my age who are facing health problems such as difficulties due to abortion, HIV/AIDS, or gonorrhoea.” – Male participant in Kindia

widely available, and many young people do not trust the health centers.

D. YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Youth agreed they have few opportunities to participate in community decisions, display leadership, or be meaningfully included in decision-making. In most cases, youth see the political system as controlled by adults and powerful elites. Youth believe that access to civic engagement opportunities will help them become leaders and promote equal rights in their community. Participation in social and civic opportunities is lower among young women due to their traditional roles in a society, a lack of female role models, and a lack of social and civic opportunities, as well as frequent violence against women during political demonstrations.

When not at school or at work, most youth, regardless of their age, gender, or location, tend to spend their time socializing with their peers. Young men socialize in cafés, on the internet/in video clubs, or at sporting events (mostly football). Young women who live in urban and rural areas and do not have financial means may decide to stay at home to watch TV, communicate on social media, or cook. Surveyed young women from Mamou and Labé noted that there are no social activities outside of sporting events, and many youth end up spending their time out on the street. Several young men from urban areas reported they participate in political demonstrations, mostly during elections.

YOUTH COHORT	PERSPECTIVES RELATED TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
RURAL YOUTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for civic engagement are rare.
YOUNG WOMEN, 18–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and civic opportunities were not on top of their priorities. • Opportunities for women’s civic engagement in rural areas are extremely limited. Their top priorities would be access to drinking water and access to electricity. • Leadership opportunities are mostly available to men.

YOUTH COHORT	PERSPECTIVES RELATED TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
YOUNG MEN OVER 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in political campaigns when there is some type of monetary reward for their participation.
URBAN YOUNG MEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women’s participation in politics is slowly increasing, and they believe this will improve women’s ability to influence political and social life.

Youth Voices on Free Time

“If a girl in their community does not go to school or does not know where to find money, she spends all her free time at home cooking; others sit in front of the TV to watch series.” – Female participant from Kindia

“Young people in our community spend their day in Guinea Games kiosks, making tea, walking in the street, on beaches, on social networks, or participating in political demonstrations for the price of a few things [money].” – Male participant from Dixxin, Conakry

Key stakeholders noted that **young women** are likely to get organized around causes such as **FGM/C and child marriage**, while young men get organized around sporting events. They also noted that youth want to be heard and represented in political and social organizations, but there is lack of information about civic and political engagement. Key stakeholders believed that the government has not put structures in place to promote youth civic engagement or that such structures exist in theory, but in reality, they are not easily accessible.

Occasionally, motivated youth organize civic initiatives in certain communities, but this effort is not systematic. Reduced participation of youth in the civic and political life of the country leads to their exclusion from the decision-making, design, and implementation of development policies. As a result, adopted government policies tend to have less emphasis on youth and improving youth well-being.

Both youth and stakeholders confirmed that **politicians tend to manipulate young people** to facilitate election/re-election **by promising them financial compensation** in return for participation in campaigns and political protests. Unfortunately, youth often end up being subject to violence and extremism during campaigns and protests. One stakeholder noted that, “Young people are those who are at the front during various political confrontations.” Stakeholders firmly believed that in order to facilitate youth political engagement, the political system should transition toward a more democratic and less ethnic base. Focus on ethnicity has been an obstacle to youth from some ethnic backgrounds to enter the political life. Involvement in local government is also difficult due to its inadequate decentralization.

E. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Female youth prioritized improving safety and security more than their male counterparts. **Youth or cultural centers** were cited as places where young people can seek help or advice, but few regions benefit from such centers. The safety and security area is an important priority for girls and young

women. Boys and young men did not rank safety and security among their top priorities. Girls and youth with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by violence as they can be subject to abuse at home, at their workplace, or on the street during political demonstrations. Vulnerable youth can seek help from family members, in places of worship, or from the police, although girls in urban areas acknowledged that their complaints are rarely investigated by the police.

Youth Voice on Safety and Security

“I was the victim of an armed robbery in my concession.” – Female FGD participant from Mamou

YOUTH COHORT	PERSPECTIVES RELATED TO SAFETY AND SECURITY
GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support is needed from women in leadership positions or organizations that protect girls’ rights and safety. • Girls in Kankan feel relatively safe. Girls in Mamou and Boké do not feel safe even at home. • Confirmed ongoing SGBV against women and girls (sometimes under the age of ten). • Young women confirmed that gender-based violence and addiction to drugs among boys exist in rural areas.
BOYS AND YOUNG MEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young men living in mining areas reported that violence, crime, and aggression are widespread in their communities. • Young men in urban areas are confronted with armed robberies, rape of minors, and juvenile delinquency. They acknowledge that women tend to be more vulnerable to certain police abuses perpetrated during political protests.

Most participants noted they are against the use of **abuse and violence** against women at work or at home and prefer the use of dialogue and peaceful resolution to the problems. However, girls continue to be subject to abuse at home, at school, and in the workplace, as reported by girls in both urban and rural areas. Abuse at home is still acceptable, with a few males noting it is acceptable to hit a female as a behavior correction and a few females mentioning it is acceptable to hit a child for the same reason.

V. OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section identifies opportunities and recommendations that show high potential to make a difference in the lives of Guinean youth based on literature review and an analysis of discussions with youth and youth stakeholders. The CSYA findings are both deep and broad and are summarized in Annexes E and F. Annex E presents youth priorities, opportunities, and gaps by sector. Annex F highlights differences among youth by location, gender, and age.

A. EDUCATION

Opportunities

Guinean youth at all levels value **education**. It is seen as **a key step toward youth self-reliance**. Young people are aware of the importance of practical, hands-on training. Youth educational challenges are recognized by the **government of Guinea** in its current education plan (PRODEG, 2019–2028), which promotes the integration of young people into education and focuses on provision of a skilled workforce for the growing sectors of the economy. These programs include training and integration in the urban and peri-urban handicrafts, agriculture, and mining sectors and the construction of centers of excellence at the Higher Institute of Mines and Geology of Boké and the Faculty of Sciences and Techniques of Health in Conakry.

Guinean youth crave the **support of parents, teachers, mentors**, and other **positive role models** in their education journey. Evidence shows that both quality of teachers and parental support are key factors influencing students' learning outcomes. Parental involvement can also lead to significant school infrastructure improvements and improvement in learning outcomes as demonstrated by the Community Participation in Education for Equity program.⁸³ The program enlisted parents' help in simple investments such as adding latrines to increase girls' and young women's participation.

One program that came up during the assessment as exemplary was Jeune Espoir. This program installs **online and local learning management systems** for schools and educational centers; develops digital courses for the primary, middle, and high school levels in Guinea; and builds digital courses for studying English, business, and computers skills. The program is currently developing high-quality digital courses for high school students and making them available [online](#).

Recommendations

Increase access to quality education. Teachers, professors, and TVET instructors play key roles in attendance and education outcomes. Strengthen teachers' training and build capacity in applied learning, including activity-based learning. Provide learning materials tailored to the needs of youth and appropriate for the desired outcomes.

Integrate technology, practical training, soft skills, and social-emotional learning throughout education. Engage children early and youth throughout education opportunities in soft-skills and experience-based learning. Use technology as appropriate throughout education. Provide SRH education along with appropriate life-phase education. Integrate classroom delivery with practical, hands-on training. Link graduates to internships and apprenticeships.

⁸³ Keiko Inoue et al., *Out-of-School Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Policy Perspective* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2015).

Support establishment and strengthening of TVET curricula by developing standards and providing progressive skills to meet entry-level, mid-level, and high-level positions, particularly in agriculture, fisheries, mining, and construction.

B. LIVELIHOODS, BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES, AND AGRICULTURE

Opportunities

The government of Guinea recognizes youth challenges in employment, self-employment, and entrepreneurship. The National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES, 2016–2020) identifies human capital development as one of the key strategic pillars. In its plan, the GOG aims to increase its public investments and implement structural reforms to transform the Guinean economy to generate future prosperity. In its **National Youth Policy (2010–2020)**, the GOG's one of two main objectives is participation of young people in socioeconomic development and decision-making. Two of the seven programmatic goals are focused on youth access to decent employment and economic initiatives (Axis 4 and Axis 5).

World Bank's Skills to Succeed (STS) Project Focuses On:

- 1. Establishing fund for skills and employability.** The fund supports two- to three-year professional training programs adhering to international certifications and delivered through a public–private partnership (PPP). It aims to provide incentives and innovative approaches to improve skills, employability, and employment for targeted populations as well as design and test new training program models with a view to improve quality and relevance.
- 2. Education to Employment (E2E) program.** The program provides unemployed graduates a career pathway to professional opportunities in training, internships, jobs, or self-employment through incentive-based PPP contracts. The priority sectors are mining, agriculture, and health services.
- 3. Improving institutional support and regulatory framework.** By allocating resources directly to training institutions and introducing more spending flexibility, the competitive fund encourages a paradigm shift in institutional management and governance while building capacity of AQUIPE.

The **Guinean Agency for the Promotion of Employment (AQUIPE)** under the Ministry of Technical Education, Vocational Training, Employment, and Work supports implementation of the national policy for promotion of youth employment. AQUIPE's goals are as follows:

- Create favorable conditions for the job search through specific training.
- Create a favorable dynamic between youth skills and job market needs.
- Guide young job seekers to the best opportunities.
- Strengthen the links between unemployed graduates and the formal sector.
- Insert graduates into formal employment opportunities in high-growth sectors with urgent skills deficits.
- Encourage creation of jobs and opportunities throughout the Guinean territory.
- Create and promote a unique platform for employment opportunities.
- Maximize choices for youth and employers.

World Bank's Skills to Succeed (STS) project has been working closely with AQUIPE since 2015. The project aims to boost the employability and employment outcomes of highly educated youth through skills-building in the agriculture, health, and energy sectors. It also focuses on building AQUIPE capacity.

In the agriculture sector, the GOG launched the **Accelerated Program of Food and Nutritional Security and Sustainable Agriculture (PASANDAD 2016–2020)**, which has been integrated into PNDES. It aims to improve food and nutrition and reduce food imports by accelerating agricultural production and improving commercialization, storage, and processing. The program targets an annual growth of the primary sector (agriculture) of 6.5 percent and a reduction in food poverty incidence from 18.1 percent in 2012 to 9.1 percent in 2020. The program focuses on promoting mechanization of agriculture; strengthening small farms' capacities, processing, and storage; and commercialization of agricultural, fishery, forestry, and livestock products.

Another bright spot for livelihoods is the fact that young people are willing to take more risk than older adults, which is a quality that should be cultivated. They are more natural **positive risk-takers and early adopters**. Many older adults in Guinea associate courage and risk-taking with the youth. This is an opportunity to explore this characteristic of young people and invest in a new generation of young entrepreneurs who are likely to adopt modern practices and technologies.

Finally, young people in Guinea are **very motivated to learn entrepreneurship** and business skills. They are interested in pursuing **opportunities in agribusiness and within value chains**. Some young people quoted examples of good entrepreneurial programs funded by international donors, such as World Bank's Stepping Up Skills, the European Union's INTEGRA, the IOM-EU-funded Migrants Reintegration Initiative, and USAID's AVENIR.

Recommendations

Increase youth opportunities for employment through self-employment and entrepreneurship. There is a great unmet demand for programs that offer entrepreneurial skills-building together with practical, hands-on training connected to market needs that provide a stable source of income through self-employment or entrepreneurship in the informal sector. Global research suggests that low-potential, low-income countries such as Guinea should focus their youth employment interventions on "resurgent opportunities in the informal sector."⁸⁴ However, the **distinction should be made between programming focused on an increase in self-employment versus an increase in true entrepreneurship.**

INTEGRA Project—Support Program for the Socioeconomic Integration of the Guinean Youth

EU-funded project under the Ministry of Youth, Guinea. The project aims to increase employment for fifteen thousand Guinean youth and to create three thousand businesses; to increase skills development; to increase access to finances; and to improve competitiveness of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the agricultural and ICT sectors. "We managed to create local jobs for youth who did not believe in themselves," summarized one of the INTEGRA staff.

⁸⁴ Louise Fox and Upaasna Kaul, *The Evidence Is In: How Should Youth Employment Programs in Low-Income Countries be Designed?* (Washington, DC: USAID, 2017).

Self-Employment/Entrepreneurial Mindset. Boosting low-educated and more vulnerable youth earnings in the informal sector should involve development of proactive, entrepreneurial mindsets, transferrable skills (soft skills including SRH), financial management skills, other work-ready skills,

Entrepreneurial Mindset Training

A joint World Bank, National University of Singapore Business School, and Leuphana University study revealed that psychology-based entrepreneur training programs are outperforming traditional business trainings among microentrepreneurs in West Africa, translating into increased firm profits by 30 percent compared to 11 percent for traditional business training.

coaching/mentoring, and access to financing options. The training on a **proactive, entrepreneurial mindset** should focus on developing self-starting behavior, innovation, identifying and exploiting new opportunities, goal-setting, planning, feedback cycles, and overcoming obstacles. The main idea is to provide a psychology-based entrepreneur training program that develops behavior associated with a **proactive, entrepreneurial mindset, rather than focusing on teaching basic business skills.** The evidence shows this is highly effective for microentrepreneurs in West Africa.⁸⁵ For **young women and more vulnerable youth**, additional packages of interventions should be introduced, such as functional numeracy and literacy, alternative learning, and additional support to free young mothers and disabled youth to attend training sessions and access financing options.

Entrepreneurship. Boosting **youth engagement in entrepreneurship** should be done after a thorough analysis of target youth's aspirations, goals, skill levels, and market needs. Depending on the country, only about 10 to 15 percent of the population are true entrepreneurs.⁸⁶ Entrepreneurs are believed to have an exceptional ability to see and seize upon new opportunities, the commitment and drive required to pursue them, and an unflinching willingness to bear the inherent risks.⁸⁷ Therefore, the target youth should display certain entrepreneurial characteristics before being admitted into the training for the donor to expect a reasonable return on investment.

Social entrepreneurship. Another option is to support both entrepreneurship and youth civic engagement through **“social entrepreneurship” activities.** This could be done using a **capability approach to entrepreneurship.**⁸⁸ By teaching youth social entrepreneurship skills, they discover possibilities for engaging civically in their community or local or national government through their entrepreneurial projects. This helps mitigate young entrepreneurs' risk through community support and by emphasizing the choice of sustainable livelihoods.

Target opportunities in agriculture. Focusing on the agriculture/livestock sector is important for reaching more vulnerable youth in rural areas and young women. Meet rural youth where they live with appropriate agricultural value-chain opportunities. In rural areas, agriculture and self-employment should be part of any youth livelihood approach.⁸⁹ Increasing agricultural productivity will be important for economic transformation. Given that youth are interested in modern and mechanized agriculture and other value-added production, programs should encourage and raise awareness regarding the use of

⁸⁵ Francisco Campos et al., “Teaching Personal Initiative Beats Traditional Training in Boosting Small Business in West Africa,” *Journal of Science* 357, no. 6357 (September 22, 2017): 1287–90.

⁸⁶ Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) statistics. U.S. 2015 data indicated 14 percent entrepreneurs in the U.S. market.

⁸⁷ “Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition,” Stanford Social Innovation Review, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/social_entrepreneurship_the_case_for_definition.

⁸⁸ Dejaeghere and Baxter (2013), Entrepreneurship education for youth in sub-Saharan Africa: A capabilities approach as an alternative framework to neoliberalism's individualizing risks. “The approach identifies three key concepts: endowments, capabilities, and functioning. Endowments can be any asset that entrepreneurs process for creating capabilities. Capabilities are the opportunities that entrepreneurs have for undertaking a livelihood. Functioning is what the entrepreneur chooses to do.”

⁸⁹ See <https://www.agrilinks.org/post/tools-empowering-youth-agriculture-and-food-systems> for guidance on designing programs for youth in agriculture and food systems.

technology and include more practical activities that integrate youth along different parts of the agricultural value chain.

Invest in coaching and mentoring by peer and adult entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship coaching and mentoring does not support only business creation but also improves business survival and growth prospects.⁹⁰ Coaching and mentoring are intensive, individually tailored supports that can address the needs of different youth groups as well as the specific challenges faced by the individual. They promote learning and help youth develop self-confidence, motivation, and entrepreneurship skills. Coaching tends to be a short-term relationship. Mentoring usually involves a longer-term relationship, focusing on personal development. While focusing on vulnerable youth, ensure selection of suitable coaches and mentors who understand the specific youth needs and challenges. Recently, peer-based coaching and mentoring has been effective in increasing the attractiveness of support to entrepreneurs from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups.⁹¹

Develop a private-sector engagement strategy. The assessment confirms that there is a limited interaction among public-sector, donor community, and private-sector stakeholders. Support the development of a common platform, build MOY capacity in private-sector engagement, and establish meaningful internships and apprenticeships as follows:

- Organize a **platform where all key youth employment stakeholders** can meet on a regular basis and develop a framework for public–private partnerships. Encourage private-sector partners to start offering meaningful internships and apprenticeships. For example, Plan International Guinea is offering this type of internship to young women to increase their work experience and chances of being employed.
- **Support capacity-building of the MOY in private-sector engagement.** The MOY is drafting a youth employment strategy with support from the African Development Bank. A thoughtful private-sector engagement strategy is essential to achieve transformational results. Most of the time, private-sector players are hesitant to hire vulnerable youth as they need to incur “sunk costs” to upskill them. Therefore, there is a need for a big player bridging the gaps between youth skills, level of experience, and employer needs.
- Support establishment of **meaningful internships and apprenticeships.** Some projects (for example, AVENIR) and organizations such as Osez Innover successfully engaged the private sector in this area. However, they had to “share the burden” of sunk costs associated with upskilling young people first before they could enter the internship/apprenticeship/practical training sphere. Surveyed youth confirmed that they benefited enormously from these work experiences.

Use technology and active learning methods. Given youth interest in technology and modernization, ensure that modern technology and ICTs are incorporated into youth employment programs, particularly in agriculture. Invest in youth technology training within the mining industry. In the public sector, the demand will continue to grow for a skilled health and education labor force that is ICT-savvy. Deliver trainings through active learning methods, i.e., incorporate games, simulations, and practical, hands-on training.

⁹⁰ *Guidance Note: Building Entrepreneurship Skills and Capacities for Youth Entrepreneurs* (Paris: OECD, 2018).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Through soft-skills training, work with young people on employment competencies and career expectations. Understanding their career goal and the pathway that leads to it will help young people to set correct expectations for their first job or microenterprise. Invest in better youth understanding of job and market opportunities. Work with young people and their parents on gender stereotypes to overcome some negative perceptions about certain industries/job categories.

Focus on building further evidence of what works in the context of low-income economies, youth employment, self-employment, youth entrepreneurship, and the informal sector.

Increase youth access to financial services. Access to credit is a major barrier to business development. Further investigation is needed to identify ways to build youth access to finance, including building credit history, financial responsibility, and connections to youth-friendly MFIs and banking institutions. In the short-term, savings groups (VSLAs, youth savings groups, women's savings groups) that are already known to youth may support youth education and business goals. However, the amount of funding is relatively small. In order to grow and transform micro and SME enterprises in Guinea, increasing financial access for youth entrepreneurs is a must. The *Doing Business 2020* report ranks Guinea 156 out of 190 economies and 152th regarding accessing credit.⁹²

Support improvements in the business-enabling environment. Formalizing business for young people is extremely difficult. According to a 2016 enterprise survey by World Bank, the main constraints to businesses identified by the private sector in Guinea are political instability, customs and trade regulations, theft and disorder, and tax rates. The process of setting up and managing a business is very lengthy, with heavy administrative procedures. Although the environment has slightly improved in the past five years, the institutional framework is not conducive to private-sector development.

C. HEALTH

Opportunities

Youth who participate in regionally based **Counseling Centers for Young People** (Centre d'Ecoute de Conseils et d'Orientation pour Jeune, CECOJE) demonstrated good knowledge of STDs and displayed full understanding of prevention, testing, and how to access medical care. Cascading this type of mechanism to harder-to-reach communities would ensure better information among young people, particularly in rural areas.

Youth are better connected and share information via **mobile phones**, which can facilitate any public health **social behavior change campaign**. The campaign could be modeled based on the fight against malaria as surveyed youth demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of malaria prevention and treatment. They also confirmed they have sufficient access to bed nets and malaria medicine if needed.

Recommendations

Increase youth access to SRH information and services. While UNFPA reports that 97 percent of health facilities in Guinea offer at least five modern contraceptive methods, the majority of surveyed youth lack the information, youth-friendly services, and access to testing for STDs. To address the knowledge gap, invest in school-based SRH education as part of integrated soft-skills training. Target very young adolescents (VYAs, ten to fourteen years old) since early adolescence marks a critical transition between childhood and older adolescence/adulthood, setting the stage for future SRH and gendered attitudes and

⁹² *Doing Business 2020* (Washington, DC: World Bank Group, 2020).

behaviors. Targeted investment in VYAs is imperative to lay foundations for healthy future relationships and positive SRH.⁹³ Invest in **platforms discussing SRHR**, fully engaging the public sector, other donors, NGOs, and civil society.

Provide support to youth-friendly health centers offering integrated adolescent, teen pregnancy, FP, and SRH services. Invest in training health staff in youth-friendly customer service.

D. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Opportunities

Most of the youth find **SGBV unacceptable**. They indicated other ways of resolving disputes—dialogue, negotiation, mediation, and peacebuilding. There is also an alternative dispute resolution option that is used when needed (Chef de Quartier) and traditional mechanisms that can be used to resolve disputes and SGBV.

Youth recognize safe places to go and people to turn to when in need. While girls and young women continue being more at risk at home, at work, and on the street, help is available from family and friends.

Recommendations

Provide youth with safe spaces where they can socialize or receive training or that can serve as innovation hubs. These could be a **physical space/building or virtual space**, such as online chat groups in which youth share ideas and experiences, thereby learning from their peers. Encourage government actors to expand Youth Centers (Maisons des Jeunes) beyond urban areas. Encourage expansion of CECOJE centers beyond an SRH focus and into youth engagement space. Sports also serve as a safe space and vehicle to bring youth together. Besides serving as a training ground for sports activities and resilience, sports centers can help with development of soft skills. The soft-skills training could be complementary to sports activities. In the absence of youth centers, make schools safe spaces with safe and private latrines and safe water sources. School should also be safe from SGBV and other sources of insecurity, particularly for girls and young women. Conduct **public information campaigns on youth online safety**.

Provide support to youth victims of gender-based violence. Provide support to centers such as service delivery points (SDPs) that provide support to girls and young women in need and that are equipped with post-rape kits. Provide support to centers working with youth survivors of SGBV.

E. YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Opportunities

The government of Guinea is aware of the gap in youth participation in decision-making. In 2015, the Ministry of Youth organized national youth consultations called “Young People Have Talent.” The consultations resulted in a list of grievances that were presented to the president’s office. Two of the main youth complaints were a lack of communication between youth and the government and youth “nonparticipation” in the decision-making processes. As a response, the Ministry of Youth, with support from UNICEF, launched the **U-Report platform**. However, the platform has not been effectively used

⁹³ Susan M. Igras et al., “Investing in Very Young adolescents’ Sexual and Reproductive Health,” *Global Public Health* 9, no. 5 (May 2014): 555–69, doi:10.1080/17441692.2014.908230.

yet. Surveyed youth had minimal knowledge of U-Report. Half of surveyed participants in Kindia, Boké, Conakry, Labé, and Mamou regions were aware of U-Report, but only two participants had ever used it. None of the participants reported seeing differences in their communities after reporting their concerns via U-Report.

Key stakeholders reported that “there is **an emerging group of young people who are very active in the civic space** and who are ready to take charge of their future.” For example, prior to and during the elections in March 2020, young people in Conakry disseminated information to other young people about the impact of constitutional changes.

Recommendations

Strengthen youth-led civic engagement associations, organizations, and networks through capacity-building in advocacy training, civic engagement, and leadership. Strengthen their capacity to build youth skills in community engagement, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding.

Invest in peer or adult coaching and mentoring for social cohesion. Be intentional about reaching vulnerable youth. This can be done collaboratively with local youth organizations operating in rural and urban areas. Mentoring and coaching in small, female-only groups may be the only way girls and young women can access support networks. These activities are critical to promoting youth integration and cohesion and building resilience.

Equip young people with skills to demand citizen-driven service provision and oversight, as well as accountability, leading to the growth of citizen–government relationships and confidence in the government. Confidence in the government is associated with government provision of services. As highlighted in the entrepreneurship section above, invest in social entrepreneurship.

U-Report Guinea

U-Report is an innovative application that, through free SMS, enables young people and adolescents to express themselves and make their voices heard by decision-makers on the topics that concern them. Through U-Report, young people have the opportunity to comment on topics such as health, education, climate change, access to water, hygiene and sanitation, and reproductive health. U-Report is also present on social networks Facebook and Twitter.

VI. APPLYING POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES WITHIN YOUTH PROGRAMS

Findings from this assessment underscore the cross-sectoral interdependencies of youth success. Guinean youth place a strong emphasis on receiving a market-relevant education, finding employment/starting up a business, and keeping healthy. Education and livelihoods are interdependent and exigent. Youth education and livelihood success, however, are affected by other factors, most notably lack of livelihood opportunities, poor education, teenage pregnancy, general youth health, and substance abuse, which perpetuate a vicious cycle of youth dependence. As this assessment has shown, this dynamic means that improving any single youth outcome cannot be done in an isolated, sector-specific manner but must consider the salient youth influences across different sectors.

To make CSYA findings and recommendations actionable for the multiple stakeholders interested in the well-being of youth in Guinea and their role in making themselves, their families, their communities, and the country self-reliant, this section serves as a guide to using the findings in this report and the many resources available to support PYD-based programming.

Human endeavors are based on assumptions about people. Throughout the programming process, identify and document assumptions. For these recommendations, we assume that youth will be involved in every part of the process.



Assumption: Youth are engaged in design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

[YouthPower.org](https://www.youthpower.org) hosts a tremendous body of valuable resources. This link provides resources for entry points to include youth in the project cycle. Entry points include country/regional strategy planning, project design and implementation, activity design and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. <https://www.youthpower.org/youth-inclusion-drg-toolkit-youth-program-cycle>

The Youth Programming Assessment Tool (YPAT) helps organizations reflect on their internal programming and institutional practices and identify areas for improvement: <https://www.youthpower.org/resources/youth-programming-assessment-tool>

Helpful Steps to Design a Program

Step 1: Who is your target population? Describe them in detail.



<https://www.youthpower.org/feed-future-project-design-guide-youth-inclusive-agriculture-and-food-systems-identifying-cohorts>

Step 2: What are the priorities and situations of your target population? See table below for ideas on how to organize your information. This is an example to help guide you. We use rural youth as an example because they are typically more vulnerable than urban youth to many of the challenges affecting youth (e.g., economic and education opportunities, safety and security, freedom of movement, access to land and basic services, high food insecurity).



Good time to engage youth from your target population and facilitate discussion.

Step 3: Think about what interventions/activities should be integrated into your program to facilitate youth development for your target population.



Assumption: Cross-sectoral programming incorporates interventions.

Designing cross-sectoral programs requires coordinated effort from a group of people, typically specialists in multiple sectors. Sharing assumptions and goals, documenting them, and making vocabulary clear to the group are essential to effective communication.



Good time to engage youth from your target population and facilitate discussion.

Step 4: Discuss assumptions and expectations and map a theory of change. Document your work.



Assumptions: Pilot previously untested program designs. Evaluate the pilot. Learn, redesign. Document learning. Redesign if appropriate and pilot. Scale up programs with desirable, expected outcomes. Monitor unexpected outcomes as they can be harmful to youth.

Additional Recommended Resources



Youth Compass is a cross-sectoral youth assessment tool developed by USAID YouthPower Action for use by implementers to strengthen the design or ongoing efforts of youth-focused or youth-inclusive activities. <https://www.youthpower.org/resources/youth-compass-strategic-guide-strengthen-youth-activities>

The YouthPower Learning Community of Practice on Youth Engagement developed a comprehensive definition of meaningful youth engagement: “Meaningful youth engagement is an inclusive, intentional, mutually respectful partnership between youth and adults whereby power is shared, respective contributions are valued, and young people’s ideas, perspectives, skills, and strengths are integrated into the design and delivery of programs, strategies, policies, funding mechanisms, and organizations that affect their lives and their communities, countries, and globally. Meaningful youth engagement recognizes and seeks to change the power structures that prevent young people from being considered experts regarding their own needs and priorities, while also building their leadership capacities. Youth includes a full spectrum of the population aged ten to twenty-nine regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic identity, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, political affiliation, or physical location.” <https://www.youthpower.org/youth-engagement-guide>

ANNEX A: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Guiding Research Questions
<p>I. What are youth life goals, and what are the factors that hinder them from achieving their goals?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">What do youth express as their visions, priorities, and ambitions?How do the goals differ for urban vs. rural youth, male vs. female youth, in-school vs. out-of-school youth, youth or different ethnicities, and marginalized and vulnerable (disabled, etc.) youth?What are the contextual risks and barriers that hinder or impede positive youth development? Contextual risks may include political, economic, social, security, and environmental risks.For those young people who may be dissatisfied, what are the sources of their frustrations?How do youth feel their education has prepared them for the decisions and challenges they face in their lives, or not?What do youth identify as barriers to education? How does this differ for male and female youth or urban and rural youth?What are the biggest concerns youth have about their future? How do these differ across gender, rural/urban location, ethnicity, education level, disability, and other known marginalized categories in Guinea?Who are the most vulnerable youth populations, and how do their life goals and opportunities for engagement differ from others? What are their unique needs?
<p><i>Associated Secondary Research Questions</i></p> <p><u>Overall</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">How do youth think their education has prepared them for the decisions and challenges they face in their lives, or not?What do they identify as barriers to completing their education? (by gender)What opportunities and resilience factors positively influence youth access to safe, quality education?What are the key aspects of youth unemployment, and how does unemployment impact the behaviors/decisions of youth?What factors affect youth migration from rural to urban areas and out of Guinea?How can Guinean youth skills be built to reflect both national and international job market needs in order to reduce youth unemployment? <p><u>Youth Demographics and Dynamics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">What are the defining structures and characteristics of youth cohorts in Guinea? What are the prevailing differences between male and female youth, urban and rural youth, age cohorts, and major ethnic groups?What do these youth cohorts express as their visions, priorities, and ambitions? What are their greatest frustrations? How are these ambitions and frustrations expressed?

Guiding Research Questions

- What percentage of youth have access to computers? Internet? Mobile phones? How do youth use the internet? How does this differ among male and female youth? How do innovation hubs and schools help extend ICT skills to youth?
- What drives youth from rural to urban areas? What incentives would make youth stay in rural areas?

Health

What are the key issues affecting access and use of health services for youth? What are the trends of youth-related indicators—sexual debut, fertility rate, contraceptive use, rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among youth, rate of female genital mutilation among youth, and rates of access and use of health care services?

- What are the key barriers and opportunities for youth access and utilization of health services?
- Are youth-friendly and gender-sensitive services offered consistently by the health sector? If so, what makes them youth-friendly? If not, what needs to be changed to make them youth-friendly and gender-sensitive?
- What information is available to youth on health issues and services? What are the gaps? Where do youth get most of their basic health information from?
- What positive and negative health behaviors influence/characterize Guinea's youth cohorts? Are there significant differences between youth cohorts or between male and female cohorts? Does marital status play a role?
- Which health services are in the highest demand for youth?
- Where are the biggest gaps in health services for youth in terms of quality and access? How are marginalized youth and other youth key populations accessing health services?
- What are the main drivers of violence against children/youth?
- How do traditional practices, including early marriages, female genital mutilation, and beliefs, play a role in youth health care?
- What opportunities are there for supporting leadership development of young people in health sector development and governance and accountability?

Democracy and Governance

- How do youth engage civically and politically in Guinea?
- What barriers do youth experience in their civic engagement? How do these challenges differ by age, gender, ethnicity, disabilities, and/or other demographic information or marginalization?
- What informal or traditional structures exist at the community level that involve youth in civic engagement activities?
- What opportunities are there for supporting leadership development of young people?
- What youth-led and/or youth-oriented networks exist in Guinea? What has allowed some networks to be effective and others not? What relationships and networks exist or can advance youth engagement and participation?
- Where do the youth-led networks and initiatives get their support?

Guiding Research Questions

- Where do youth get their news from? What social or traditional media outlets do they use for civic/political engagement?

Economic Growth and Employment

- What roles are youth currently playing in environmental conservation?
 - What ties are there between youth, livelihoods, and the natural environment?
- Are there opportunities to empower youth through conservation-based livelihoods?
- What are the statistics on youth employment and unemployment in Guinea? What are the primary occupations of youth, and how does this vary by youth cohort and demographic?
- What are the aspirations of Guinean youth with regard to employment/self-employment/livelihoods disaggregated by age cohort, gender, and rural/urban location? What are the key opportunities and barriers to being employed?
- What current skill sets do youth believe can help them earn income?
- What is hindering youth from accessing skill development programs?
- What can be done to make employment in the agriculture sector a viable or desirable livelihood option for youth?
- What other opportunities and barriers exist for youth engagement in the mining industry?
- What vocational, entrepreneurship, employability, and life skills training institutions/programs exist in Guinea, and are these accessible to most youth? Are these institutions/programs adequate as viewed by the youth, and are they responsive to labor market demands?
- What challenges do youth face when accessing and completing vocational and entrepreneurship programs?
- What opportunities and barriers are faced by youth in accessing credit and building savings?
- To what extent are youth moving between rural and urban areas and/or migrating to other countries or regions to find employment?
- What partners could USAID work with in the area of youth employment?
- What can be done to ensure economic growth activities such as agriculture become an attractive source of income generation for youth?
- What are the barriers that cause lower female youth participation in agricultural economic growth activities, and how can these barriers be addressed?

Guiding Research Questions

2. Which investments by USAID, the GOG, and other stakeholders (donors, private sector, international organizations) have been important and promising in youth development to date?

- a. What promising policies, structures, programs, and partnerships currently exist both within the mission and outside USAID that could be learned from, scaled up, and/or borrowed?
- b. Who have been the key stakeholders and what have been their roles in youth development in Guinea? What has been promising from their investments in the last five years?
- c. How effective have the efforts been to coordinate the various interventions in youth development within USAID and across other partners?
- d. What rules, laws, and policies impede or support full engagement of youth civically and economically?
- e. To what extent have youth participated in design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of activities implemented by the stakeholders in question c above?
- f. How do youth in Guinea define successful youth programming?
- g. What types of interventions in health, civic engagement, agriculture, and food security have demonstrated the potential to improve youth development?

Associated Secondary Research Questions

Overall

- How has the GOG invested in youth? What are the intentional investments that benefit youth? What are the donor investments in youth-related sectors? What are gap areas or where are potential areas/sectors of duplication to avoid?
- What are youth perceptions on how GOG policies and programs have promoted youth empowerment?
- To what extent do USAID youth-related programs and activities (last five years) include explicit interventions that address underlying barriers and opportunities for positive youth development? What have we learned about their effectiveness to improve youth engagement and development?
- To what extent have youth participated in design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of USAID activities?
- How well is USAID organized and resourced to support more effective youth development?

Health

What has worked well in youth programming for health in Guinea?

- What programs exist in Guinea to support the health needs and healthy behaviors of these youth cohorts? How well are these programs and strategic approaches working in practice? What additional services are needed?
- How well is USAID addressing youth issues at both the Mission level and in health-sector activities/projects?

Democracy and Governance

- How well is USAID addressing youth issues at both the Mission level and in governance-sector activities/projects?

Economic Growth and Employment

Guiding Research Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What economic policies are relevant, and how do they support/inhibit youth employment or job creation?
<p>3. What do various stakeholders (including government) perceive as specific, strong opportunities for promoting private-sector engagement in issues impacting youth?</p>
<p>4. What do youth perceive as specific, strong opportunities for advancing self-reliance in Guinea, and how do they envision their role in this journey?</p>
<p><i>Associated Secondary Research Questions</i></p> <p><u>Overall</u></p> <p>How are youth currently contributing to economic growth? Civic engagement? Health programs? How would they like to engage?</p>
<p>5. How can USAID best address PYD in both current and future programming over the next five years?</p>

ANNEX B: RESEARCH METHODS DETAILS

DATA COLLECTION

The assessment process consisted of several data collection methods:

- A desk review of more than fifty secondary sources
- A field visit to all eight regions
- Twenty focus-group discussions (FGDs) with 125 youth (64 males, 61 females) ages eighteen to thirty-five
- Twenty-one KIs with individual and small groups from the government of Guinea, international donors, UN agencies, USAID staff, and community and business leaders, as well as national and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) implementing youth programs across Guinea

LITERATURE REVIEW AND SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

The assessment team completed a document review of past five years, current USAID/Guinea, and other stakeholder and donor annual reports and evaluations integrating or dedicated to youth programming in Guinea. The review also included data sets, such as a 2018 Demographic Health Survey, and UNICEF's State of the World's Children Country Statistical Information. These data and documents served as references to both respond to the primary research questions and associated secondary questions and inform the final data collection tools. They provided key contextual and demographic information for framing and interpreting findings from youth focus-group discussions and key informant interviews.

PEER-LED FOCUS-GROUP DISCUSSIONS, AGES EIGHTEEN TO THIRTY-FIVE

The assessment team collected primary data through twenty FGDs with separate male and female groups of “nonelite” youth ages eighteen to thirty-five in all regions. Dedicated focus-group discussions with near-peer youth ages eighteen to nineteen were used to capture experiences of younger youth ages fifteen to seventeen. The YouthPower Learning assessment team used purposive sampling to identify between six and eight same-sex and age-specific individuals for each FGD. The team made every effort to ensure that participants within focus groups had similar ages, sex, and socioeconomic/demographic characteristics, while simultaneously ensuring that FGD participants represented a variety of backgrounds, ethnic groups, and youth with disabilities, where possible.

The assessment team sought to include youth within the age and sex categories (inclusion criteria) who were *willing to both participate and freely share their perspectives and expertise*. The YouthPower Learning team allotted enough time for each session to give youth the space to “open up” and speak honestly in front of the facilitator. The analysis made every effort to employ creative approaches that used youth to help facilitate these sessions and support the analysis. This served to build capacity among youth researchers as well as deepen the analysis and assessment.

As such, the youth facilitation teams engaged urban and rural youth, highly educated and low-educated youth, girls and boys. COVID-19 restrictions prohibited the team from conducting FGDs in person in Nzérékoré and Faranah regions. These FGDs were administered remotely.

Data Quality Control. To ensure consistency and quality of the FGDs and resulting data, and to respond to and correct any challenges in a timely manner, the team leader/deputy team leader undertook **five key quality-control measures**:

(1) Facilitator and recorder training: The team leader and deputy team leader provided a one-day training on qualitative data collection techniques, the respective roles of facilitators and recorders, facilitation techniques, the FGD guides, human research ethics, note-taking techniques, and basic process standards and protocols prior to the beginning of field research. Training included a field test of the FGD guides. During the training, the team leader/deputy team leader offered an opportunity for youth to provide feedback on the tools and to suggest interactive techniques or games to elicit responses from youth.

(2) Consistency in roles: The facilitators and recorders maintained their respective roles throughout the research process. Given the learning curve expected for both the facilitators and recorders at the start of the process as they familiarized themselves with their roles and the respective quality standards for each, they maintained consistency in their roles throughout—an important quality-control function.

(3) Observations and constructive feedback: The deputy team leader observed each team of facilitators/recorders at least once per day to provide supportive supervision and constructive feedback regarding FGD process and quality.

(4) FGD debriefing: After each FGD, the deputy team leader, facilitators, and recorders conducted a short, internal debriefing to identify any process challenges (e.g., insufficient use of probes or follow-up questions) in order to make corrections in subsequent FGDs.

(5) Regular debriefing across teams: The team leader and deputy team leader conducted a daily debriefing to identify and systematically address any arising challenges and to discuss emerging trends and outliers arising from the data.

Data Processing. Youth facilitators and data recorders took FGD notes in a dedicated *Field Notebook*. Each set of FGD notes includes clear labels for the location and composition (age, number, sex) of each FGD. The data-collection teams were asked to include an approximate 1.5-inch margin on one side of each page of the notebook that they used to jot down key thoughts/analyses/interpretations AFTER each FGD and during their process debriefings. The team planned a maximum of two FGDs per day per team to provide time for youth researchers to transfer at least a portion of their FGD notes daily into an electronic (Microsoft Word) format. FGDs were recorded with permission of participants. Notes and some portions of each discussion were transcribed verbatim and provided to the study team for review. Revisions were made to clarify and add verbatim quotes for analysis.

Analysis and Reporting. Building on key *grounded theory* principles, the assessment team systematically and *iteratively* analyzed the data derived from the FGDs: at the end of each day of data collection, the deputy team leader guided a debriefing with the youth researchers regarding the key themes and outliers arising from the day's data collection. These debriefing sessions provided insights into key findings and emerging themes while serving to identify process challenges and jointly identify solutions. The “gaps” were used to reinforce the use of probes and follow-up questions to ensure sufficient explanatory data in subsequent groups. Our partner, Mathematica, conducted thematic and content analysis by coding data (using encoding software), enabling the identification of clear trends, outliers, and explanatory data. To finalize the analytical and reporting process, the team triangulated FGD findings with those of the KIIs (as well as observations during the field exercise) and literature review, ensuring the consideration of multiple viewpoints and facilitating robust conclusions. It is important to point out that as part of the triangulation

strategy, the team leader and deputy team leader conducted separate analyses to ensure that the analysis was informed by more than one perspective.

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

As part of the data collection, each participant completed a basic intake form, which included demographics (sex, age, marital status, children) as well as current educational attainment and employment data. See Table 1.0 below for the education and employment information. The group consisted of 51 percent males and 49 percent females. While these youth are better educated than previous generations, most are unemployed or underemployed and looking for work.

Table 1.0: Education Levels and Employment Status of Youth Focus-Group Participants

Educational Attainment, as Reported by Youth Focus-Group Participants	Percent
Preschool Only	1.6
Primary School Only	2.4
Lower Secondary School	9.6
Secondary School Graduate	34.4
University Graduate	52

Employment Status, as Reported by Youth Focus-Group Participants	Percent
Formal Employment	3.2
Informal Employment	18.4
Incapable of Working	5.6
Not Employed, Looking for Work	52.8
Not Employed, Not Looking for Work	20.0

LIMITATIONS

Although the breadth of the assessment was quite extensive, it was not possible to answer all the primary research questions exhaustively (as well as an additional fifty-four secondary questions). Where feasible, the data collection team conducted follow-up interviews and additional literature reviews to deepen analysis of the most salient issues, policies, and programs. As a largely qualitative assessment using purposive sampling, the assessment cannot purport to be statistically representative or generalizable to all youth in Guinea.

ANNEX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROFILE

FGD PROFILE BY AGE, SEX, REGION, AND URBAN/RURAL LOCATION

Number of FGDs by Region, Sex, Age Bandings, and Rural/Urban Mix		Female						Male						Total
		Female 18-19		Female 20-24		Female 25-35		Male 18-19^		Male 20-24		Male 25-35		
Region	Site	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Total
Conakry	Dixinn, Conakry													2
	Minière, Conakry													2
Boké	City Center, Boké													2
	Boffa, Boké													2
Kindia	City Center, Kindia													2
Mamou	City Center, Mamou													2
	Dalaba, Mamou													2
Labé	City Center, Labé													2
Kankan	City Center, Kankan													2
Faranah	City Center, Faranah				0.5						0.5			1
Nzérékoré	City Center, Nzérékoré				0.5						0.5			1
														20

ANNEX D: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW PROFILE AND KEY ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON YOUTH

The Assessment team conducted primary data collection through semistructured interviews with twenty-one key informants in individual and small-group settings. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the team leader and deputy team leader interviewed a majority of implementing partners, youth-focused organizations, youth leaders, service providers, government officials, and donors remotely. While the team aimed to meet with an array of key and interested stakeholders, sometimes the COVID-19 emergency prevented some organizations from participating. For example, IOM was contacted via email several times, but they were unresponsive. The summary table below provides a quick summary of the key organizations engaged through KIs or desk research and a snapshot of their youth-related activities.

Organizations participating in KIs

Organization Type	Some of the Organizations That Participated in KIs
NGOs; INGOs; USAID Projects	Plan International, ChildFund, Search for Common Ground, CNFA, ACDI/VOCA, RTI, NDI, Association for Youth with Disabilities
Community leaders, business leaders, youth associations	BSTP - Bourse de sous-traitance et de partenariat, Osez Innover, AVENIR graduates, Osez Innover, Ablogi
Government leaders; USAID; donors, UN agencies	Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Social Affairs, OPROGEM, World Bank, UNDP, IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA

Key organizations focused on youth

Organization	Youth Activities
Ministry of Youth and Youth Employment	The Ministry's goal is to promote youth programming within the realm of the National Development Plan (PNDES). The Ministry produced the National Youth Policy (2010–2020), which is not available publicly on the website. MOY is currently working on the "Strategy for Youth Employment" with support of the African Development Bank. The National Youth Policy focuses on 1) Youth participation (participation of young people in socioeconomic development and decision-making and 2) Promotion of citizens' education for the adoption of responsible behavior "to make youth both the main actors of their own development and vectors of active citizenship." The Ministry has been a member of the Confederation of Francophone Ministers of Youth and Sports (CONFESJES) since 1983.

Organization	Youth Activities
Ministry of Technical Education, Vocational Training, Employment, and Work	Focuses on strengthening of TVET systems and curricula. Supports the GOG initiatives aimed at increased in youth employment, self-employment, and entrepreneurship.
Ministry of Commerce	One of the three ministries engaged in the INTEGRA project, a joint initiative between the GOG and EU. Worked closely with International Trade Center on the market assessment study that identified lead agriculture value chains that displayed high potential for youth employment—cashew, coffee, cocoa, rice, and fonio.
Prime Minister’s Office	Responsible for general coordination of three ministries involved in youth development and youth employment—the Ministry of Technical education, Vocational Training, Employment, and Work; the Ministry of Youth and Youth Employment; and the Ministry of Commerce. The coordination team is tasked with raising awareness of national government initiatives aimed at increasing youth employment, youth entrepreneurship, and prevention of irregular migration.
AQUIPE	The Guinean Agency for the Promotion of Employment (AQUIPE) was created in 1989. Its mission is the implementation of the national policy in the promotion of youth employment. AGUIPE’s goals are: 1) Create favorable conditions for the job search through specific training. 2) Create a favorable dynamic between young people skills and the needs of the job market. 3) Guide young job seekers to the best opportunities. 4) Strengthen the links between unemployed graduates and the formal sector. 5) Insert graduates into formal employment opportunities in high-growth sectors with urgent skills deficits. 6) Encourage creation of jobs and opportunities throughout the Guinean territory. 7) Create and promote a unique platform for employment opportunities. 8) Maximize choices for youth and employers.
FONIJ	The National Fund for the Integration of Youth (FONIJ) supports the socioeconomic integration of young people twenty-eight to thirty-five years old. Funded by the Ministry of Youth. It aims to support the implementation of national strategies for the promotion and socio-professional and economic integration of young people. It focuses on promotion of entrepreneurship, supports qualifying training programs, provides assistance to the youth in productive and income-generating activities, supports youth access to finance. It encourages and supports local authorities/local governments in the implementation of youth programming, supports and finances internships in private companies and provides lump sum allowances for young community volunteers. Partly funded by the UNDP.
UNDP	Focuses on youth and women’s empowerment, skills development (business, organizational, and management skills-building), inclusive economic growth, women civic participation, adaptation to climate change, and resilience. It also supports multifunctional platforms. Economic activities support livelihoods in agriculture, fisheries, livestock, and forestry as they are main sources of income for more than 70 percent of the population. Supports strengthening of legal/regulatory framework to improve women and youth participation in political life, including number of women participating as candidates in local and national elections. Supports strengthening of professional unions and farmers’ associations. Supports most vulnerable groups, including youth, to increase their capacities for resilience and adaptation to climate change.

Organization	Youth Activities
IOM	Since 2017, implements IOM-EU Initiative (strengthening the governance of migration and supporting the sustainable reintegration of migrants). Focuses on six administrative regions: Conakry, Boké, Mamou, Labé, Kankan and Nzérékoré. The Initiative objectives are 1) support Guinea to improve the reintegration of two thousand returned Guineans in order to give them the tools and means to continue a decent life in Guinea; 2) strengthen national structures and capacities in terms of reintegration management in a dignified and sustainable manner; 3) enable migrants and potential migrants to make conscious decisions about their migratory journey and raise awareness in the communities most affected by irregular migration; 4) strengthen migration data and communication on migratory flows, routes, and trends.
UNFPA	Supports reproductive health services programming focused on essential obstetric care, adolescents and youth, family planning, and health commodities. It also aims to establish mechanisms to respond to gender-based violence.
UNICEF	Focuses on SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 16 in the forty rural communes with the most severe disparities and the lowest child development indicators. Focuses on interventions in WASH, health, and urban and peri-urban watersheds of Conakry, where poor hygiene and environmental risks are major problems. Supported launch of U-Report in Guinea. U-Report is an innovative application that, through free SMS, enables young people and adolescents to express themselves and make their voices heard by decision-makers on the topics that concern them. Through U-Report, young people have the opportunity to comment on topics such as health, education, climate change, access to water, hygiene and sanitation, and reproductive health. U-Report is also present on social networks Facebook and Twitter.
Plan International	Focused on children, adolescent girls, and young women programming in four key areas: 1) ASRH (adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls); 2) FGM/C; 3) prevention of violence in families and communities; 4) health and resilience programming. Working through community-based approaches and supporting youth and young women entrepreneurship, women and youth savings groups, and soft-skills development.
ChildFund	Life cycle approach to programming for three age cohorts: stage 1, zero to five years old (Healthy and Secure); stage 2, six to fourteen years old (Educated and Confident); and stage 3, fifteen to twenty-four years old (Skilled and Involved). Four programming priorities: FGM/C, school violence prevention, early marriage, and SGBV. Focused on in-school children and youth clubs. Currently implementing a VOICE NOW program to build youth advocacy skills.
Catholic Relief Services	Focuses on supporting national development efforts in the areas of health, community-level conflict prevention and resolution, governance, education, water and sanitation, and peacebuilding.
European Union	Funds the four-year INTEGRA (2018–2022) project under the Ministry of Youth. It aims to increase employment for fifteen thousand Guinean youth and create three thousand businesses; increase skills development; increase access to financing; and improve competitiveness of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the agricultural and ICT sectors.

Organization	Youth Activities
Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Saudi Fund	Funds programming in the areas of primary education, construction, extension, schools, and TVET rehabilitation. It supports construction of regional TVET centers co-financed by the Saudi Fund. IDB's contribution is geared toward infrastructure, equipment, and training of trainers for the TVET centers.
World Bank	Funds Stepping Up Skills project to boost the employability and employment outcomes of highly educated Guinean youth. Focuses on most promising sectors in agriculture, health, and energy. Three components: 1) Establishing fund for skills and employability. The fund supports two- to three-year professional training programs adhering to international certifications and delivered through a public-private partnership, or PPP. It aims to provide incentives and innovative approaches to improve skills, employability, and employment for targeted population. It designs and tests new training program models with a view to improve quality and relevance. 2) Education to Employment (E2E) program. The program provides unemployed graduates a career pathway to professional opportunities in training, internships, jobs, or self-employment through incentive-based PPP contracts. The priority sectors are mining, agriculture, and health services. 3) Improving institutional support and regulatory framework. By allocating resources directly to training institutions and introducing more spending flexibility, the competitive fund encourages a paradigm shift in institutional management and governance. Supports capacity-building of AQUIPE.
IFC	Provides advisory services to different line ministries on structuring and implementation of public-private partnerships (for example, the Ministry of Energy and Hydraulics for the power sector and the Ministry of Mines and Geology for the mining sector). In the past, focused on SME skills training in mining and agriculture. The training for SMEs included IFC Business Edge training; individual coaching; financial management; marketing; health and safety procedures; business plan development; and access to finance. Some initiatives focused on women business owners.
The Global Partnership for Education (GPE)	Provides support to education system during COVID-19 pandemic by supporting learning continuity during school closure through producing and disseminating print, radio, TV, and online materials. It is focused on vulnerable groups including girls, children in rural areas, and children with disabilities through distribution of small radios, school canteens, printed learning materials, and back-to-school and social mobilization campaigns targeting girls and producing guides based on a recently implemented accelerated education program for girls in isolated areas. Special support will be given to pregnant girls and SGBV victims (children and youth). The grant is implemented by UNICEF.
French Development Agency (AFD) and German Agency for International Development (GIZ)	AFD and GIZ provide support to primary education and girls' and young women's education. Substantial resources support youth employment and skills training. AFD supports TVET strengthening for lower-level secondary school skills. The Saudi Fund provides financing for construction of new regional TVET centers dedicated to lower levels of skills training (below the BAC level).
Search for Common Ground	Focuses on youth engagement in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Key areas: support peacebuilding dialogue, promote peaceful cohabitation and prevention of violent extremism, and peaceful conflict resolution. Engages youth through social media, theater, radio, and reality TV. Building skills through Peace Committees. A special approach for preventing violent extremism. Recently, organized the first Festival of Peace in Guinea. Engaged vulnerable youth in competitions to explore their creativity (photos, sketches) for peacebuilding.

Organization	Youth Activities
	Currently, pilots a Youth 360 initiative to strengthen youth leadership in the conflict prevention through social entrepreneurship.
Osez Innover	A youth-led organization aiming to end youth unemployment in West Africa. Supports entrepreneurial ecosystem to ignite social change. Focuses on creating a community of socially minded youth and youth entrepreneurs that fosters exchange of ideas, knowledge, and resources, catalyzing and promoting the social entrepreneurship in Guinea. The programming includes skills-building/training, access to finance, and follow-up support (“accompaniment”).
Ablogi	Association of young bloggers of Guinea. Started with Guinean youth living abroad but now mainly led by local bloggers (over four hundred of them). Aims to promote government transparency, governance, and youth access to public information. Supports youth voices in governance/political system.
Bourse de Sous-Traitance et de Partenariats (BSTP)	A platform that connects local youth-led or -owned companies with foreign companies. Created in 2019 and funded by GIZ, World Bank, and the GOG. Focused on low-income youth and entry-level and women’s skills-building. Supports capacity-building of youth SMEs supplying goods and services to mining and agriculture companies. Supports coaching and mentoring.
NDI	Offers several capacity-building opportunities for young people. It seeks to ensure that young people are represented and have spaces for expression within political parties.
Jeune Espoir	Founded in 2014 by a group of Guinean youth in order to “change Guinea and beyond from within.” Local education and research NGO that strives for successful school-to-work transition and responsible leadership. It supports improvements in education standards and academic performance and digital formats of academic curricula, helps youth identify and create sustainable livelihoods, and focuses on youth leadership.

Annex E	EDUCATION	LIVELIHOODS	HEALTH	SECURITY/SAFETY	YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
YOUTH PRIORITIES	<p>Access to quality education at all levels</p> <p>Market-relevant education that supports job-seeking</p> <p>Teachers are not well-trained; high absenteeism due to teachers' strikes</p> <p>Access to education still issue in rural areas and for girls</p> <p>Access to quality vocational training and facilities</p> <p>Parents' involvement in education is weakening ("encadrement")</p>	<p>Access to work a challenge due to skill gaps, corruption, nepotism, tribalism, gender discrimination</p> <p>Preference for entrepreneurship (with exception of Boké and Boffa with strong mining sectors)</p> <p>Strong preference for international organizations/private companies with strong employment rules/policies</p> <p>Access to finance</p> <p>Production sectors: modern, technology-based production, value addition, processing, marketing, and product transformation</p>	<p>Access to basic health care, SRH services, youth safe spaces, medicines, food</p> <p>Early marriage, teen pregnancy, and FP awareness</p> <p>Access to testing for HIV/AIDS and other STDs</p> <p>Deteriorating quality of interparental relationships—mental health</p> <p>Increased alcohol and substance abuse</p>	<p>Living free of crime/violence</p> <p>Justice and equality</p> <p>Online safety, social media</p> <p>Safety for women in workplace</p> <p>Desire for change in gender norms</p>	<p>Perception of high corruption within the government, even with funds targeted for youth programming</p> <p>Youth desire to participate in decision-making and leadership, exercising agency</p> <p>Equity and opportunity: elders and politics of ethnicity are barriers</p>

Annex E	EDUCATION	LIVELIHOODS	HEALTH	SECURITY/SAFETY	YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
BRIGHT SPOTS	<p>Education is key to self-reliance</p> <p>Youth is aware that hands-on, practical training is important</p> <p>Family/community supports (financial, morale)</p> <p>Youth crave support of teachers, mentors, and positive role models</p>	<p>Positive risk-taking</p> <p>Large amount of arable soil available to undertake agro-entrepreneurial projects at all sites except Conakry</p> <p>Successful business training and financial support projects by local and international organizations</p> <p>Young women are organized and can access money through savings groups</p> <p>Emerging examples of youth in nontraditional industries</p>	<p>Youth affiliated with the Counseling Center for Young People are aware of the danger of STDs and have skills to act when needed. Present in all regions.</p> <p>Youth are well aware of prevention and treatment of malaria.</p> <p>Youth can be agents of positive behavior change.</p>	<p>Help is available from friends and family.</p> <p>There is an alternative dispute resolution mechanism that is used when needed (Chef de Quartier).</p>	<p>Youth are civically engaged and prepared to lead in their communities</p> <p>Emerging active youth-led umbrella organizations and networks</p>
PROGRAMMATIC GAPS/ OPPORTUNITIES	<p>Increase access to quality education</p> <p>Train teachers</p> <p>Integrate technology, practical training, soft skills, and social-emotional learning throughout education</p> <p>Support establishment and strengthening of TVET curricula and its connection to market needs</p>	<p>Invest in youth entrepreneurship, market-driven, informal sector</p> <p>Invest in social entrepreneurship</p> <p>Meaningful internships and apprenticeships</p> <p>Engage private sector</p> <p>Integrate ICT into education</p> <p>Increase access to finance</p> <p>Support improvements in business-enabling environment</p>	<p>Increase access to SRH information and services</p> <p>Provide support to youth-friendly health centers</p>	<p>Provide youth with safe spaces</p> <p>Provide support to youth victims of gender-based violence</p> <p>Conduct public information campaign on youth online safety</p>	<p>Strengthen youth-led associations, organizations, and networks</p> <p>Invest in peer or adult coaching and mentoring</p> <p>Support youth-led public information campaigns on civic issues</p> <p>Support youth engagement in peacebuilding and conflict resolution</p> <p>Build citizen-government relationships and confidence</p>

Annex F	EDUCATION	LIVELIHOODS	HEALTH	SECURITY	YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
Location	<p>Access to quality education is a challenge for all youth from primary to university levels.</p> <p>Access to education is more difficult for rural youth, particularly girls.</p>	<p>Urban youth have better access to employment opportunities.</p> <p>Youth in mining areas have more access to jobs in the sector.</p> <p>All youth are interested in modern agribusiness.</p>	<p>Youth report high levels of STDs, particularly youth from Labé and Faranah regions.</p> <p>All youth lack access to youth-friendly health facilities and services; rural youth suffer the most.</p>	<p>Youth feel generally safe. Some youth report not being safe at home (abuse by parents or criminal gangs).</p> <p>Youth report instances of internet bullying and sexting.</p>	<p>Civic engagement is more common among older youth.</p> <p>Young men get paid to participate in political demonstrations.</p> <p>Youth use social media to communicate.</p> <p>Young women and rural youth are less active in civic space.</p> <p>Internet is mostly accessible in urban areas. Free Wi-Fi is rarely available to youth.</p>
Gender	<p>Gender gap remains wide. Girls are trailing behind boys.</p> <p>Girls' school enrollment has improved in past decade.</p> <p>Boys report more free time to rest and prepare for school.</p>	<p>Males make key financial decisions.</p> <p>Female and male roles define job options.</p> <p>Emerging examples of youth in nontraditional job categories.</p> <p>Female youth suffer more from workplace harassment.</p>	<p>Rise in alcohol and substance abuse by young males.</p> <p>SGBV affects females the most.</p>	<p>Young women are rarely able to file a complaint due to domestic violence.</p> <p>Young men are less safe at sports and other public/political events.</p> <p>Young women are unsafe at political demonstrations.</p> <p>Girls and young women are often victims of sexting on social media.</p>	<p>Parents and leaders rarely support female participation.</p> <p>Some young urban men report emerging female leadership.</p> <p>Young women have more limited access to leadership opportunities, phones, computers, and internet.</p>
Age	<p>Youth under age twenty are more focused on completing education.</p> <p>Older youth are more focused on education–employment transition.</p>	<p>Education-to-employment transition is taking longer.</p> <p>Older unemployed youth end up underemployed or in unsafe jobs in order to earn their living.</p>	<p>Among young women, FGM/C, early marriage, and teenage pregnancy remain high.</p> <p>Substance abuse by younger youth is rising.</p> <p>Girls and young women suffer from early marriage, FGM/C, and teen pregnancy.</p>	<p>All youth reported safety and security issues.</p> <p>All youth are victims of SGBV.</p>	<p>Adults and current leaders do not invest in building a new generation of leaders.</p> <p>Young civic leaders are emerging in the younger youth cohorts using social media and online tools.</p>