



The current global youth population is 2.4 billion, the largest in history. The growing number of young people poses both an opportunity for and a challenge to USAID’s development goals. When youth contribute to economic, social, and civic life, they help lift their countries out of poverty, ensure greater stability, and create healthier societies.

This brief provides a synopsis of USAID programming that engages young people in meaningful ways, including examples of the positive impacts of the Agency’s investments in youth globally from October 2021 to September 2022.

The programs highlighted here exemplify USAID’s updated Youth in Development Policy, which guides our programming toward an overarching goal: Increasing young people’s meaningful participation in their communities, schools, organizations, economies, peer groups, and families; enhancing their skills; providing opportunities; and fostering healthy relationships so they may build on their collective leadership.



There’s our dedicated youth programming, and then what we need to do because much of the developing world is young—which is that **all our programming should be youth programming.**¹

—Samantha Power, USAID Administrator



Click below to learn how USAID is engaging youth:

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¹ Budget Hearing – Fiscal Year 2024 Request for the United States Agency for International Development (1hr:34min)

FY 2022 HIGHLIGHTS



In FY 2022, USAID supported a range of youth programming:

More than **2,970 youth** successfully completed USG-funded leadership programs.



43 percent of youth who participated in soft skills/life skills training or initiatives from USG-assisted programs later took part in civic-engagement activities.



Youth (ages 15 to 29) represented **46 percent of participants** in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources.



Approximately **700,000 youth** learned a broad set of life skills and soft skills, including management, leadership, social, and/or civic-engagement skills.



Missions and Bureaus invested approximately **\$282 million in FY 2022 funding** in youth development programming.



The Youth Coordinator's Office issued more than **\$100,000 in small grants** to youth-led organizations through Youth Excel and Generation Unlimited.





WHERE WE WORK

Egypt | USAID equipped 40,720 youth with life skills and leadership training, and provided 55,876 youth with digital literacy training through the Creating an Enabling Environment for Adolescent Girls activity. USAID also supports Egyptian youth through the \$63 million University Centers for Career Development (UCCD) activity to establish career centers that better prepare graduates for employment. During FY 2022, 19 career centers at 12 Egyptian universities collectively served 79,247 students (60 percent women).

Guatemala | USAID's Puentes project has supported 42,464 youth to develop soft, technical, and academic skills. Youth participate in internships; engage in employment or entrepreneurship; and design their life plans. The activity provided workforce development training to almost 10,000 youth. Over 400 youth were also elected to positions on the Youth Councils of the Project's Youth Network. The project enrolled 185 youth in primary education and 3,281 youth in secondary education programs.

Colombia | USAID's Youth Resilience Activity (YRA) supported the access and participation of 8,430 young people ages 10-29 in life skills development and community engagement interventions. At the end of 2021, a record 1.2 million Colombian youth voted to elect 10,000 of their peers to serve on the country's first-ever Municipal Youth Councils. YRA strengthened 250 municipal youth councils in advocacy and monitoring of local youth policies, and integrated them into dialogues with the national government to design new elected government strategies for Colombian youth. YRA also engaged 2,835 youth in civic and community activities following their leadership and life skills training, including 804 from Afro-Colombian communities and 187 from indigenous groups.

Georgia | The USAID Empowering Youth for Peace Program built the leadership skills of 125 youth on both sides of the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict. This was accomplished through youth volunteerism and civic engagement in 16 communities across Georgia, including seven in occupied Abkhazia. These groups supported 58 local civic initiatives that mobilized 750 volunteers and provided youth with small grants on peace-building techniques.

Sri Lanka | USAID's Youth Employment and Business Start-Up (YouLead) activity works to design and integrate processes, learning content, and teaching methodologies into vocational classrooms and training institutes. YouLead developed 98 vocational courses in partnership with the private sector. As a result, 39,676 youth completed workforce development programs and 78 youth started new businesses the next year.

Democratic Republic of the Congo | USAID's Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA) builds on the foundational reading, writing, and numeracy skills of 7,120 Congolese youth to work in accelerated learning centers, technical and vocational training centers, and community literacy interventions. As a result, 70 percent of youth passed end-of-primary education standard exams, transitioning to higher education. USAID also facilitated the creation of savings and internal lending community groups benefiting over 3,650 youth.

*The topics highlighted in this brief reflect cross-sectoral areas of USAID youth programming and do not represent the full scope of the Agency's investment in youth programs in specific sectors.

INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT



Cambodia/Children in Adversity

USAID's Family Care First (FCF) initiative and UNICEF worked with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Cambodia to strengthen policies and systems to help children and youth living in residential care facilities transition and integrate into society. FCF, a network composed of global and community partners, is committed to increasing the percentage of children and youth living in safe, nurturing, and family-based care environments. Estimates suggest that approximately 80 percent of children living in orphanages have at least one living parent. This percentage is decreasing, but many young people are entrusted to residential care facilities because parents believe their children will receive better educational and health care services in the facilities. The USG continues to work with partners to build an effective alternative care system for children and youth in Cambodia. Through FCF, USG assistance strengthened domestic adoption, child safeguarding policies, and effective kinship and foster care, in addition to building capacity and child protection systems to prevent harm and trafficking of young people. FCF partners worked with young adults receiving reintegration services who are no longer able to stay in residential care (around age 18) to assist them with the transition to independent living.



Guyana/Youth with Disabilities; Indigenous Youth; LGBTQI+

The Youth Advocacy, Linkages, Leadership in Elections and Society (Youth ALLIES) Activity in Guyana promotes inclusive governance and political processes. The program has trained 164 young people, including youth with disabilities and Indigenous youth, to lead training sessions in their communities that focus on civic engagement and practical skills. Youth ALLIES also distributed civic education material in person and through social media, reaching 898 people. Forty-seven young people participated in workshops on misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech, and were able to identify counterstrategies. USAID also supported a workshop to help youth increase their advocacy skills and ability to stand up against violence toward LGBTQI+ groups.



Colombia/Indigenous Youth and Mental Health

The Pacific in Progress Activity is a youth-focused program that provided over 500 Afro-Colombian and Indigenous high school students with life-planning and mentoring support. The Activity also trained 200 of these students' relatives on soft skills so they can better support students in difficult moments, and trained more than 200 teachers on flexible teaching methodologies and emotional well-being. USAID extended this effort to its own workforce by developing an Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Fellowship program. Under this program, eight Afro-Colombian and Indigenous youth are gaining experience as USAID interns and playing an important role in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Agency activities.



Rwanda/Youth with Disabilities

The Umurimo Kuri Bose (UKB) Activity, which means "Employment for All," worked with the Rwandan government and local youth-serving organizations to build young people's employability skills and offer work-based learning opportunities. UKB provides training for youth with disabilities on technical skills, soft skills, resiliency, human rights, and leadership. A total of 984 youth participated in workforce development programs, with a 72 percent completion rate. In addition, 381 youth were trained in soft and life skills, and 813 youth were placed in on-the-job training or work-based learning.



Kosovo/Youth with Disabilities

The USAID Up to Youth Activity built the capacities of its Youth Advisory Board (YAB), a diverse group of 20 youth who support other young people participating in the program across the country. The YAB ensures that the entire Activity is youth-led. Up to Youth worked with those who were vulnerable to social exclusion, such as youth with disabilities. It engaged youth through 18 different cohorts that led participatory analyses of problems and solutions development to address those issues. The Activity also implemented 27 different youth-led initiatives, which were designed to address youth priorities.

YOUTH AND CLIMATE



Brazil

USAID/Brazil worked with the U.S. Forest Service fire management program to provide youth access to information and networking opportunities, while also building their capacity in integrated fire management skills that are critical for life in and around the Amazon. In addition, the Catalyzing and Learning through Private Sector Engagement for Biodiversity Conservation Activity engaged 84 young people to learn the benefits of sustainable natural resource management practices.



Haiti

In FY 2022, USAID's Community-Driven Development (CDD) Activity conducted training focused on environmental protection with the Water Resilience Unit of the State University of Haiti in Limonade. In total, 1,000 youth were trained in environmental and water protection. Schools in the North-East province hosted students from the University's Environmental Studies and Agronomy program, who shared their knowledge on best practices to address climate change, waste disposal, and protection of the environment. Sixty percent of the youth were women and most of them live in rural areas of the North-East province, a USAID Resilience Focus Zone.



Libya

The Local Governance and Civil Society Activity ("Ta qarib") strengthens subnational governance in Libya, focusing on 30 of the country's 140 municipalities. The Activity enabled locally nominated community leaders, including youth, to work closely with local governments in articulating a clear vision for municipal planning and service delivery processes. Ta qarib's citizen charters include youth signatories, and it issued multiple grants that increased youth organizations' involvement in local governments to implement environment, climate change, and waste management projects. The Activity successfully assisted the Ministry of Local Government to develop and adopt a municipal youth policy focused on youth engagement in several areas.



Timor-Leste

The Tourism for All project worked with youth (ages 15 to 29) to protect and promote Timorese culture; conserve the natural environment; incubate entrepreneurship; and expand awareness of tourism. A total of 331 youth and 12 individuals with disabilities benefited directly from the Project in FY 2022. Another initiative, "Sustainable Marine Tourism: A Field Experience for Timorese Youth," was organized in partnership with Compass Boat Charters through a USAID grant. This program took 90 Timorese youth on a one-week field trip to Atauro Island, where they visited local communities and connected with the underwater world. As a result, youth who were previously fearful of the ocean broadened their knowledge, appreciation, and awareness of the potential of their country's marine assets.

YOUTH AND MENTAL HEALTH



Bosnia and Herzegovina

USAID's Trust, Understanding, and Responsibility for the Future (PRO-Future) activity engaged youth in peace education that focused on emerging issues in mental health and confronting past exposure to trauma. Highlights include the Peace and Advocacy Camp and the "Through Young Eyes" program at the 2022 Sarajevo Film Festival, which gave youth opportunities to tackle sensitive issues and reflect on past atrocities and current divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and the region. USAID also partnered with Ministries of Education in six cantons throughout the Federation of BiH to implement peace education in 65 high schools. In partnership with a local mental health initiative, "Elephant in the Room," and the artist and rapper Adnan Hamidovic Frenkie, USAID launched a public relations campaign on anxiety and mental health.



Ukraine

USAID's Ukraine National Identity Through Youth (UNITY) Activity provided both stand-alone mental health and psychosocial support and integrated components to destigmatize mental health issues. UNITY helped train hundreds of Ukrainian secondary school teachers on manifestations of stress and anxiety among children, art therapy, and tools for building emotional dialogue between children and teachers. The Activity also created a checklist designed to support local organizations in applying a trauma-informed approach to the design, management, and implementation of programs for youth ages 15 to 35.



Liberia

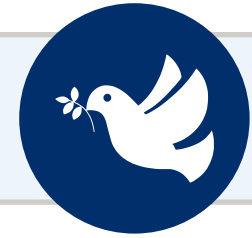
USAID's Youth Advance Activity integrated mental health into its job skills training for Liberian youth ages 15 to 35. The training included information on seeking referrals to sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and gender-based violence services. In addition, youth training promoted mental well-being, addressing subjects such as "Developing a Healthy Mind," "Building Skills to Support My Mind," and "Designing My Wellness Plan." In FY 2022, Youth Advance trained a total of 2,130 youth in these topics. At the community level, the Activity recruited 66 youth health volunteers and trained them on how to connect their communities with mental health resources.



West Bank and Gaza

The protracted conflict in the West Bank and Gaza continues to have negative consequences for children and adolescents, and increased tensions and violence have exacerbated the fragile circumstances surrounding their learning and well-being. The Positive Youth Engagement Activity is working to localize and adapt the Profound Stress Attunement (PSA) curriculum to the Palestinian context. PSA uses structured group activities and mentorship to help adolescents become more aware of their emotions and establish empathy, subsequently improving their mental and psychosocial well-being. The Activity strengthened the capacity of its mentors, coaches, and trainers in at least 20 safe spaces to support youth well-being. It also trained 42 mentors and coaches on PSA to support youth, and more than 1,013 youth participated in PSA workshops and interventions.

YOUTH PEACEBUILDING



Bangladesh

In FY 2022, USAID's Youth Entrepreneurship and Empowerment Support project funded six youth resource centers to serve as a source of information about jobs, employment opportunities, and other development issues for the Cox's Bazar community hosting the Rohingya refugees. The centers helped youth share ideas and discuss community issues with community leaders and local government representatives. The project reached 1,071 youth, including 912 females through 50 training sessions. USAID also trained youth as peace monitors and social cohesion activists or champions. Specifically, 390 youth volunteers served as peace monitors within their host communities. The Youth Empowerment for Social Cohesion project supported 18 youth clubs with a total of 360 members to address issues of social conflict. Thirty-six youth champions trained in 2021 continued to serve as change leaders by raising awareness of social cohesion, gender, and diversity issues in their communities. In addition, USAID trained 339 youth in social and leadership skills and engaged them in sports and cultural activities to improve their self-esteem, self-reliance, and promote social inclusion.



South Sudan

The Youth Empowerment program in South Sudan plays a crucial role in preventing youth violence by equipping young people with the knowledge and skills they need to lead healthy, engaged, and productive lives. Through the implementation of a Youth Corps Service Model, this Activity aims to empower 25,000 youth, both skilled and unskilled, with the support of 500 trained youth leaders acting as mentors supporting their peers in developing functional literacy, numeracy, and soft and life skills.



Ethiopia

USAID/Ethiopia's Elections and Political Processes Program completed a youth-focused conflict analysis that highlighted the drivers of conflict among Ethiopian youth and the obstacles to engaging in conflict resolution at a local and national scale. Building on this analysis, the Activity developed a program to engage youth in universities as peace ambassadors and trained 119 students from six national universities in conflict resolution, dialogue, and peacebuilding approaches.



Thailand

The USAID Chumchon Harapan ("Community of Hope") Activity initiated a "Peacemaker Lab" to formalize a youth network with the aim of leveraging young people's capacity and encouraging them to play a more substantial role in peacebuilding. The Peacemaker Lab will elevate the role of youth ages 17 to 22 as connectors in their communities, enabling them to represent youth voices and needs in development. To date, the Activity has provided training and mentoring to 97 Peacemaker Lab members, equipping them with digital literacy, digital citizenship, and leadership and team management skills to connect diverse people and promote peace and social cohesion through youth-led development projects.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP



Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan)

Through the Central Asia Youth Leadership Academy (CAYLA), USAID's Social Innovation in Central Asia (SICA) Activity works with and coaches young civic leaders to implement 23 community change projects in Kazakhstan through a youth leadership grant program. These projects have enabled 23 youth organizations and initiative groups to reach about 4,000 young people and engage more than 70,000 people on social media. One CAYLA alumni project provided 2,300 students and 200 teachers in rural areas with access to an intensive non-formal education program that advances soft skills and community-building values through training sessions, workshops, roundtables, quests, and other opportunities. Regionally, SICA works in Kazakhstan as well as Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, to build a new generation of vibrant and innovative civil society leaders.



Philippines

In FY 2022, the USAID/Philippines Youth Leadership for Democracy (YouthLed) Activity trained 4,091,068 youth on voter education and registration, 314,656 youth in civic education and engagement, 700 youth on coalition organizing, 234 youth in intensive social or leadership skills, and 241 youth in communications, design thinking, digital storytelling, narrative-building, and other innovative capacity-building interventions. USAID sponsored democracy-themed podcasts and videos, reaching over 280,000 young people. In addition, 66 youth-led civil society organizations participated in legislative proceedings or engaged in advocacy interventions. YouthLed increased youth leaders' and youth-led civil society organizations' access to high-quality training, coaching, and mentorship; voter registration information and guidance; training on election monitoring; and knowledge development forums on election and democracy discourse and debates.



Zambia

The USAID/Zambia Political Participation and Leadership Activity provided financial and technical support to the Centre for Young Leaders in Africa (CYLA) to advocate for greater youth representation in electoral and political processes. CYLA also works with a broader civil society coalition to incorporate youth and persons living with disabilities in these processes in a more democratic manner. With USAID's support, CYLA held live Twitter and Facebook talks on youth involvement in constitutional reforms, electoral systems, governance, and politics, reaching 1,550 people. It also held a behavioral change and communications workshop to strengthen young people's advocacy skills and promote youth representation in governance.



Pakistan

USAID's Community Resilience Activity-South (CRA-South) increases civic action among vulnerable youth to revitalize university student groups. In FY 2022, CRA-South trained 8,176 youth to initiate civic and social actions in areas with a strong extremist presence to address urgent community issues. The CRA-North activity engages youth through sociocultural activities and trains young farmers on modern agricultural techniques to provide livelihood alternatives. During FY 2022, CRA-North trained more than 900 youth in social, leadership, and life skills to lead social cohesion initiatives to promote social tolerance.

YOUTH NETWORKS



Dominican Republic

USAID provided assistance for 11 youth networks implementing crime and violence prevention plans in six high-crime and high-violence municipalities. These networks supported the USG Citizen Security Communication Strategy by amplifying messaging around communicating for conflict resolution. Through the At Risk Youth Initiative, youth networks also received training in project implementation and financial management, which culminated in youth-led activities in each of the 11 neighborhoods. The networks designed and implemented crime and violence prevention projects with mentorship and oversight from USAID, thus strengthening their organizational capacity as youth-led, community-based organizations. With USAID assistance, they also organized themselves into eight independent, nonprofit organizations with legal status in the Dominican Republic. As a part of formalization, each youth network's leadership participated in training on organizational management, fiscal responsibilities, and the legal characteristics of nonprofits.



Kenya

Through Empowered Youth (EY), USAID is building the capacity of local higher education institutions and youth organizations in six Prosper Africa countries that are partnering with the USG to promote private sector investments. Leveraging a network of youth-led organizations, EY identified and registered 4,541 youth for national identification cards, which serve as proof of citizenship and are required for formal employment, college enrollment, opening bank accounts, and other financial services including student loans. The Young African Leaders Initiative's (YALI) Regional Leadership Center in Kenya trains youth ages 18 to 35 in business and entrepreneurship, civic leadership, and public management. In FY 2022, YALI trained 274 participants from 14 east and central African countries. Participants graduated with the skills and networking opportunities necessary to strengthen their communities and join a robust alumni network that offers access to networking, mentors, and competitive grant funding opportunities.



Sudan

USAID provided financial and technical support to young people in Sudan who were forming advocacy networks to promote their rights. Efforts prioritized youth from diverse backgrounds, especially in marginalized areas. USAID also sponsored the TEDx Mukram-Kassala conference, which addressed various local community challenges, including social, educational, health, political, and economic issues. In Darfur, the Agency organized 30 innovation forums, engaging 1,387 young innovators and resulting in the formation of 11 networks involving painters, musicians, dramatists, actors, social media users, local and tribal leaders, and policymakers.



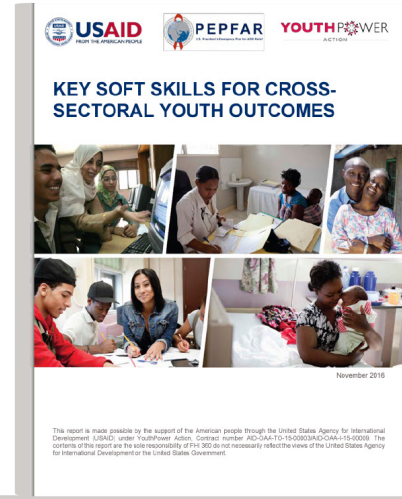
Guatemala

Through the Positive Youth Development-aligned Puentes Project, USAID supported 42,464 youth ages 15 to 29 to develop soft skills, technical skills, and academic skills; participate in internships; engage in employment or entrepreneurship; and design their life plans. In FY 2022, 5,800 youth graduated from the "Undertake Success" program, and 3,942 youth are currently enrolled in Cohort 9 of the program. The Project provided workforce development training to 9,818 youth and, to build project participants' leadership skills, works with youth networks of Guatemalan youth-centered organizations and activities. During FY 2022, 434 youth were elected to positions on the Youth Councils of the Puentes Project's Youth Network, which include 516 females in leadership roles (of 769 leaders total). Fifteen young women also participated in the Municipal Development Councils in nine municipalities. The Project facilitated access to flexible education, enrolling 185 youth in primary education and 3,281 youth in secondary education programs. It also referred 796 youth to specialized services to support their psychosocial, medical, and legal needs.

COURSE RESOURCES AND REPORTS



www.YouthLead.org
www.YouthPower.org



Positive Youth Development (PYD) 101 and 201 courses

