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ACTORS FROM THE POPULAR USAID-FUNDED TV SERIES YOLO ("YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE") | PHOTO: USAID/GHANA

GHANA YOUTH FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

Youth comprise the majority of Ghanaians, with individuals younger than 25 totaling nearly 60% of the population. Despite their critical role in Ghana's development, youth face significant unemployment and their overall contributions to GDP are limited. Notably, youth express reluctance to participate in an aging agricultural sector, and at the same time face barriers to financing and technology that would enable them to partake more actively in entrepreneurship, trade, and the post-production industry. In addition to these economic constraints, Ghanaian youth face many other salient challenges including poverty, gender inequality, conflict, and climate change.

On behalf of the American people, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) works with the Government of Ghana (GoG) to actively engage young people to achieve Ghana's long-term goal of being a self-reliant, prosperous, and stable democratic country, and to avert these threats and challenges to progress.

GOALS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

GOAL 1: IMPROVE FINANCIAL, TECHNOLOGY, AND HEALTH LITERACY AMONG YOUTH

The GoG has a primary goal of reducing youth underemployment and encouraging youth participation in pre- and post-production sectors. By integrating financial and technological literacy training into ongoing and new activity design, USAID will reduce barriers to employment and business opportunities for young people and encourage a new wave of innovation and technological advancement. Key achievements include:

- Partnered with the Ghana Health Service and the National Population Council to launch the sixth season of an award-winning TV series, ‘You Only Live Once’ (YOLO). YOLO follows the lives of a group of young Ghanaians as they explore key health, gender, social, and cultural issues. This popular “edutainment” series has been viewed 6.5 million times online. It confronts and educates young people on key health issues, including nutrition; malaria; maternal, newborn, and child health; water, sanitation, hygiene, and COVID-19.

GOAL 2: INCREASE ACCESS TO BUSINESS SERVICES AND AFFORDABLE FINANCING

The GoG seeks to improve the enabling environment for entrepreneurship in order to spur nationwide private-sector investment, industrial expansion, and economic growth. USAID supports the GoG in adopting financial inclusion policies and provisions for mitigating risks to lenders for small loans to help youth-owned businesses gain access to capital to expand their businesses. Key achievements include:

- Assisted entrepreneurs with promising agriculture business proposals to access financing from banks and cooperatives. Through targeted training, technical assistance, and financial incentives in FY22, USAID facilitated \$180M in additional agricultural lending to agribusinesses, including to around 20,000 youth entrepreneurs.

GOAL 3: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CIVIC EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT, AND ADVOCACY

According to a 2021 Youth Assessment, Ghanaian youth are among the most optimistic about their future in comparison to youth from other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, yet they express limited confidence in the rule of law and access to justice and are constrained from participating in democratic institutions by social norms. USAID understands that supporting youth representation in governance systems is crucial for institutionalizing long-term democratic governance and maintaining youth optimism in democratic systems. Key achievements include:

- USAID’s Feed the Future Ghana Policy LINK Activity held a 10th-anniversary celebration of the Youth Arise Organization’s Leadership Dairy Training Program. A panel discussion on “opportunities for young people” at the event encouraged young people to take a greater interest in the agricultural sector by discussing collaborative ways to adapt the sector to the needs and interests of youths.