Positive Youth Development for Workforce Readiness and Employability: What Do We Know?

YouthPower Learning Webinar

July 18, 2017

Advancing solutions to transform the lives of young people
Agenda

- Introduction – Nancy Taggart
- Presentation of Workforce Readiness and Employability Brief Findings – Caitlin Moss & Daniel Plaut
- BALIKA & A Ganar Presentations – Sajeda Amin & Anna Barrett
- Moderated Q & A
- Open Q & A
YouthPower Learning
Advancing solutions to improve young lives

- **YouthPower Learning** advances solutions through integrated research and development programs to improve the capacity of youth-led and youth-serving institutions.

- By engaging youth, their families, communities, and governments in innovative programs, we build young people’s skills, assets, and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the enabling environment; and transform systems.

What is Positive Youth Development (PYD)?

PYD programs recognize youth’s inherent rights and result in youth who have **assets**, the ability to leverage those assets (**agency**), and the ability to **contribute** to positive change for themselves and their communities, surrounded by an **enabling environment** that supports them.

[http://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development](http://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development)
How can we partner together?

• Identifying **What Works**

• Measuring PYD: [PYD Measurement Toolkit/Indicators](#)

• Sharing Resources, Events, Information, and What Works: Learning Hub [YouthPower.org](#)

• **Communities of Practice:**
  – Youth in Peace and Security
  – Gender and PYD
  – Youth Engagement
  – Cross-Sectoral Skills

• Ongoing YouthPower Activities: [YouthPower Projects](#)

• Apply for an Upcoming [Grant](#)
YouthPower Learning Brief
Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Findings on Workforce Readiness & Employability

This brief is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of Making Cents International through YouthPower: Evidence and Evaluation Task Order 1 (YouthPower Learning) AID Contract # AID-OAA-I-15-00034/AID-OAA-TO-15-00011. This brief does not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.
Table of Contents

1. What is Positive Youth Development (PYD)?
2. PYD Systematic Review in LMICs Methodology
3. Workforce Readiness and Employability (WR&E) Findings
4. Conclusions & Recommendations
PYD is positive, proactive, and holistic.

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.

PYD transitions away from traditional approaches that respond to young people in a risk or problem frame.

Instead, PYD supports youth holistically by proactively fostering positive attributes which can lead to an improved quality of life.

PYD theory suggests that if young people have adequate knowledge, skills, and support, sector-specific outcomes will improve.

Improved outcomes may include quality health, economic success, and meaningful contribution and engagement within communities.
To achieve the vision of healthy, productive and engaged youth, PYD programs, practices and policies must work with youth to improve the following qualities:
Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development in LMICs

YouthPower Learning’s Systematic Review of Positive Youth Development answered two questions:

1. How have PYD approaches been implemented in low- and middle-income countries?
2. What does the evidence say about the effectiveness of those approaches?

Search Criteria
- Projects engaging youth (ages 10-29)
- Studies included at least two PYD-related outcomes within the domains of assets, agency, contribution, and enabling environment

Literature Identification Approach
- Systematic search for peer-reviewed literature
- Purposive search and survey for grey literature: program descriptions, case studies, evaluations or end-of-project reports

Scope
- Searched for papers published between 1990 and 2015
- Covered three sectors: health, democracy and governance; education; and economic growth

Quality
- Assessed using an adapted version of the Checklist for Blueprint Program Evaluation, which sets standards for reviewing research designs, measures, and analyses

Identified 108 reports on 97 PYD programs implemented across 60 countries.
Defining Workforce Readiness & Employability (WR&E) Programs

In general, Workforce Readiness and Employability Programs:

• Are initiatives that help youth develop the necessary skills, competencies, and resources to secure and maintain meaningful employment.

• Often focus on creating opportunities for youth within the formal employment sector, but may also aim for economic engagement in the informal sector or entrepreneurship as desired outcomes.

• Can work towards outcomes related to other sectors as well (health, education, etc.)

For this review:

PYD programs identified through the systematic review were considered to be WR&E if they included any activities intended to improve youth’s ability to secure work, or measured outcomes related to employability or economic growth (including quality of employment, income levels, etc.)
PYD WR&E programs are concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa and work across sectors.

**Key Findings: Location & Sectors**

- **Programs working in WR&E** make up one-third of all PYD programs identified in this systematic-review: 33 out of 97 programs work toward WR&E outcomes.

- **Location:** WR&E programs included in the review operate in 20 countries, with a concentration in sub-Saharan Africa (15).

- **Sectors:** Many WR&E programs also work towards outcomes in other sectors, including Global Health (23), Democracy and Governance (21) and Education(20).

**PYD for WR&E in Low- and Middle-Income Countries**

- South Africa (4)
- Brazil (3)
- Ethiopia (3)
- Somalia (2)
- Uganda (2)
- Zimbabwe (2)
- Bangladesh
- Belize
- Colombia
- Dominican Republic
- East Timor
- Guyana
- India
- Kenya
- Kosovo
- Nepal
- Peru
- Rwanda
- Ukraine
- Yemen
PYD WR&E programs focus on building youths’ assets.

**Key Finding: Domains**

**Domains:**

- All WR&E programs identified through the review focus on building youths’ **assets**, in particular by building **vocational competencies** and **soft skills**.

- In addition to **assets** (33), WR&E programs also address **agency** (25) and **enabling environment** (23).

- Fewer programs (only 19) include **contribution**.

**PYD Domains: WR&E vs All Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>PYD WR&amp;E</th>
<th>Other PYD Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling environment</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assets:** WR&E programs work to ensure that youth have the necessary resources, skills, and competencies to achieve desired outcomes. Asset constructs include:

- Technical skills training
- Formal education
- Academic achievement
- Higher-order thinking skills

- Recognizing emotions
- Interpersonal skills
- Self-control
PYD WR&E programs are mostly implemented by NGOs and take place in community-based settings.

**Key Findings: Program Implementers and Setting**

- **Setting:** 25 of the 33 WR&E programs included in the review take place in community-based settings, compared to the majority of PYD programs, which occur in schools.

- **Implementers:** A majority (22) of WR&E programs are implemented by NGOs.

**Program Settings: WR&E vs. All Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>PYD WR&amp;E</th>
<th>Other PYD Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based settings</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare facility</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious or faith-based organization</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implementation in multiple settings:** 13 out of 33 WR&E programs were implemented in more than one setting, which has been shown to positively impact soft skills development (Soares et. al 2017) and is considered a success factor for PYD programs (Catalano et. al 2004).
PYD WR&E programs are delivered through direct service provision, and around half integrate gender issues in programming.

Key Findings: Gender Focus & Activities

Activities:
- WR&E programs tend to work less with parents and teachers than the average PYD program, and instead focus on direct service provision and educational activities (through training sessions, for example).
- 20 of the 33 WR&E programs implemented four or more activity types listed at right.

Gender Focus:
- About two-thirds of WR&E programs served both young men and women.
- Eight programs provided services only to young women.
- 18 programs integrated gender issues in programming, including addressing gender-based violence, forced and early marriage, and social and economic gender equality.
Overall, PYD WR&E programs lack rigorous evidence.

**Key Findings: Evidence Gaps and Impact**

- **Lack of rigorous evidence:** While 36% of the 108 PYD reports were categorized as experimental or quasi-experimental studies, the same is true of only 26% of WR&E studies.

- **Studies often did not report evaluation outcomes:** Over 40% of WR&E studies did not report any evaluation outcomes. Only a few experimental studies yielded statistically significant effect sizes relevant to WR&E.
Programs classified as WR&E demonstrated promising impacts across several measures. **Key Findings: Evidence Gaps and Impact**

- **Cross-sector outcomes:** A number of programs produced both WR&E outcomes and health outcomes. Impacts related to gender norms were also captured in experimental or quasi-experimental studies.

- **Health outcomes:** Positive outcomes were found in several studies, including a decrease in the number of sexual partners, increase in contraceptive use, and increases in knowledge related to HIV and pregnancy.

- **Gender equity outcomes:** Decreases in child marriage, pregnancy, and unwanted sexual contact, as well as improved community gender norms and wages for young women, were also found.

Positive Outcomes from WR&E Programs

- **Increases in formal and self-employment, as well as quality of employment** found in 3 of 9 experimental or quasi-experimental studies.
- **Increases in assets and earnings** occurred in 4 of 9 experimental or quasi-experimental studies.
- **Other WR&E outcomes** included increased savings, duration of employment, and work experience.
- **Increases in ability to apply for a job, understand marketing, and develop a business plan** were seen in some studies.
- **Positive outcomes related to adolescent sexual and reproductive health** were found in 3 out of 9 experimental or quasi-experimental studies.

*Gender equity outcomes were found in both female-only programs and in programs targeting both genders. The extent to which programs used gender-based intervention strategies, and data was not consistently clear from evaluation reports.*
PYD programs classified as WR&E are prevalent in LMICs and work across sectors and domains.

• PYD programs working towards WR&E make up about one-third of PYD programs in the systematic review.

• All WR&E programs focus on improving and increasing youths’ assets, including vocational and soft skills. Building agency and an enabling environment were also a goal of most WR&E programs.

• A majority of WR&E programs also include activities targeted at improving outcomes in the sectors of health, democracy and governance, and education.

Studies have found impacts of PYD programming on WR&E outcomes, as well as cross-sectoral outcomes.

• Programs such as Stepping Stones + Creating Futures and BALIKA suggest that PYD programs conducting health and economic empowerment activities can foster positive outcomes across sectors.

• Positive outcomes on gender equity have also been identified.

A significant evidence gap remains on the effectiveness of WR&E PYD programs.

• Only 26% of PYD programs working in WR&E conducted experimental or quasi-experimental studies.
Recommendations

1. **WR&E program implementers interested in deepening the support they provide to youth** should leverage existing PYD resources and approaches. Implementers working on WR&E programs can look to PYD programs for examples of holistic (cross-sectoral and multi-setting) youth development if they are interested in broadening the impact of their programs to address youth needs across sectors.

WR&E implementers may also want to incorporate youth-led and community-based approaches (such as peer education or activities with parents and teachers) into their programming to build broad support for youth and enable them to contribute to their communities. These approaches are more commonly used among non-WR&E PYD programs.
Recommendations

2. **Funders should support high-quality rigorous evaluations to expand the evidence base of WR&E PYD programs**

   There is a need for more rigorous evidence to better understand the added value of PYD programming in WR&E. Support for high-quality rigorous evaluations of promising models, including impact evaluations and cost-benefit analyses, should be considered.

3. **Funders should invest in promising approaches for cross-sectoral impact**

   The review highlights promising outcomes for PYD programs that address WR&E, including cross-sectoral outcomes (specifically health and gender equity). Proven models could be expanded and replicated.

4. **Researchers, implementers, and funders interested in capturing cross-sectoral impact should leverage existing PYD tools for monitoring and evaluation**

   Implementers and researchers can leverage existing PYD resources (such as the YouthPower Learning PYD Measurement Toolkit) for guidance on assessing PYD indicators.
YouthPower Documents

YouthPower Learning Systematic Review of PYD Programs in LMICs

http://www.youthpower.org/systematic-review-pyd-lmics

YouthPower Learning PYD Measurement Toolkit

http://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development-toolkit

YouthPower Action RFA: Integrated Workforce Development and Sexual and Reproductive Health Activity

http://solicitations.fhi360.org/Solicitation.aspx

YouthPower Action Assessment of Integrated Workforce Development and Sexual and Reproductive Health Interventions with Recommendations for the Future

https://static.globalinnovationexchange.org/s3fspublic/asset/document/YouthPower%20Action_IntegrateWorkforce%20andSRHAssessment_Final.pdf?b9wtqmi8UG1gxJgja6Xr5BjnZpH1OykF

Click here to learn more about Positive Youth Development, or visit YouthPower.org for more details.
Additional References


Acknowledgments

This brief is the result of a collaborative effort by the YouthPower Learning team. It was prepared by Making Cents International, the International Center for Research on Women, Results for Development Institute, University of Melbourne, and University of Washington, under the authorship of Dr. Gina Alvarado, Dr. Chisina Kapungu, Ms. Caitlin Moss, Mr. Daniel Plaut, Dr. Nicola Reavley, and Dr. Martie Skinner. The authors acknowledge and give thanks to our YouthPower Learning team colleagues who contributed to the systematic review and brief. They include Ms. Cassandra Jessee, Dr. Christy Olenik and, Dr. Suzanne Petroni. The team also appreciates the data visualization support from Chris Lysy. The team also acknowledges valuable input from the broader YouthPower community, especially YouthPower Action and members of the USAID YouthPower Steering Committee. In particular, the authors appreciate feedback and support from Ms. Laurel Rushton and Ms. Nancy Taggart from USAID’s Bureau for Global Health and USAID’s Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3).


Visit us at YouthPower.org to learn more, and follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates.

For public inquiries and additional information, please email comms@youthpower.org or mail to: Making Cents International, Attention: YouthPower Learning 1350 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 410, Washington DC 20036
BALIKA
(BANGLADESHI ASSOCIATION FOR LIFE SKILLS, INCOME, AND KNOWLEDGE FOR ADOLESCENTS)
GENERATING EVIDENCE TO DELAY MARRIAGE IN BANGLADESH

Sajeda Amin
Senior Associate
Population Council
July 18, 2017
Expanding Opportunities

• interventions designed to address the problem of “a failure to aspire”

• Offer opportunities to girls that can be alternative pathways to early marriage by building **assets** and changing aspirations
Role of Aspirations

- Opportunities for employment/alternate pathways change marriage and fertility patterns (Jensen 2012)
- Female leader role models changes gender role stereotypes (Beaman et al, 2009)
- Information about the outside world and other ways of life decreases acceptability of violence against women (Jensen & Oster, 2009)
The Program

Presents a holistic approach to addressing child marriage

• Multiple components: SRHR, livelihoods, education
• Multiple levels: individual, family, community (from village to district level)
• Multiple actors: girl, parents, community leaders
Research design

- Randomized controlled trial
- Three intervention strategies: all received 44 hours of life skills training plus 100 hours of education, gender rights awareness, or livelihoods training
- Random selection: 120 girls per community
- Baseline and endline surveys, focus groups and interviews

- Reached: ~9,000 girls aged 12 – 18 in 72 communities
- Locations: Khulna, Satkhira, Narail Bangladesh
- Duration: Nov 2012 – Sep 2016
- Qualitative and quantitative data over 18 months

All groups received:
Basic life-skills training
ICT support
Community-awareness training
Elements of the BALIKA approach

**BALIKA Center Activities**
- Basic Life Skills training for all girls
- Additional training in: Gender rights & awareness, education, or livelihoods skills

**Community Mobilization**
- Community awareness raising and advocacy
- Courtyard sessions for parents
- Committee meetings for community members to build support

**Use of technology**
- Computers
- ToT for facilitators
- Capacity building of interns

**Sustainability**
- Community-based approach
- Engaging the community
- Community ownership
Intervention strategies

**Education:** tutoring support in mathematics and English

**Livelihoods skills training:** in computers, entrepreneurship, first aid and basic paramedic skills, mobile based application, photography, and mobile phone skills for financial transactions

**Gender rights awareness training:** in life skills training, including information about gender rights and negotiation, critical thinking, and decision-making

**Comparison:** A comparison group receiving no interventions
Livelihoods skills

- Basic computer (25 hours) - web search capabilities, MS office (word, excel), email, skype
- Basic health screening (17 hours) - monitor blood pressure and temperature, first aid, maternal health, nutrition
- Photography (30 hours) - digital photography, editing through Photoshop, printing
- Mobile based application (13 hours) - mobile banking, talk time recharge, mobile app download
- Entrepreneurship (15 hours) – budgeting, planning, savings, profit-loss

A total of 100 hours of skills training delivered by the skilled mentors
Resources used

• Skilled mentors serve as role models
• Use of technology – computer
• Interactive hands on training with digital content
• Resource books for girls and mentors
• Equipment – laptop, tablet, camera, mobile phone, health equipment
BALIKA: Empowering girls and building assets

Statistically significant findings from the three intervention strategies, relative to the comparison group.

FEWER GIRLS MARRIED AS CHILDREN

REDUCTION OF:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EDUC.</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>LIVELI.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls married at the end of the study</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever married before 18</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BALIKA: Empowering girls and building assets

Statistically significant findings from the three intervention strategies, relative to the comparison group.

1. EDUCATION
2. GENDER-RIGHTS AWARENESS
3. LIVELIHOODS SKILLS

**IMPROVED EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EDUC.</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>LIVELI.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently in school</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excelling on mathematics test</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>nss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently earning an income</td>
<td>nss</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

nss = not statistically significant
Summary of Program Impact

All three arms showed significant impact on child marriage, school enrolment, gender attitudes and health behaviors and two arms showed impact on workforce participation.

Program impact diffused to non-members in Livelihoods skill training.
Recommendations

- Design programs based on context analysis
- Reach girls early while they are in school
- Provide girls with the skills they need to succeed
- Create girl-centered platforms
- Engage the community
- Employ mentors and trusted adults
- Use technology
A Ganar
Youth Workforce Development through Sport

Presented by:
Anna Barrett
Sport for Development Adviser
Partners of the Americas

July 18, 2017
Partners of the Americas is an international non-profit organization. We connect people and organizations across borders to serve and to change lives through lasting partnerships.
A Ganar is an award-winning methodology that uses sport to teach low-income youth important principles of respect, teamwork, discipline, communication, focus on results, and continued self-improvement that can be transferred from the field to the workplace.

A Ganar Mission: Prepare youth in Latin America and the Caribbean to enter the world of work, learn entrepreneurial skills, or re-enter the formal education system.
A Ganar targets at-risk youth, ages 16-24, who are from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and underserved communities, are unemployed/underemployed, and are motivated to participate.
• **Original countries:** Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay (2005)

• **Implemented in:** 19 countries in Latin American and the Caribbean

• **Major Funders:** Inter-American Development Bank, US Agency for International Development, Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), US Department of State, Ministry of Education in Barbados
Skills that are critical on the sport field are also critical in the world of work and life.
Sport is more than a game—it is an effective tool for promoting mutual understanding, social inclusion, gender equity, economic development, health and leadership.
Mentorships and Service Learning
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT FROM BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS

PHASE 1
Sports-Based Employability Training
TEAMWORK, COMMUNICATION, FOCUS ON RESULTS, DISCIPLINE, RESPECT, CONTINUOUS SELF-IMPROVEMENT

PHASE 2
Market-Driven Technical Training
REINFORCING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS THROUGH TECHNICAL TRAINING

PHASE 3
Practical Experience
INTERNSHIPS APPRENTICESHIPS OR OTHER SUPERVISED EXPERIENCE

PHASE 4
Follow-On
ALUMNI SUPPORT AND LINK TO EMPLOYMENT

A GANAR

www.partners.net | @PartnersAmerica | PartnersAmericas
The Impact of A Ganar:

- A Ganar has worked with over 16,000 youth across Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Approximately 65-70% of participants graduate from the program (complete the first 3 phases).

- Approximately 65-70% of graduates obtain formal employment, return to school or start a business within one year.

- A Ganar youth have completed over 145,000 hours of community service.
Main research question (Proof of Concept):

To what extent does participation and completion of the A Ganar program increase the likelihood that youth will obtain and maintain jobs, return to school, start their own business or reduce risky behavior?

Methodology: Longitudinal, 2 year RCT study
Key Findings (Honduras)

A Ganar led to significant improvements in youths’ job quality. Program youth reported higher wages, higher prevalence of benefits, and higher job satisfaction. Employment rates, however, were similar in both groups.

Intermediate outcomes showed very positive results. A Ganar led to significant increases in both personal strength and a supportive social environment. A Ganar youth achieved better self reported professional capabilities in almost all categories, with significantly better skills in CV-writing.

Socio-emotional impacts were strong. Both personal strength and supportive social environment increased significantly for participants. This is consistent with qualitative impacts, which showed much improvement in socio-emotional outcomes.
**“If you were to ask me today if A Ganar really instilled (work and life skills) in me, I would say that it did that and much more. Thanks to this program, I discovered that sport is good, but it is even better to use it as a means to gain knowledge and to grow as an individual.”** – Honduras

**“What I liked most about the program was that it did not only prepare us for entering into the workforce, but the program was interested in instilling us with values that make us a better person and will not only help us be workers in some business, but workers with values.”** – Dominican Republic
Q&A
What can you do next?

- Use social media to spread the message of PYD.
- Join a YouthPower Community of Practice.
- Visit the YouthPower Learning Hub at www.YouthPower.org and use the resources, best practices, and knowledge shared.
- Apply for a Grant under Contract in the next round.
- Register on the Learning Hub and share your own reports, studies and other resources on the Learning Hub, submit a blog, announce a PYD event.
Thank you!

Thank you for participating in this YouthPower Learning event hosted by the Gender and PYD CoP.

The recording, presentation, and any resources shared during this event will be sent to all registrants.

@YPLearning  YouthPower Learning