



Save the Children

Connecting youth to services

Key Learnings from Youth in Action



Session Objective

This session focuses on:

What are the strengths and limitations of how YiA has connected youth to services?

Services in Youth in Action



Services in Youth in Action

- YiA facilitates youth linkages to services in order to help youth better embed themselves and their livelihood initiatives in the market and community.
- Services utilized by YiA vary **based on:**

The availability of services.

The needs of youth.

The kinds of partnerships that the program has been able to leverage.



Services in Youth in Action

Services that YiA connected youth to:

Financial services

Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), Banks, Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs), Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs)
Mobile money services.

Business development services

Government business services; Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and artisans.

Health services:

sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and personal hygiene.

Education services

linked youth to formal schools and vocational training institutions

Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

- 1. Connecting youth to financial services is contextual.**
- 2. Business development services are limited in rural communities.**
- 3. Connecting out of school youth to learning alternatives is vital to ensure enterprise sustainability.**
- 4. Access to Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) Services is key to providing quality youth livelihood programs.**

Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

1. Connecting youth to financial services is contextual

- YiA acknowledges the role of financial services in equipping youth with the necessary tools to become economically productive.
- Youth face challenges in accessing formal financial services.
- The program confronted significant challenges in its attempts to link youth to formal financial service providers. Such challenges included:
 - Limited access to formal financial services,
 - Legal age restrictions for accessing services,
 - High transaction costs,
 - Negative stereotypes about youth.

Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

1. Connecting youth to financial services is contextual

➤ VSLAs are accessible but can be mistrusted

- Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) was one of the most effective mechanisms for promoting a savings culture among youth.
- YiA did recognize some related challenges, including for example, that some groups were too big, which impacted decision making activities.
- in Malawi, some communities, including parents of YiA participants, resisted VSLAs within their communities because it was common for members to run away with group savings and others not paying back their loans

Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

1. Connecting youth to financial services is contextual

- **Mobile money services are accessible but process heavy**
 - In some rural African communities, due to limited access to formal financial service institutions, mobile money services have become increasingly popular.
 - Mobile money” includes services that allow electronic money transactions over the phone.
 - YiA realized that there were some key benefits to integrating mobile money services into the program.

Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

2. Business development services are limited in rural communities.

- Government services are the most effective means of linking youth with BDS.
- Working with local services was more or less effective in different YiA countries because of varying levels of buy-in and support from governments.
- Government services include agricultural extension services and business training.
- YiA in some countries collaborated with community development officers (CDOs), who provide business trainings to community members



Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

2. Business development services are limited in rural communities.

- Apprenticeship and vocational training are central for youth skills development
 - YiA embedded vocational training and apprenticeship as two options that youth could choose from upon completion of the learning phase.
 - Burkina Faso implemented apprenticeship, while Egypt, Malawi and Uganda implemented both vocational training and apprenticeship.
 - In the case of apprenticeship, YiA attached youth to a successful community artisan who received a stipend to provide youth with on-the-job training in different enterprises.

Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

3. Connecting out of school youth to learning alternatives is vital to ensure enterprise sustainability.

- YiA supported youth to identify and explore livelihood opportunities through a combination of non-formal education and practice oriented learning experiences.
- YiA's education pathway offered youth an option to go back to school or join vocational training with the support of a small grant.
- Returning to school primarily benefited the Very Young Adolescents (VYAs) and a few older youth who opted to go back to formal schools.

Connecting youth to services in Youth in Action

Key findings from YiA

4. Access to Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) Services is key to providing quality youth livelihood programs.

- Connecting youth to SRH services helped YiA address programmatic challenges like high pregnancy rates, limited access to family planning services, and no access to sanitary towels.
- This in return increased the participation of girls in the program activities and reduced numbers of those dropping out.

THANK YOU



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Youth Testimonies

Abdel Rahman from Egypt

The facilitators took my group to visit entities that provide **financial services** in my village, among them was a **local community-based organization**. I asked about the requirements to get a **loan** and returned with my mother to take out a loan in her name as I am still under age. I used the loan to top up the cash grant that I received from the program to buy materials and tools to complement the equipment for my project, which is sewing. My father went with me to whole sale shops and I bought all that I needed with a competitive price. This helped me to increase my profit, grow my business and helped me satisfy my clients' needs.



“The connections I made through this program such as access to financial services, connections to whole sale markets and clients will continue. I am planning to take another loan once I repay the current one to grow my business even more.”



SAFIATA from Burkina Faso

Aged 19 years old, Safiétou, the mother of a daughter, became one of the best weavers of Bama's "DANFANI" loincloth weaving.

“During the learning sessions, service representatives and other resource persons came to talk to us about topics such as **sexual and reproductive health**, savings and financing.”

with the advice I received from **MFI agents on management and savings**, I effectively run my business and it allows me to maintain my daughter and me without financially depending on my companion.

I am sure that the knowledge and connections that the project has established will continue because I and my friends have realized their importance and the positive impact it will have on our lives.



“Today, we can approach all those people and structures that remain available to accompany us without the intervention of a project staff.”

Azemera from Ethiopia

Azemera, 18, from Woldia, Ethiopia, was about to migrate to the unknown to help her family make ends meet when our Youth in Action Program started in her village. The programme has transformed her life.

Azemera now weaves, has a steady income, and most importantly, has acquired the necessary skills to sustain and grow her business to an even bigger one in the future.

Azemera says that YIA gets her connected with **local mentors** who helped her on linking her to market after graduation. YiA helps her to link with **local businesses**, trade and business associations as well as **peer-to-peer networks**, which could serve her as source of information on market price in the locality.



Azemera is highly optimistic that she will enjoy the support of mentors even after the program.

Never Makota from Malawi

Youth In action has helped me to be connected to **banking services**. Through what I was learning at the learning center I decided to open an **Airtel money account** where I keep all my money.

I believe that my money is safe and I can easily access the money whenever I need it.

In addition YIA has helped me to join VSL group in my village where I am also saving some money.

I am also able to borrow money from the group which help me pay other builders when I have been offered more building contracts.

The VSL group is a village group and as a community we agreed that we will be participating in VSL every YIA. In addition the group grows big every year meaning that people are interested and this means the group shall exist forever. Airtel money is an existing company in our area.



THANK YOU



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