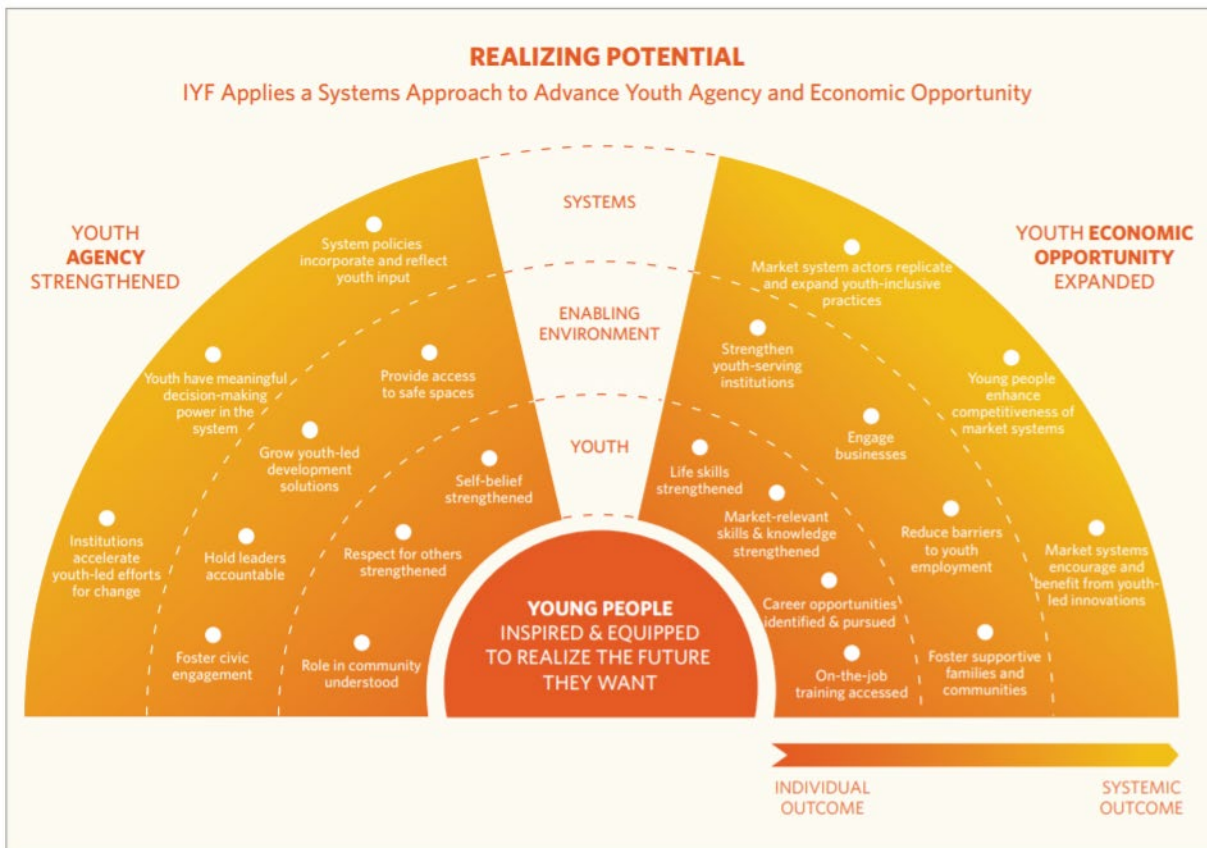


IYF is a learning organization, committed to answering the youth development field’s most pressing questions, which are consolidated into IYF’s learning agenda. A learning agenda articulates key questions for organizational leadership, a process for collecting answers to those questions, and the resulting learning products. Taken together, these provide actionable information about the institution’s performance, guide an iterative process of internal learning and improvement and forward-looking strategic planning, and contribute to the base of knowledge on youth development. This learning agenda was developed through a consultative process with IYF technical and program staff and reflects current [Positive Youth Development](#) and [Youth Systems Collaborative](#) learning priorities. IYF’s learning agenda focuses on mechanisms and approaches for improving youth assets and agency and for contributing to an environment that enables increased economic opportunity and positive youth development.

Appropriate learning activities—such as observational learning, qualitative studies, and impact evaluation—to generate evidence and information are determined, along with the necessary learning partners and resources. Project-level learning agendas are proposed during the business development process, consistent with IYF’s “Realizing Potential” approach illustrated in the graphic below. Research, evaluation, and learning activities are integrated into new projects, ongoing annual project workplans and budgets and are guided by the Research and Evaluation Questions below.



Research and Evaluation Questions

The Learning Agenda Research and Evaluation Questions are divided into two themes:

1. Youth Outcomes
2. Systems and Partnerships

Youth Outcomes

1. MODELS AND MECHANISMS

What models and mechanisms are most effective to improve outcomes in 1) youth agency, and 2) youth economic opportunities?

2. YOUTH OUTCOMES¹ OF IYF CURRICULA

To what extent do IYF curricula (e.g., Passport to Success® (PTS) life skills training) lead to improved youth assets and agency, and improved labor market outcomes for youth and at what cost?

3. TRADITIONAL VS. DIGITAL DELIVERY MECHANISMS

How do outcomes of digitally-administered programming differ from traditional, in person, programming for youth? How does digitally administered training complement traditional, in person skills training for youth?

4. STRATEGIES FOR ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS² FOR YOUTH OUTCOMES

How can stakeholders (peers, relevant adults, family members, community members, policy makers, private sector partners, etc.) be engaged to support or create an enabling environment to support youth agency and youth economic opportunity outcomes for youth?

5. YOUTH VOICE AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

What are effective strategies for meaningful youth engagement and contribution to a development intervention?

¹ Labor market outcomes of interest are: retaining work (same job, steadiness of work), ascending in job position, wages, benefits, working conditions (desirability), and on the job performance.

² Per the [PYD Framework](#), “environment” includes: social (e.g., relationships with peers and adults), normative (e.g., attitudes, norms and beliefs), physical (e.g., safe, supportive spaces) and structural (e.g., laws, policies, programs services, and systems). Note that structural dimensions are addressed below under “systems and partnerships”.

Systems and Partnerships³

6. SYSTEMS APPROACHES

What are effective approaches to facilitate and sustain positive system change for youth development?

7. CRITERIA FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

What is required, in terms of context, partnerships, capacity, and resources, to affect systemic change on a national, regional, or local level?

8. STRENGTHENING CAPACITY OF YOUTH-LED AND YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

What are approaches that effectively strengthen the capacity of youth-led or youth-serving organizations? How effective are current approaches to strengthening organizational capacity?

9. OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO YOUTH INCLUSION

What are the factors that systematically exclude youth from local systems (e.g., political systems, development interventions)? What approaches effectively address barriers to youth inclusion?

10. MARKET SYSTEMS ACTORS ORGANIZED TO DEVELOP MARKET RELEVANT SKILLS

Which approaches to engaging firms to identify market relevant skills deliver the highest return on investment? What economic trends impact market relevant skills? What are critical skills for the 4th industrial revolution?

³ Per the [Youth Systems Framework](#) the four domains to consider are policy, resources, services and practice, and norms and mindsets.

Annex 1: Detailed Learning Questions

Youth Outcomes

1. **MODELS AND MECHANISMS.** What models and mechanisms are most effective to improve outcomes in 1) youth agency, and 2) youth economic opportunities?
 - a. Are youth agency outcomes comparable for different subsets of young people⁴? What are unintended effects on these youth outcomes?
 - b. Are economic opportunity outcomes--including increased incomes, high quality jobs, or self-employment--comparable for different subsets of young people? What are unintended effects on these youth outcomes?
 - c. How does the return on investment and social return on investment vary according to the models and mechanisms applied?
 - d. What are the most effective wrap-around or support services that remove barriers young people face from accessing development opportunities and advancing along career pathways, exercising their agency, and taking action in their communities? (e.g. psychosocial support, career guidance, job placement services, parental engagement, transportation, GESI-related accommodation, childcare, meals.)
 - e. What models and mechanisms prepare young people best for working in the world of work today (e.g. the digital economy (outsourcing, tech support, etc.), remote economy, local labor market evolutions)?

2. **YOUTH OUTCOMES⁵ OF IYF CURRICULA.** To what extent do IYF curricula (e.g., Passport to Success® (PTS) life skills training program) lead to improved youth assets and agency, and improved labor market outcomes for youth and at what cost?
 - a. Which modules are most beneficial for which youth outcomes (including socio-emotional learning, youth agency and labor market outcomes)? How much of an additional benefit are additional modules or versions (e.g., PTS-G)?
 - b. What is the ideal dosage and sequencing of modules to affect socio-emotional learning, youth agency and labor market outcomes? How does this vary according to population subset?
 - c. How context specific is the curriculum? To what extent do the effects vary by geographic setting, sector, or type of job training?
 - d. What are the necessary conditions for effectiveness (subset of youth, labor market conditions, policies or regulations)?
 - e. What is the optimal delivery method of the curriculum for different **work** settings (e.g., jobs in the digital sector)?

⁴ Subsets of the population segmented by descriptive characteristics including gender, age/psychosocial development level and social inclusion variables such as disability status, ethnic and racial minorities, NEETS & opportunity youth, geographic location (rural/ urban, postal code, etc.).

⁵ Labor market outcomes of interest are: retaining work (same job, steadiness of work), ascending in job position, wages, benefits, working conditions (desirability), and on the job performance.

- f. What is the return on investment for employers or firms that hire graduates of the curriculum?
 - g. What is the social return on investment of the curriculum for institutions and organizations that implement the curriculum?
 - h. What are the labor market outcomes for program participants that have completed **both** the curriculum and demand driven technical training?
3. **TRADITIONAL VS. DIGITAL DELIVERY MECHANISMS.** How do outcomes of digitally-administered programming differ from traditional, in person, programming for youth? How does digitally administered training complement traditional, in person skills training for youth?
- a. What is the most impactful digital delivery mechanism for a given participant group?
 - b. Under what conditions should digital or blended solutions be applied for youth agency and youth economic opportunities programming?
 - c. What contextual factors, such as youth profile, minimum skill level of learners, must exist to ensure the best outcomes for each delivery mechanism?
 - d. How can usage data and participant feedback be designed as a feedback loop to refine digitally-delivered content? At what stage is user feedback most useful for adaptive management?
4. **STRATEGIES FOR ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS⁶ FOR YOUTH OUTCOMES.** How can stakeholders (peers, relevant adults, family members, community members, policy makers, private sector partners, etc.) be engaged to support or create an enabling environment to support youth agency and youth economic opportunity outcomes for youth?
- a. What activities and approaches are most effective in promoting and facilitating key PYD program features which are part of the enabling environment domain: healthy relationships & bonding; belonging & membership; positive norms, expectations, and perceptions; safe spaces; access to age appropriate & youth friendly services; and integration among services?
 - b. What interventions targeting the enabling environment (such as parental engagement workshops) are most effective in facilitating skills acquisition and change in youth agency ?
 - c. What interventions are most effective in facilitating youth-inclusive market systems (e.g., value addition, creation of new opportunities).
 - d. What interventions are most effective for facilitating mutually beneficial youth-adult partnerships, and when and how can they be best assessed?

⁶ Per the [PYD Framework](#), “environment” includes: social (e.g., relationships with peers and adults), normative (e.g., attitudes, norms and beliefs), physical (e.g., safe, supportive spaces) and structural (e.g., laws, policies, programs services, and systems). Note that structural dimensions are addressed below under “systems and partnerships”.

5. YOUTH VOICE AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT

INTERVENTIONS. What are effective strategies for meaningful youth engagement and contribution to a development intervention?

- a. At what points in the intervention life cycle is youth engagement most valuable? How does this differ for different stakeholders?
- b. How can youth engagement in a development intervention be measured, for both the youth participants and the intervention? What are the outcomes, costs, and return on investment of youth engagement?
- c. What types and levels of engagement are most effective?
- d. What are effective strategies to work with adults and systems to enable meaningful youth engagement in development interventions, including transferring power to youth?
- e. What are the benefits of youth engagement to the youth (as opposed to the development intervention)? Are outcomes—such as assets, agency and economic opportunity—for youth participants engaged in the intervention different from those not engaged?

Systems and Partnerships⁷

6. SYSTEMS APPROACHES. What are effective approaches to facilitate and sustain positive system change for youth development?

- a. What are the main actions that affect systems change, e.g. actions across the enablers of the Youth Systems Collaborative's Framework: stakeholder collaboration, visioning, systems mapping, capacity development, and data, learning and evaluation?
- b. What are effective approaches to working with formal education institutions (e.g., school systems, TVET institutions) and relevant stakeholders to achieve systemic change in areas such as curricula, pedagogy, support services such as career guidance, private sector engagement and demand-aligned models?
- c. How can relevant stakeholders (e.g., government employees in the vocational training and education sector) be effectively engaged and motivated to advance systems change (e.g., change practice)?
- d. How can new products or methodologies be integrated effectively and sustainably into TVET institutions?

7. CRITERIA FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE. What is required, in terms of context, partnerships, capacity, and resources, to affect systemic change on a national, regional, or local level?

- a. What is the value of partnerships? In the case of a project that works through a public-private alliance model, what is the most effective role of each actor? What is the level of collaboration required to be effective? What are effective mechanisms for coordination that optimally predict successful changes within systems?

⁷ Per the [Youth Systems Framework](#) the four domains to consider are policy, resources, services and practice, and norms and mindsets.

- b. How can the changes introduced into a system be sustained despite administration, leadership or government changes? What is needed to create or support a self-sustaining network?
 - c. What are the best methods for measuring system change? (e.g., AAER as a tool) Are there minimum standards or benchmarks for evaluating the strength and resilience of youth systems?
8. **STRENGTHENING CAPACITY OF YOUTH-LED AND YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS.** What are approaches that effectively strengthen the capacity of youth-led or youth-serving organizations? How effective are current approaches to strengthening organizational capacity?
- a. For youth-led and youth-serving organizations, what are effective approaches to strengthening the capacity of: Organizational operations (organizational systems and processes); career guidance services; job placement services; life skills training; technical skills training and private sector engagement; and measurement, evaluation and learning?
 - b. How do we encourage collaboration between youth serving organizations to strengthen the network of youth-led or youth-serving organizations?
9. **OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO YOUTH INCLUSION.** What are the factors that systematically exclude youth from local systems (e.g., political systems, development interventions)?
- a. What are ways to amplify the roles of young people themselves in systems change efforts?
 - b. What youth-specific factors lead to young people's exclusion, and what strategies can young people use to effectively influence these systems?
 - c. Through what mechanisms can development programs influence these systems to be more inclusive? How does it vary for different subsets of youth, particularly marginalized groups?
 - d. How can the business case for engaging youth as valuable consumers and beneficiaries be made to different stakeholders? What are the most compelling business cases for which stakeholders?
 - e. How can technology facilitate youth inclusion? How can technology be used to connect young people to their communities, resources, relevant training, and jobs?
 - f. What are effective strategies for ensuring digital solutions are youth-responsive and inclusive (e.g., for those without internet access, for those without experience or knowledge on using the technology)?
10. **MARKET SYSTEMS ACTORS ORGANIZED TO DEVELOP MARKET RELEVANT SKILLS.** Which approaches to engaging firms to identify market relevant skills deliver the highest return on investment? What economic trends impact market relevant skills?

- a. What are critical skills for the 4th industrial revolution? What are the critical skills needed to obtain and succeed in high-impact careers, such as green jobs, industrial production, services and energy?
- b. How is digital disruption impacting industry critical skills within and across sectors?
- c. What conditions must exist within industries to have the greatest potential to offer large volumes of high-quality jobs? What skills are most in demand in these industries?
- d. How can innovative certification models (e.g. micro-badging, block chain, industry certifications in public schools) be leveraged to improve labor market outcomes?