

CONGOLESE YOUTH: Assets & Opportunities

YouthMap, a program of the International Youth Foundation, is a four-year initiative to assess youth circumstances and support promising youth development programs and practices in eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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The International Youth Foundation (IYF) invests in the extraordinary potential of young people. Founded in 1990, IYF builds and maintains a worldwide community of businesses, governments, and civil-society organizations committed to empowering youth to be healthy, productive, and engaged citizens. IYF programs are catalysts of change that help young people obtain a quality education, gain employability skills, make healthy choices, and improve their communities.

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WITH OVER 60% OF THE CONTINENT'S POPULATION under the age of 30, Africa's development is closely linked to its young people's well-being. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in 2010 33% of the 66 million citizens were between 10 and 24 years old. This number is projected to increase to 31.6 million by 2025 and 42.9 million by 2050.¹ This rapidly growing youth population has enormous potential to bolster or undermine national objectives in the areas of governance and economic and social development. Long years of conflict have stymied the government of DRC (GDRC)'s ability to provide social services, and many children have died, become combatants, and/or been displaced due to this instability. The Prime Minister of the DRC recently called these children the 'lost generation,'² as they make up the bulk of the country's unskilled labor force and represent a majority of unemployed youth.

Young Congolese who took part in the YouthMap assessment shared their backgrounds, current circumstances, and plans for the future. They addressed their own lives and shared their views on how to move the DRC forward. They demonstrated determination but also frustration with inherent obstacles. Throughout YouthMap's conversations with youth and other key stakeholders, critical issues emerged:

Education: The education and training system in the DRC is failing, and youth are ill equipped for the world of work. More than seven million children ages 5 to 17, half of whom are girls, are out-of-school.³ Access to and the quality of primary, secondary, and vocational education and technical training is poor. Barriers to education include distance, poverty, poorly trained teachers, and discrimination against females. The GDRC, particularly the Ministry of Primary, Secondary, and Professional Education, is making concerted efforts to overhaul this sector with support from donor and technical partners.

Employment: Young people's skills do not meet employers' demands, and young people find few opportunities to earn a decent wage. At 32.2%, the official youth unemployment rate nearly doubles the national average of 17.8% in the formal economy.⁴ However, the actual scale of underemployment and unemployment among youth is unknown, with some estimates ranging above 70%.⁵ Youth shared that the current education system does not provide practical skills necessary for them to break into the labor market, a message reinforced by the YouthMap assessment team's peer review committee. Additionally, many young people do not have or recognize the value of soft skills.⁶ Other employment-related obstacles include limited access to professional mentoring and lack of access to credit for young entrepreneurs.

Health: Youth are poorly informed about sexual and reproductive health. Fewer than 20% of youth ages 15 to 19 have comprehensive knowledge of HIV, and in that age group roughly the same percentage of young women give birth each year.⁷ Despite ongoing efforts by the government and development partners, the majority of youth reported feeling health and family planning services are neither accessible nor youth-friendly.

Civic and Political Participation: Youth take advantage of governmental and civil society avenues for expression and participation. Proud as they are to be Congolese, they feel disengaged, disempowered, and discouraged. With a strong sense of citizenship and responsibility, the majority of YouthMap participants reported engagement in community volunteer and religious activities. Young Congolese also expressed interest in the electoral process; however, they have limited influence on decision making. They are often victims of political and ethnic manipulation.

Gender: Deeply rooted cultural norms and outdated laws challenge gender equity in the DRC. Most troublesome is the DRC's pervasive acceptance of domestic violence, early motherhood, and rape as a weapon of war. More than one in three adolescents ages 15 to 19 in the DRC has experienced sexual violence.⁸ Although the USAID/DRC *Gender Assessment Report* provides some hope—urban youth expressed that women and men are equal in education and work,⁹ the UN's *2013 Human Development Report* states that 74% of women ages 15 to 24 felt that under certain circumstances a husband could be justified to hit or beat his wife.¹⁰ Recent DRC research and social protection programs experience (e.g., increasing livelihoods opportunities for both women and men) point to an improved understanding of sociocultural issues and show promise for improved equity and treatment for both sexes.

Conflict: From independence in 1960 until today, violence, conflict, and insecurity have cast a wide shadow. As poverty and exclusion drive conflict in the DRC, Congolese youth must be provided economic opportunities. Further research on Congolese youth will ensure policy and programs are designed and implemented to translate the country's youth bulge into a demographic dividend.

Recommendations

- Overall, Congolese youth have a strong desire to learn, work, and lead. This optimism heavily influences the following recommendations to USAID, the GDRC, and broader development community:
- Align education and training curricula with labor market demands and employer needs and encourage youth participation in the value chains of growth sectors (e.g., the extractive industries, agriculture, and transportation)
- Increase partnerships between educational and training institutions and employers
- Improve and increase internship, apprenticeship, volunteering, and mentoring opportunities
- Provide incentives for youth entrepreneurship through increased access to training, mentors, and financing
- Expand youth access to quality health care (especially sexual reproductive health and family planning services)
- Improve and expand training for health workers to provide quality care to young people
- Actively engage youth in government and non-government decision-making structures and processes at all levels (i.e., national, provincial, district, communal, and village)

1. UNFPA, *Status Report: Youth Sub-Saharan Africa* (2013), 40.
2. Xanthe Ackerman, Lauren Greubel, and Rebecca Winthrop, "The New Push for Education Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo," Brookings Institute (2013), accessed June 2013, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2013/03/01-education-reform-congo-winthrop>.
3. UNICEF, *National Survey on the Situation of Out-of-School Children and Adolescents* (UNICEF, UNESCO, DFID, 2013), 9.
4. UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2013).
5. African Development Bank, *2012 Africa Economic Outlook* (2012), 2.
6. Life skills are defined by the World Health Organization as abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.
7. UNFPA, *Status Report: Youth Sub-Saharan Africa* (2013), 40.
8. *Ibid.*, 23.
9. On the other hand, gender inequality is referenced as a key contributor to the country's 39.9% dip in the UN's 2013 Human Development Index (HDI).
10. UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2013).

INTRODUCTION

Overview of YouthMap

YouthMap is a four-year program designed to assess youth circumstances as well as support promising programs and practices in positive youth development in up to eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. YouthMap is supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the International Youth Foundation (IYF). The YouthMap assessments are designed to paint a comprehensive picture of the lives of young people, including how they spend their time, how they interact with each other and other segments of society, what services they utilize, and others they feel are inaccessible. The assessments also capture young people's hopes, aspirations, and challenges related to their most significant life transition—from childhood to independent adult—in the areas of education and learning, employment and livelihoods, health, and civic participation. The YouthMap DRC assessment follows completed assessments in Senegal, Uganda, Mozambique, and Tanzania.

YouthMap DRC sought to better understand the opportunities and challenges facing young people ages 15 to 29 through the application of an appreciative inquiry approach. This approach requires listening to young people's perspectives along with those of key stakeholders, to inform IYF and USAID planning and programming. In the DRC, IYF partnered with Centre d'Études Pour l'Action Sociale (CEPAS) to conduct this research. Study objectives were to:

1. Better understand the challenges, hopes, and aspirations of young people;
2. Assess youth-serving infrastructure and services;
3. Identify and share successful models, lessons, and strategies to promote youth development;
4. Recommend options for youth programming and integrating youth into USAID activities.

Methodology

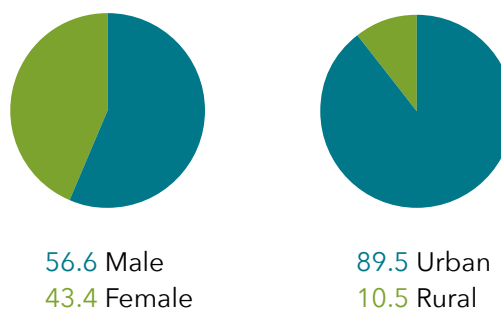
YouthMap combined qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data on youth. Secondary research was conducted to inform the primary research and to provide the macro picture of the environment in which youth operate. Primary research was carried out over a four-week

period in five DRC provinces: Kinshasa, Katanga, Kasai Orientale, Kasai Occidental, and Province Orientale. To capture youth voices firsthand, YouthMap conducted focus groups and rapid surveys with 512 youth across the country's five provinces. The youth cohort consisted of 122 in-school youth, 122 employed youth, 167 vulnerable youth, and 119 positive role models¹¹ (see Annex A for selection criteria definitions). A youth survey with focus group participants collected demographic data, as well as young people's views on each of the focus sectors (i.e., education, employment, technology, health, and civic participation). At USAID/DRC's request, less emphasis was placed on health, due to the Mission's already substantial knowledge gained through its various health-related interventions and reports.

Table 1: Breakdown of YouthMap Youth Participants

Youth Criteria	Number reached
In-School	122
Employed	122
Vulnerable	167
Role Models	119
Total	512

Figure 1: YouthMap DRC Participants by Gender and Location¹²



Using semi-structured interview guides, YouthMap conducted interviews with 94 key stakeholders from the public and private sectors, civil society, donor organizations, and educational institutions most informed about youth conditions in the DRC. In addition, YouthMap interviewed 21 companies in target growth sectors and, to understand the labor market conditions, administered an employer survey.

YOUTH AT A GLANCE

There is limited literature and data about the situation of Congolese youth, despite the fact this demographic represents the majority of the country's underemployed and unemployed population. DRC's almost constant state of conflict since independence in 1960, and widespread poverty (despite abundant natural resources), partially contribute to this lack of information.

The DRC is a young country: approximately half of its population is below the age of 35. With estimates of annual growth ranging from 2.6 to 3.1%, the population is projected to reach 85 million in 2020.¹³ The UN's 2013 *Human Development Report* projects a population of 106 million by 2030.¹⁴ The youth dependency ratio of 86.4% (individuals likely to be economically dependent on the support of others) clearly points to a need for greater investments in education, employment, health, and other social services for young people.¹⁵

Youth in the DRC aspire to become agents of change for their country. However, the education and training system is failing young Congolese, who are poorly educated, largely unemployed, and ill-equipped to move into the world of work. According to the Ministry of Planning, youth unemployment in the formal economy is at 32.2%, almost twice the national average of 17.8%.¹⁶ The 2012 *African Economic Outlook* states that more than 70% of youth between ages 15 and 24 do not have jobs, and those in urban and peri-urban areas were the hardest hit.¹⁷ More than 7.3 million out-of-school young people are left even further behind in achieving their full potential.¹⁸ The DRC's resilience and economic potential is often written about and will surely come, but youth need education, training, and jobs now.

Young people transitioning to adulthood experience a range of physical, psychological, emotional, and economic changes. The decisions they make during this critical period impact not only their individual well-being, but also that of their families, friends, communities, and wider society. Ensuring that young Congolese can successfully navigate this life stage can create livelihood opportunities for today's youth, help break the current cycle of poverty and conflict, and produce longer-term benefits for the country's future.

Figure 2: CIA 2013 Population Pyramid

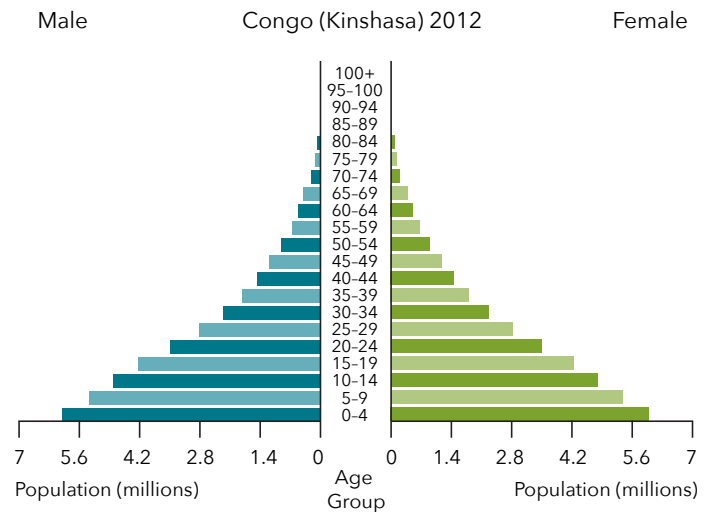
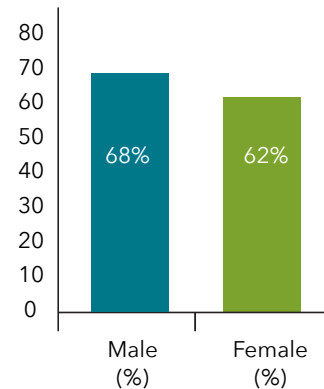
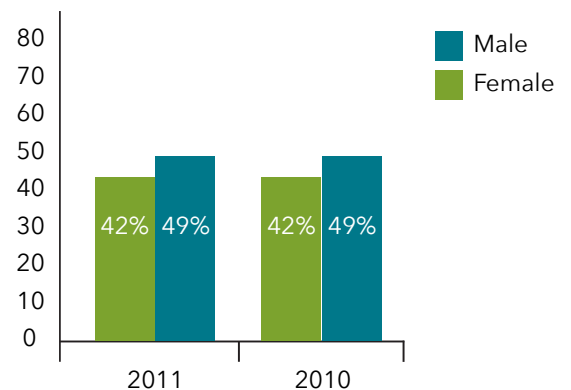


Figure 3: Literacy Rates Ages 15 to 24



World Bank, 2010

Figure 4: Labor Market Participation Rate Ages 15 to 24



World Bank, 2011

POLICY AT A GLANCE

Within the GDRC, youth development currently falls under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The GDRC has signed or ratified a number of international conventions related to the protection of human rights and youth. The *Declaration of Human Rights*, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child*, and the *African Youth Charter* are but a few examples. However, political turbulence and conflict between the 1992 national conference declaration of a *National Youth Policy* and the 2009 Congolese government's formal adoption of said policy meant it took 17 years for the DRC to provide a legal structure for its youth to fully participate in social, economic, and civic life. During this time, the country fell behind the rest of the continent. Today, the youth policy¹⁹ is progressive and ambitious—calling for government action across various issue areas, yet it lacks an accompanying implementation framework.

Although the *2011 Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (GPRSP 2) acknowledges youth unemployment as an obstacle to achieving national development goals, it is short on details about how best to tackle this issue. The GDRC has called for the promotion of income-generating activities to avoid an “explosive situation” amongst its youth, and for the government to advance decent and productive work opportunities through the private sector.²⁰ However, achieving such goals will require simplifying and effectively applying the labor code. The accompanying government action plan calls for the development of “innovative” employment initiatives for unemployed youth, the poor, and villagers.²¹ It cites “innovations” such as manual work, agriculture, workers’ cooperatives, micro-credit establishments and incubators to promote job creation through training and mentoring small and medium-sized enterprises (SME); finalizing the national policy drafting process to begin promoting employment and vocational training opportunities; and providing the National Institute for Professional Preparation (INPP) with the necessary resources for implementation. Even though it is widely accepted that employers must be central to helping identify skills gaps and employment needs within the labor market, along with the

establishment of workforce certification standards, the poverty reduction strategy does not address how the education and training system will be adapted to meet labor market needs. Findings from stakeholder interviews with employers recognizes their important role in identifying technical standards, yet the country's poverty reduction strategy does not put forward a model that adequately leverages education and training to address these labor market needs. The African Development Bank substantiates this finding by stating that the GDRC does not have a real policy for youth employment and must put into place sectoral and macroeconomic policies that support labor intensive economic activities; promote self-employment through training; improve access to credit; reform the education system; and integrate the Diaspora.²²

Additional examples of empty government policy statements that lack clear mechanisms for successful implementation include the GDRC's proposal to establish a National Micro-Finance Fund targeting women and youth, along with a National Fund for Promoting Employment that will be financed by public and private sector workers. They have also issued another proposal for steering jobless youth, retired persons, and demobilized soldiers into agriculture jobs and discussed the establishment of a compulsory public service for 18-year-olds to “revive their patriotism through active participation in the supervision, training, and leadership of community development structures.”²³

Government youth policies highlight young women's sociocultural, economic, and political disadvantages, and a number of GDRC policy and strategy instruments call for special measures to promote gender equity.²⁴ For example, Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution call for parity and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, and the National Gender Policy seeks to make equality of opportunity and gender equity mainstream.²⁵ There is a *National Strategy to Combat Gender-Based Violence*,²⁶ and the Penal Code and the Procedural Code have been modified to better tackle sexual violence. The DRC also has ratified key international instruments protecting the rights of women, such as the *Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Nevertheless, the Family Code and the Labor Code remain unchanged and continue to discriminate against women—highlight-

ing ever-present gaps between law, policy, strategy, and compliance or implementation.

Related to gender, further research into the widely accepted *droit d'ainesse* (the rights of elders to make decisions) is required. Through focus group discussions and key stakeholder interviews, there was a common trend of the young people's limited ability to influence decision making. As in most African cultures, the opinions of young people are not highly regarded in Congolese society. Elders are seen as the chief decision makers in all facets of the young person's life and the development of the community. A greater understanding of how this cultural construct defines and impacts power dynamics between youth and adults and men and women will be critical to addressing youth opportunities and challenges in the DRC.

Lastly, prolonged conflict and the proliferation of rebel movements that have shifted authority toward young combatants and recruits who view violence as a legitimate strategy of defense, identity making, and improving social and economic status,²⁷ is an emerging and perhaps more complex aspect of youth and gender power dynamics in the DRC. This analysis appears to support the *USAID Gender Assessment* finding that power in the DRC is exercised in a predatory zero sum manner;²⁸ however, more research on this youth power shift in certain parts of the country is required.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

This assessment focuses on four sectors. The first part looks at the effectiveness of formal **education** and vocational training, specifically studying the gap between education that young people receive and the qualifications required to be successful in the labor market. The **economic growth** analysis explores information on the employment situation for young people, including their level of preparation for work, qualifications required by employers, barriers to hiring, and corporate recruitment strategies that benefit young people. The **health** section examines youth habits and behaviors and young people's access to information and health services. The final portion uses a civic and political participation lens to analyze **democracy and governance**, and it highlights the extent

of youth participation in politics, their level of engagement in their communities, and the existence of youth-friendly civic and political engagement programs.

Education and Skills Development Background

Limited access to schools, poor quality of instruction, and low completion rates characterize the education and training system in the DRC. On one hand, a review of the education sector indicators across primary, secondary, and vocational education shows relative improvement over the last ten years—primarily due to increases in funding by the government, households, and donors. However, secondary and higher education completion rates remain low, with only 26% of students completing secondary school.²⁹ Similarly, parity in primary education by 2015 was once considered an achievable Millennium Development Goal, but the GDRC also acknowledged its inability to reach this target.³⁰

Nonetheless, the GDRC is making a concerted effort to strengthen the provision of education services across the country. Over the last few years, it has doubled its education budget from 6.5 to 13.8%,³¹ a sign that the government is beginning to prioritize education. In addition, the National Youth Policy strives for broadly “improving and strengthening the national education system and promoting vocational training,”³² and the GDRC also has developed a five-year (2010–2015) education sector plan. An external evaluation of the 2012–2014 Interim Education Plan suggests that the GDRC now has a framework for improved collaboration and coordination between ministries charged with vocational education and technical training. A number of key donors and technical partners such as the International Labor Organization, the Belgian government, the French Development Agency and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency are funding projects and/or providing technical assistance to training institutions.

Presently, the GDRC Ministry of Education is responsible for formal vocational and technical training, while the Ministry of Social Affairs targets young people under 15 with non-formal vocational training programs (includes youth literacy component) and professional apprenticeships. The National Institute for Professional Preparation,

tasked with oversight of technical education and professional training schools, is under the Ministry of Labor. The GDRC established the Interministerial Commission for Technical Education and Professional Training in 2008 to coordinate the multiple actors, and a committee of technical partners and donors that focuses its support on the vocational training sector. This body has enabled the GDRC to adopt a professional training approach, along with a framework for qualification and certification that is based on experience and competence. It is envisioned that a national certification scheme will be developed as part of an agreement that was signed between the private sector and the Ministry of Education in 2011 to improve the quality of professional and technical training.

Technical and vocational training (TVET) in the DRC is a more recent development, with 57% of TVET institutions having been built since 1991. A reflection of a national challenge for the Congolese education system, their training programs do not reflect local labor market demands, and the training content remains too general and theoretical. For example, out of 37 possible TVET areas of concentration, 30% of apprentices enroll in “trade and administrative studies.”³³

With respect to higher education, demand is outpacing the country’s infrastructure, Enrollment figures increased from 240,000 students in 2006 to more than 300,000 in 2008, of which approximately 80% are in public institutions. Geographic and gender imbalances are also worth noting, because 44% of students are concentrated in the capital Kinshasa, and girls account for only 26% of the student population. Overall increased enrollment is testing the country’s inadequate infrastructure, equipment, and personnel (i.e., teachers and administrators).³⁴ This situation has led to a recent explosion in the number of institutions of higher education. This uncontrolled expansion has contributed to the current disconnection between what the education system is producing and what the labor market demands. At the same time, GDRC funding for higher education has declined drastically in recent years, from 24% of public spending in 1980 to 7% in 2002 and 4% in 2009. These cutbacks have placed a heavy burden on parents, most of whom are poor, to support their children’s educational pursuits in the midst of a general decline in the overall quality of education.³⁵

Positive academic outcomes will remain a challenge in the DRC for the immediate future given the poor quality of education, lack of infrastructure, gender discrimination against females, and ongoing national security concerns. Despite recent increases in budget allocations, the country has a long way to go before reaching universal primary enrollment as part of the UN Education for All by 2015 goals, and even further when adding quality education and training to the mix.

Assessment Findings

Table 2 summarizes the field research.

Table 2: Assessment Findings—Summary of Field Research

EDUCATION SECTOR	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Significant increase in education budget	Limited access to quality education
Competency development	Weak professional training
High primary school enrollment	Gap between education system curriculum and labor market needs
Increasing effort of TVET coordination	Gender discrimination
	Sexual harassment and violence

Access to and Relevance of Education

Training opportunities are available to Congolese youth through government, NGO training programs, vocational training centers, and private companies. Of the youth who participated in the assessment, 78.6% (47% of girls and 32% of boys), recognize that education is essential for employment and also critical to breaking the cycle of poverty. The majority of youth also considered training a pathway to earning a decent wage, provided that they complete their studies and acquire the appropriate certification (equivalent of either a high school diploma or Bachelor’s degree).

In the DRC, more than 7.3 million children and adolescents between the ages of 5 to 17 are not in school³⁶, and 52% of them are girls. Some 1.2 million, or 21%, of

those out-of-school are between 14 and 17 years old, and the majority are girls (64%).³⁷ Barriers to primary and secondary education include distance to school, poverty, affordability of school fees, poorly trained teachers, inadequate school facilities and environment for learning, gender discrimination and sociocultural norms that prevent girls in particular from attending school, death of a parent, being in *confiage* (living in a household other than your parents') and insecurity in certain parts of the country.³⁸ Analysis shows that the gender disparities in access to education are linked in part to both sociocultural (e.g., early marriage and pregnancy) and economic (poverty) factors that favor boys, particularly when selective choices must be made within the family. In addition, sexist practices within the school or the lack of separate toilets can discourage girls from attending school. Many youth and key stakeholders discussed the phenomenon of 'sexually transmitted grades' where female students have sex with their teachers to obtain good grades. Failure to comply has seen some young women get lower grades than they thought they deserved. Compliance often results in an unqualified grade, which more often than not also comes with sexually transmitted infections, early unplanned pregnancies, unsafe abortions, or loss of focus. In Province Orientale, a young girl stated "Even in the school environment, I also faced sexual harassment by a teacher who forced me to go out with him," while another young woman stated "Because of sexual harassment at school, I asked my father's permission to change my course of study."

Youth Perspectives

Among YouthMap participants, literacy rates and overall skill levels were higher in urban vs. rural areas and among boys as compared to girls.

The study reported cases of poor and vulnerable youth (both girls and boys) who believe firmly in the future and who, despite numerous challenges, have persevered to finish their studies, sometimes by working hard to finance their schooling through income-generating activities. Amongst their peers and within their communities, these students are considered influential models for others, and they bring a sense of pride to their families and the larger community. The study also noted the presence of several organizations that are fighting to improve education qual-

ity and/or are providing quality education and vocational training, and they are positive models for bringing promising education practices to the community. Examples include the following organizations:

- In Katanga, *Cité de Jeunes* provides vocational training to young men;
- In Kisangani, the *Youth Association of the Plateau Medical* provides mentorship and micro-projects management to youth who are involved in auto mechanics;
- and in Kinshasa, *Don Bosco* specializes in training and employment for vulnerable girls; the *Association of the Friends of Father Tony* has trained and provided research assistants for this assessment's Kinshasa team; the *Kuvuna Foundation* provides more than 100 young people each year with youth leadership and civic engagement training; and the *Kinshasa School of Management*, which is the first institution of higher education that specializes in employment, entrepreneurship, and management training for jobs through formal partnerships with over 25 companies where full-time students have access to rewarding professional internship opportunities as part of their academic coursework.

Almost 20% of Congolese secondary school students are enrolled in TVET institutions. These schools face challenges similar to mainstream institutions: limited access, lack of curricula and programs for certain trades, old and obsolete equipment, lack of and/or aging of qualified teachers, and mismatch or lack of relevancy between training and labor market needs. An added societal challenge is that Congolese negatively perceive TVET as being for those who are unsuccessful in "regular" education, and the proliferation of private, unlicensed schools seems to support this viewpoint. Focus group discussion participants also denounced outdated school curricula and training tools, as evidenced by a young man working in the mining sector in Katanga province who said with anguish that "the level of the technology we use at work is higher than the level of training we received." A female student in computer science in Kinshasa said, "[our] training is more theoretical than practical, and we have

Table 3: Literacy rates of YouthMap Participants

Provinces	Boys					Girls					Totals %
	Urban		Rural		Total %	Urban		Rural		Total %	
	Literates %	Illiterates %	Literates %	Illiterates %		Literates %	Illiterates %	Literates %	Illiterates %		
Kinshasa	20.9	1.8			22.7	15.2	2.3			17.6	40.2
Katanga	13.9	1.0	1.6	0.2	16.6	5.5	2.1	2.3	0.2	10.2	26.8
Oriental	3.1	0.4			3.5	4.1	0.6			4.7	8.2
Kasai	5.5	1.8	1.8	4.9	13.9	2.7	2.0	1.2	5.1	10.9	24.8
Totals	43.4	4.9	3.3	5.1	56.6	27.5	7.0	3.5	5.3	43.3	100

one machine for 52 people.” Young people interviewed also mentioned the persistence of certain traditional practices (i.e., early marriage), sexual harassment, and corruption in universities and training institutions as factors contributing to “lowering the level of instruction and discouraging girls participation in school.” With respect to their training, one student in Kananga stated that “the training received does not match the requirements and the actual needs of the labor market.” Another young person in Kipushi (Katanga) linked access to school and training with poverty by describing the cost as “a real challenge to the development of skills,” which limits their opportunities to learn. Some young people did acknowledge that vocational training remains an asset because it offers opportunities to work and quickly earn a living. A young man in Kinshasa said, “Education allows us to acquire knowledge, but it is the technical [vocational] training which allows us to acquire a skill. There is no level, one just needs to know his job, work, and earn a living.”

In an effort to improve the quality of vocational training, the Belgian Technical Cooperation implements a project that seeks to bridge the labor market skills gap in areas such as auto mechanics, electrician training, agriculture, dressmaking, electronics, commercial administration, and veterinary science. Particular emphasis is placed not only on improved and appropriate content and training delivery, but also on improving the image of vocational education and technical training among its students, staff, and other key stakeholders. The project also ensures

young women have access to this education and training. Additional project support includes facility and infrastructure renovations and a critical partnership with the Interministerial Commission for Technical Education and Professional Training. The project is being implemented in Lubumbashi and Haut Katanga (Katanga); Mbuji-Mayi (Kasai Oriental); Kisangani and Tshopo (Province Orientale); and Mongala and Sub Ubangi (Equateur).

A number of youth stated that as part of bridging the labor market skills gap, gaining more practical and technical skills would provide them with greater opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship. Employers and other stakeholders concurred that existing training programs are mostly theoretical and rarely add value to the workplace, while placing emphasis on the importance of life skills. The table below highlights this skills mismatch between what education and training youth feel they need for the workplace, and employer needs. While employers deemed life skills important, young people are unaware of their significance and are more concerned with acquiring computer and other technical skills.

During focus group discussions, YouthMap participants shared that the current education system does not provide practical skills necessary for them to break into the labor market, a message reinforced by youth who served on the peer review committee. Discussion themes around strengthening and developing soft and technical skills were also common. Some young people claimed that they “need

Table 4: Comparison of Skills Perceived as Essential by Youth and Employers

Skills	Skills youth see as essential for entry level positions	Skills employers require for entry level positions
Technical Skills	Computer skills Math and literacy skills Secretarial or hotel management Carpentry, tailoring, cooking, masonry, mechanics, and construction Nursing, driving, and English	Computer skills Accounting, sales, and marketing Administrative and customer service skills Manual skills Other (e.g., driving and English language)
Life Skills	Not considered as critical	Teamwork, strong work ethics, integrity, loyalty to company, communication, managing emotions, problem solving

to do more than a diploma,” while others acknowledged that the “ability to solve social problems” is even more critical than the degree. With respect to work readiness upon graduation, only 43% of boys and 30% of girls interviewed felt prepared, and most expressed the need for additional expertise or qualifications. Others seemed to ignore the qualifications already being acquired as impractical for the working world. This conversation on work readiness centered on a perceived lack of skills in three key areas: computers, vocational and technical, and entrepreneurship.

The final mismatch the YouthMap study identified had to do with work experience. Young people saw a lack of work experience as a major challenge to getting work, while most employers (80%) reported that experience is not a requirement for entry-level positions. However, the research did point to a gender bias for entry-level positions, with key stakeholders reporting that men have significant advantages over women in technical jobs due to sociocultural norms that associate men in those roles.

Table 5: Prepared to Enter Workforce

	Boys	Girls
Ready for employment after training	43%	30%
Not ready for employment after training	57%	70%

Employer Perspectives

Youth and employers both highlight the disconnection between labor market needs and training provision. The latter acknowledged the need to establish better communications with training institutions. Nevertheless, YouthMap research found that employers feel they can bridge the theoretical-practical gap through in-house employee training programs. 90% of employers reported that they train employees on the job, while nearly half of employers surveyed conduct in-house classroom training. It is less common for employers to use outside vendors and education institutes for their training programs, yet 64% of participating employers expressed a willingness to invest financially in employee training outside of the workplace. Although current training focuses more on corporate social responsibility efforts, employers’ main shared interests were to have qualified employees closing skills gaps.

Positive Role Models

YouthMap interviews with educational administrators about key characteristics exhibited by young people who are considered role models highlight the importance of life skills, as expressed in the following summary results:

- **Attitudes and behaviors exhibited:** punctual, obedient, attentive, accountable, respectful, and disciplined;
- **Personal image portrayed:** decent, modern, reliable, and strong ethics;
- **Future outlook:** forward-looking, committed, driven, and focused.

Key Program Considerations

In sum, education is considered an important asset for youth. Youth interviewed noted that both reading and writing skills are necessary for life success, and they can only be gained through formal education. Some key considerations that need to be contemplated as part of future youth programming decisions for the DRC include:

- Education needs vary by region, and quality education was perceived to be in limited supply across the country at all education levels. Although access to primary education has increased across the country in recent years, quality is equally important for the long-term development of youth. It needs to be a focus at the secondary, tertiary, and vocational training levels as well.
- The quality, relevance, and practicality of education and training need improvement in order to increase young people’s chances of gaining employment in the private sector. The integration of practical and soft skills into formal and informal education is essential.
- Access to education and training services for those living in rural areas, particularly isolated provinces, must improve.
- Ensure practical (rather than theoretical) training curricula and associated coaching tools that utilize youth-appropriate teaching methodologies, activities, and approaches.
- In addition to technical training, broader training to help youth understand the cycle of project planning and management (e.g., research, needs assessment, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation), along with life skills (e.g., conflict resolution, critical thinking, and teamwork,) will be critical. This training can be done in concert with internship, apprenticeship, and/or job placement programs.
- Provide opportunities for young people to apply their new skills through internships and employment opportunities with USAID IPs, NGOs, and other private sector and civil society partners.

- Engage the Kinshasa School of Management to explore a potential partnership and/or replication of their experiential learning model.

Employment and Job-readiness Background

Table 6: Youth Training Priority Sectors

Electrician
Agri-business
Auto-mechanics
Plumbing
Beauty and hairdressing
Refrigeration and Air Conditions
Dressmaking and design
Masonry
Carpentry
Administrative secretarial
Forestry and fishing
Industrial mechanics
Skilled construction
Hotel and hospitality
Mining

According to the GDRC, economic growth was at 7.2% in late December 2012 and will reach 8.2% in 2013, its highest level since the 1970s.³⁹ However, unemployment in the country remains high and is a major concern for the government. This anxiety is partly due to population growth estimated at 3.1% and a fertility rate that has remained consistent at an average of six children per woman. Unless population growth is better regulated, there is a general acceptance that the Congolese population may double every 25 years.⁴⁰ The demographic trend points toward youth representing approximately 50% of the population between 15 and 64 years of age.⁴¹ This rapid growth in the country’s young people exerts added pressure on the school system, the health system, and the labor market more broadly.

Poverty and employment in the DRC are strongly linked. The GDRC has acknowledged that the majority of the

Congolese population is poor, which is defined by low income, unmet food needs, inability to access health care and schooling, and lack of decent housing. Poverty translates into high unemployment among Congolese youth, particularly young people between 15 and 24 years of age living in urban areas.⁴² The resulting informal sector comprises as much as 80%⁴³ of the economy, and the majority of youth enterprises fall in this category. Viewing this oversized informal sector as an obstacle to faster economic growth and a reduction in the tax base, the GDRC plans to leverage its “creativity, entrepreneurship, and work ethic” to review legal and regulatory provisions along with implementing policies and strategies to enable the informal economy to create jobs, reduce poverty and extend social safety nets.⁴⁴

Although national unemployment in the formal economy is estimated at 18%, the rate is 32% for 15- to 35-year-olds—an age group that represents more than one quarter of the population. The African Development Bank’s *2012 African Economic Outlook* publication states that more than 70% of youth between the ages of 15 and 24 do not have jobs, with those in urban and peri-urban areas the hardest hit. Although there is not one figure that accurately represents underemployment and unemployment among youth, its scale is real, as is its relative impact on girls who are most vulnerable to unemployment due to under-education and sociocultural barriers.

To address the limited access, poor quality, and irrelevance of training for the labor market, the GDRC established in 2008 an Interministerial Commission for Technical Education and Professional Training that was to achieve harmonization among the multiple ministries. Table 5 represents priority training areas for young people that the commission identified. The GDRC has adopted a broad professional training program vision that includes a qualification and certification framework, along with an accompanying competency-based training program tied to participant work experience as part of an eventual national certification scheme. In addition, in 2011 the Ministry of Education signed an agreement with the private sector to improve the quality of vocational education and technical training—to close the gap between education training and labor market needs.

Underemployed and unemployed youth cannot wait until economic growth reaches them. In the DRC, recent surveys and studies show that while there is some growth, job creation is modest.⁴⁵ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) analysis of the previous poverty reduction strategy shows only two of 25 planned actions for job creation were completed—drafting a national employment and professional training policy and strengthening the capacity of government agencies charged with labor management.⁴⁶ Although the GDRC established the Employment and Professional Training Observatory, and the Better Job Market Management through Effective Data Processing (PIEGMA) program, the IMF’s progress report has no data on actual jobs created.⁴⁷

The DRC will need to create between two and four million jobs every year to absorb those entering into the labor market and reduce poverty.⁴⁸ This work requires a bold commitment to fostering youth employment from both the GDRC and donor partners. In the 2012 GPRSP 2, the GDRC committed to creating 900,000 jobs for young people between 2012 and 2016.⁴⁹

In a further attempt to address youth unemployment, in 2013 the Ministry of Employment, Labor, and Social Security announced a national youth employability program called the National Program for Youth Employment (PRO-YEN), which seeks to create over thirteen million jobs between 2013 and 2020. Its focus is on improving Congolese employability through professional training, supporting the promotion of youth initiatives, and putting in place resources for poverty alleviation. This initiative is a partnership between the GDRC and the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) Youth Employment Network (YEN).

With respect to the DRC’s environment for entrepreneurship and self-employment, the World Bank’s *Doing Business* 2012 report shows the country slipping back two places, from 176th to 178th. Limited access to credit was partially responsible for the shift. Nevertheless, microfinance institutions and savings and loans cooperatives are developing rapidly in the country. In 2011, as a way to encourage these institutions, the government established a national microfinance fund to strengthen their regulatory framework.

Assessment Findings

Tables 7a and 7b present a summary of our findings on employment opportunities for young people in the DRC.

Tables 7a: Assessment Findings—A Summary of Findings on Employment Opportunities for Young People in the DRC

EMPLOYMENT: FORMAL/INFORMAL	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Youth employment being prioritized by the government through PRO-YEN initiative</p> <p>Isolated initiatives from the private sector</p>	<p>Few job opportunities</p> <p>Few incentives for entrepreneurship, self-employment, and general job creation</p> <p>Hiring discrimination</p> <p>No replacement of those who retire</p> <p>Gap between training/skills provided through education system and those demanded by the jobs market</p>

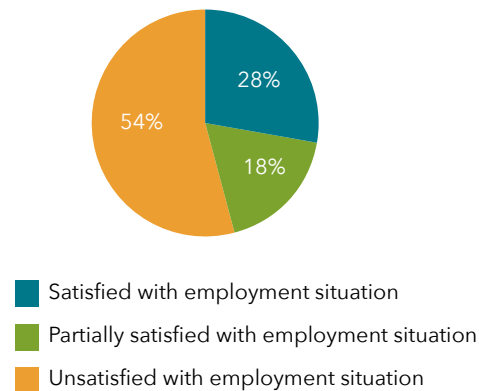
Tables 7b: Assessment Findings—A Summary of Findings on Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Young People in the DRC

ENTREPRENEURSHIP	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Youth initiative</p> <p>Willingness to get started</p>	<p>Limited access to capital and loans</p> <p>Lack of business development skills</p> <p>Corruption related to cost of doing business</p> <p>Narrow vision for the future</p>

Employment Status of YouthMap Participants

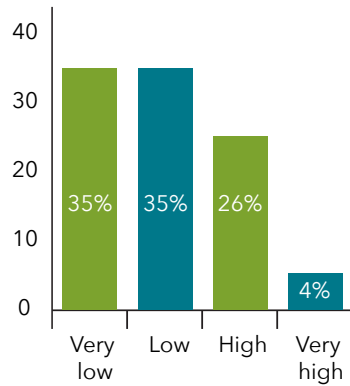
While most young people in the focus group discussions were involved in some form of economic activity, they were generally unsatisfied. More than 50% of youth respondents were unsatisfied with their current employment situation, while over 60% reported being involved in informal economic activities as a means for basic survival.

Figure 5: Labor Market Opportunities for Youth



Field research on youth employment opportunities in the DRC’s formal sector unveiled a worrying situation. To start, 70% of surveyed companies implied that they were not specifically targeting young people for new hires. Equally disturbing is the private sector’s low absorption capacity as compared to the number of unemployed youth. For the majority of young people in the DRC, formal employment is a main concern; it is perceived by youth as the primary unit of measure for personal growth, community, and family development. While the majority of participants in the study said they are working in the informal sector, during a group discussion in Kinshasa, one young man stated that “to lack a job is to stay poor.”⁵⁰ This was a particularly strong concern among the more vulnerable youth (i.e., poor and living in urban areas), who see a job as the only way out of their situation. This sentiment was also more pronounced among young men than young women, which can be associated with gender roles the local culture emphasizes with regard to the role of men within the family and community.

Figure 6: Capacity of the labor market to absorb demand
(from Employer Survey)



In 2011, with help from donors, the GDRC initiated a pilot program to recruit young graduates. 54 young people participated in the program in 2011, with the goal of reaching five hundred by the end of 2012. The government’s PRO-YEN program mission is to guide and supervise young people as they work toward better professional insertion.⁵¹ PRO-YEN is the only national effort that the assessment team came across that has concrete and detailed actions and initiatives to address employment in the DRC. The rest were isolated internship programs and other initiatives from private companies such as VOD-ACOM CONGO, AIRTEL, ProCredit, Trust Merchant Bank, and mining companies such as Tenke Fungurume and Banro.

With respect to self-employment and entrepreneurship, the Belgian government and the ILO, through YEN, is implementing a three year youth employment project in Katanga. Also known as the Youth Employment Activities in Katanga Project (PAEJK), it aims to strengthen the entrepreneurial capacity of young people; increase youth access to micro-finance; strengthen the employability of youth graduates from professional training schools; and promote youth employment by strengthening the governance of the Katanga labor market.

Barriers to Employment

Corruption; harassment from police; sexual harassment of young women by employers and potential employers; favoritism and nepotism; job insecurity; lack of networks;

and poor education systems represented the majority of labor market challenges raised by YouthMap participants. For employers, the most common barriers mentioned for hiring young people (and applicable to all sectors), were the lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills, the lack of relevant technical and life skills, and high turnover.

The youth assessment also highlighted a lack of workplace ethics and proactive recruitment policies among factors that limit young people’s access to employment in the DRC. These issues become even more complicated with respect to government and public sector recruitment, due to discrimination related to gender and family or tribal affiliation and stringent qualifications requirements (e.g., past professional experience of more than three years). A good portion of the young people interviewed highlighted the “extensive experience” barrier as part of the recruitment process, leaving little chance for young people coming out of school. With respect to gender disparities, women occupy only 2.8% of waged jobs, which are concentrated in farming, the informal sector and commerce.⁵² “There are too many cases of sexual harassment for a girl to get hired,” said a female participant during one focus group discussion in Kisangani.

While sexual harassment in the recruitment process has been identified as a larger challenge for girls, favoritism linked to ethnicity was brought up more by boys. Young people also denounced corruption as a serious barrier for young people’s access to work. “Corruption is doing well in DRC,” said a young man from the rural town of Demba in the Kasai Occidental Province. Another young man Kananga, also in Kasai-Occidental, agreed, saying that “employment is granted through gifts. They don’t care about skills.” Connections play a major role in finding a job in the DRC. Youth perceived being politically connected, having powerful relatives, and/or money to bribe as critical to getting a job, which was corroborated by YouthMap participants who reported searching for jobs mostly through relatives and friends.

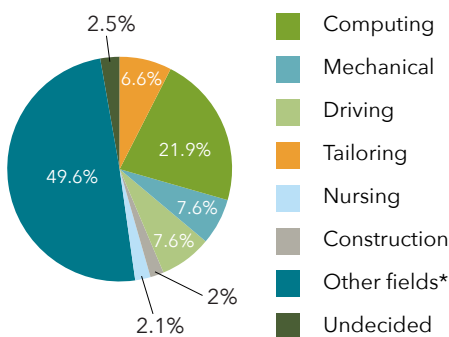
In terms of higher education, the opportunities for employment after completion are scarce. Of the 9,000 young people leaving Congolese universities each year, fewer than 100 find a job.⁵³ For lack of any other job opportunity, many of these graduates often become street vendors,

traders, money changers, operators of public telephones, or security staff. This lack of work and the absence of effective supervisory structures also push many young people into a life of crime. Since 2008, organized crime in Kinshasa has developed at an alarming rate. This increase is due to the rise of street gangs known as “Kulunas”. In other parts of the country, such as the east and parts of Katanga province, rebel groups exploit unemployed young people.

The assessment findings again stressed the lack of quality training (i.e., content and quality of education) vis-a-vis the labor market as an important aspect and barrier to youth employment. Employers surveyed stated the two main obstacles to recruitment include lack of technical skills and basic skills such as reading and writing. Given that 98% of respondents believe that the quality of their training is insufficient to meet job demands, it is easy to understand why Congolese young people are disappointed that their educational system disregards the demands of the labor market. It is this educational deficiency that explains the widespread search for additional qualifications by both young people and employers who believe that the educational system’s “finished product” lacks quality.

Putting aside the formal education system, respondents also identified entrepreneurship (especially in the informal sector for agriculture, tailoring, small trades, cosmet-

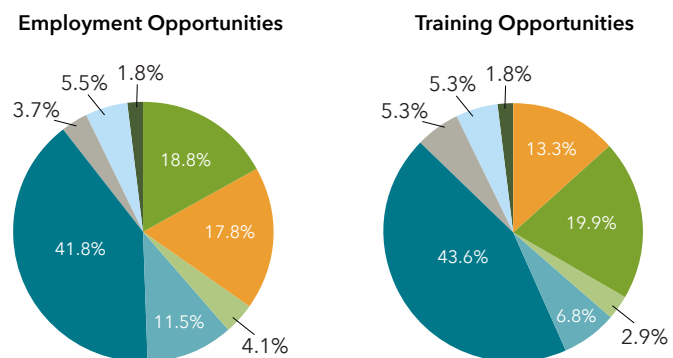
Figure 7: Skills Demanded by YouthMap Participants



* The following were identified within the *other* category: entrepreneurship, security, information technology, project evaluation, masonry, and mining.

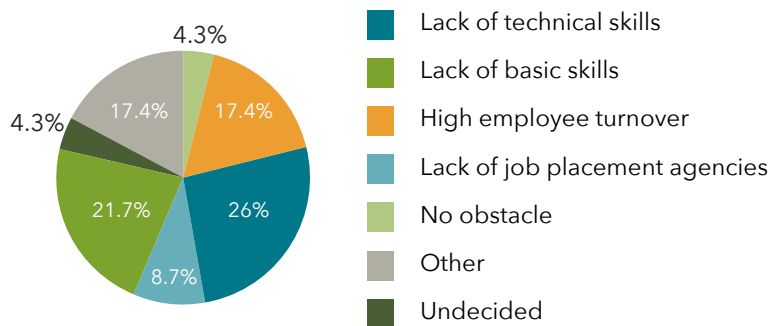
ics, food, and mechanics) as a promising alternate route to employment. As mentioned above, more than half of respondents are active in the informal sector; thus, both urban and rural youth recognize the role of the informal economy (entrepreneurship) in reducing unemployment. However, it is important to note that the specific activity is gender-specific and dependent upon the presence of role models. For example, in Kinshasa young men are involved in such work as small trades, transport, mechanics, and masonry, while young women engage in hairdressing, manicure-pedicure-, tailoring, and small trades of fruit and other foodstuffs. Differences also emerge based on environment; for example, in Kasai province boys are active in artisanal crafts with diamonds and telecommunications, while girls are more involved in agriculture, oil manufacturing, and small trades. It is also important to note that girls from rural areas most discuss agriculture as an employment option, while those from urban areas consider farming as “work of the villagers.”⁵⁴

Figure 8: How YouthMap Participants Learn About Employment and Training Opportunities



Despite the above-mentioned initiatives, most young people recognize their limits in entrepreneurship and do not get beyond the initial stages to formally establish real

Figure 9: Employer Obstacles to Youth Employment



businesses. The majority of the young people interviewed participated in a mix of activities that generated resources for survival and/or to support their schooling. Young people in the DRC identified the weak entrepreneurship culture, lack of regulatory support services and environment, insufficient means, and corruption as real barriers to entrepreneurship. It's clear from the discussions that strengthening of the technical capabilities and managerial skills of youth in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) would be an appropriate solution to the youth unemployment problem, with strong government support to formalize the SME sector in the DRC. This would allow Congolese youth increased opportunities, such as was the case of one youth in Kisangani who stated: "I have a friend who had a small shop when we were at the University. He had started with his own funds, but today it has grown into a big shop. Today he even leaves the province to buy his goods."

Key Program Considerations

Many key stakeholders, including young people, recognize employment as a top priority for Congolese youth. Key program considerations moving forward should include the following components:

- Implementing youth-centered programming that builds young people's capacity for future employment and productivity and, with a focus on entre-

preneurship, supports both 'job creators' and 'job seekers.' This type of programming should be a comprehensive youth employability package that provides young people with the right combination of relevant skills, support services, and practical work experience to help them successfully transition into the marketplace. If done right, a model of this nature can catalyze vibrant public-private partnerships that strengthen youth employability and entrepreneurship programs for greater scale and sustainability. This employability model aims to provide young people with more dynamic and meaningful training and internship experiences that enable them to secure decent jobs and/or start businesses.

- Incorporating mentorship into standard recruitment practices. Young people are in need of mentoring, and they could be grouped into networks by job and/or industry as a means to strengthen their capacities and knowledge. This clustering would be particularly important for the trades, sanitation, agriculture, transport, and mining industries.
- Promoting merit-based hiring practices that include young people and do not discriminate by gender, location, disability, etc.
- Leveraging public-private partnerships for productive employment. For example, leveraging current partnerships with Trust Merchant Bank (TMB) and Tenke Fungurume Mining (TFM) in Katanga Province to support youth development, social entrepreneurship, and access to seed capital for start-up businesses.
- Supporting and strengthening PRO-YEN, the government's youth employability program, to reach its goal of getting 13.5 million youth into the workplace through either jobs or creation of microenterprises.
- Incorporating youth indicators into each DO and associated activities as part of USAID/DRC's M&E system.
- Incorporating youth-specific questions for analysis as part of standard issues and topics to be raised in RFPs, RFAs, and other technical proposals.

Table 8: YouthMap Participants' Access to a Mobile Phone

	Access	No Access
Kinshasa	96.80%	3.20%
Katanga	86.00%	14.00%
P. Orientale	84.00%	16.00%
Kasaï	78.74%	21.26%

Table 9: YouthMap Participants' Access to Computer and Internet

Frequency	Computer	Internet
Every day	16.6%	15.4%
2-3 times per week	18.8%	18.6%
Once a week	4.9%	4.9%
Once a month	2.7%	2.1%
Rarely	14.6%	12.9%
Never	42.4%	46.1%

Access to Technology

The role of technology and communications is playing an increasingly important role in today's world, and young people are at its forefront. This study therefore sought to determine young people's access to technology (i.e., computers, mobile phones, and the internet). While only 17% of young people in the study had access to a computer, 39% had access to the Internet at least once per week. And almost all of the focus group discussion participants either owned or had access to a mobile phone. However, young people were clear about the fact radio and TV are the most popular medium for gaining access to information. Since mobile phones provide the broadest communications reach, it will become increasingly vital for stakeholders to leverage SMS and other forms of mobile technology in innovative ways to reach young people throughout the DRC. Despite mobile technology's penetration, young people mostly turn to family and friends when looking for a job or training programs—even before TV and radio. In this way, mobile technology can fill a much-needed communication vacuum for reaching young people.

Healthy Lifestyles Background

According to the UNFPA's 2013 *Status of Youth and Adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa* report, the DRC has the second highest rate of adolescent childbearing in the region⁵⁵, with adolescent fertility as high as 171 births per 1,000 women.⁵⁶ While 25% of young women between 20 and 24 years of age have given birth before reaching their 18th birthday, figures from the most recent Demographic Health Survey (DHS)⁵⁷ indicate that early marriage is frequent and more common in rural areas and among less educated young women. These young women are also at higher risk for poor reproductive health outcomes due to low rates of modern contraception methods and unsafe abortions, which often results in maternal disability and even death.

According to the UN's 2013 *Human Development Report*, 18% of males and 14% of females between the ages of 15 and 19 have comprehensive knowledge of HIV.⁵⁸ While this does not directly correlate to healthy behaviors and HIV prevalence rates, the 2007 DHS shows a relatively low percentage of HIV among young people between ages 15 and 24 (3.6%). Concerns for young people persist, however, because young men have higher HIV prevalence rates than women among adolescents between 15 and 19 years of age, while the reverse is true after age 25. This segment of the population is also characterized by high incidence of unprotected sexual intercourse, which contributes to high fertility rates as well as the spread of HIV.

In the DRC, malaria remains the major endemic disease and the primary cause of mortality. Health conditions remain worrying due to major dietary deficiencies and difficulties in access to clean drinking water and proper sewage. In the countryside three quarters of households have to rely on untreated and surface water sources. The lack of public lavatories in some regions leads to human waste polluting the environment, encouraging epidemics such as cholera.

Despite the country's public health challenges, the DRC's response is limited by a lack of commitment and national ownership, evidenced by the tendency to "leave the fight against AIDS to external partners." Several specialized government agencies under the Ministry of Health support activities targeting young mothers and

children in particular (e.g., the National Reproductive Health program and the National Adolescent Reproductive Health program), yet resources are limited and most health indicators remain below neighboring countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Congolese health situation is particularly worrisome because there is little evidence the government is politically equipped to address the vast issues related to quality health care and services in the country—persistent under-financing of the health system, poor quality and quantity of human resources, shortage of drugs and inputs to address the most prevalent diseases, and lack of infrastructure and technology.

Lastly, recent USAID-supported assessments have highlighted the prevalence of both teenage pregnancy and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as other health-related concerns. Teenage pregnancy is partly tied to the legal age girls can marry (15 years); while SGBV is linked to the double bind for women as survivor and supporter (as demanded by culture) of their perpetrators. Nevertheless, some hope is captured in the USAID/DRC’s Gender Assessment as urban youth view women and men as equals in education and work. USAID’s commitment to programming in health and psychological care by working with both men and women to promote behavior changes to meet their basic social and economic needs will also be crucial to addressing the roots of the conflict and violence in the DRC.

Assessment Findings

Table 9 presents a summary of our findings on healthy lifestyles for young people in the DRC.

Table 10: Assessment Findings—A Summary of Findings on Healthy Lifestyles for Young People in the DRC

HEALTH	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Youth are committed to the fight against STDs and HIV/AIDS	Limited access to health care services, with poverty as a main barrier Poor quality of health services Prevalence of risky behaviors, prostitution, STDs, HIV, and abortion Early marriage and pregnancies Substance abuse Gender-based violence

The cost of health care is a major challenge for the majority of youth surveyed in this study. Regardless of gender, youth in both urban and rural area agreed that with chronic poverty in the DRC and the practice of direct payments for services where health care is available, destitute and poor groups are excluded from the health system. In her interview a young girl from Kisangani said that “when one is sick and poor, doctors neglect you, but they attend very quickly to the rich because they know that they will pay.”⁵⁹ This sentiment was widely expressed in discussions with groups of marginalized youth in Kinshasa, Kananga, and Lubumbashi. Even salaried workers cannot afford the costs of health care. One young man in Kinshasha/Limete said, “I work in the public service. The salary that the Congolese State offers every end of the month does not allow us to have access to basic services. The Congolese State gave us a health card for medical care, which helps us to nothing. You can’t be served anywhere using this card. Be it for consultation or medicines, only money is accepted, not this infamous card.”

Youth in the focus groups explained that it is relatively common, especially in rural areas, for hospitals and health centers to detain patients—essentially holding them hostage—until their families or communities pay for their care. Another common practice identified is bartering property in exchange for health care. For the most part, these practices are limited to life-threatening

illnesses, and the patient will usually receive care after heavy negotiations between the family and the health care provider. Marginalized groups such as street youth and orphans are particularly vulnerable in these circumstances, because they have no family safety net to support or advocate for them. According to youth participants in this study, the inability to see a doctor or get treatment due to a lack of financial resources is one of the most significant consequences of poverty and represents a tangible denial of fundamental rights. A young female in Kisangani said, “There are no jobs for the parents or support for young people; the children become stubborn; problems of education, there is no dialogue between parents and children about sexuality.”

Given these challenges, many young people will develop survival strategies that adversely impact their health and human dignity, including turning to drug use and prostitution. This negative evolution in youth behavior is one symptom reflected in the DRC’s increased crime rate. For some of the study participants, mainly young women, prostitution is an effective means both for earning an income and accessing health care. This is the case for a young woman in Kinshasa who said, “I take care of myself—I can sell my body or exchange it for health care.” However, for the majority of young women who practice prostitution, it is seen as a dangerous means of survival and a challenge to their physical, psychological, and social well-being. Interaction with young people, and especially sexually active girls, has shown that prostitution opens the door to STDs including HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, and abortions.

In the districts targeted for this study and particularly rural areas, researchers noted the prevalence of teen mothers and other youth with HIV/AIDS. The high incidence of teen pregnancy in the DRC reflects the fact that people have not yet developed the habit of using condoms or other contraceptives. Many young men perceive safe sex with condoms as being unauthentic and unenjoyable. Despite the high incidence of teen pregnancy and early sexual debut, the majority of youth are neither informed nor sensitized about reproductive health and family planning. Research has shown that this lack of understanding about contraception, reproductive health, and family planning impedes the participation of youth in the

fight against HIV/AIDS. From 2002–2006, the UNFPA established eight youth centers offering reproductive health and counseling services. An additional sexual and reproductive health center was established at the University of Kinshasa, and, sexual and reproductive health was integrated into the curriculum of certain departments. The *Coordination du Projet Participation et Développement des Adolescents* (PDA) in Kananga provides guidance to all HIV cases through available screening centers such as IMCK/PAX (Christian Medical Institute of the Kasai/PAX), Hôpital Bon Berger-Tshikaji, and the General Referral Hospital of Kananga. Similarly, the Associations of Congolese Youth of Kolwezi work with Health District staff to facilitate free support for HIV-infected youth.

Youth participants in the study raised sexual assault as a major concern in their communities. According to a female participant in Kisangani, “... there are many cases of sexual abuse by boys against girls, especially at night in obscure places.” Another participant from Kolwezi added: “Often one encounters it [sexual assault] at the university; if, for example, you have not performed well in a class, the teacher might take advantage of vulnerable female students and dishonor them. A scholarship can protect girls from this vulnerability with teachers.” Unanimously, study participants denounced domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, and discrimination between girls and boys. According to the majority of young women, sexual harassment is widespread in schools, universities, and the workplace, where women are forced to offer themselves in exchange for grades, work, or money on a daily basis.

Positive role models are tempted to engage in risky behavior, yet they use the following motivations to make positive life decisions:

- Risky behaviors will curtail achievement of life goals
- Strong family, peer, and community networks help you stay focused
- Church lessons strengthen one’s values and character
- Developing life skills and seeking positive role models sets you toward your goals

Research has shown that in situations where girls are significantly more disadvantaged than boys—due to lack of economic opportunity, poverty, cultural or social class biases, and low levels of education—they inevitably run the risk of being victims of harassment or sexual abuse. In the specific context where local culture encourages submissive behavior among women and girls, being able to say “no” or to make decisions with respect to their bodies becomes an even more daunting challenge.

In summary, YouthMap’s health research revealed five main challenges impacting Congolese youth:

- Prevalence of risky sexual behavior, especially among vulnerable populations (e.g., unprotected sexual intercourse, multiple partners, and prostitution);
- High risk of sexual assault and coercion by those in positions of power;

- Low level of knowledge about sexuality and reproductive health (e.g., unwanted or early pregnancies and abortion);
- Persistence of conservative social practices and sociocultural constraints (e.g., early marriage);
- Limited access to health care and particularly reproductive health care.

Although there are many challenges facing youth and health in the DRC, particularly around sexual and reproductive health, this study found a number of promising practices and youth-led initiatives addressing HIV/AIDS and the need for behavior change. In Kolwezi, the Network of Associations of Congolese Youth coordinates between 37 different youth organizations (network members) in their fight against HIV/AIDS: “We coordinate all screening and support activities to combat HIV/AIDS in young people from the rural District of Kolwezi to urban cities such as Kinshasa.”

Key Program Considerations

- Integrate effective sexual and reproductive health education into life skills programming, which will contribute to young people’s security, health and well-being, education, and self-confidence. Such integration could include expanding the geographic coverage of Voice of America’s (VOA) US Department of State-funded French program titled “Your Health, Your Future.”
- Conduct TOTs and other trainings that increase knowledge and skills for young people using a peer educator format conducive to reaching DRC’s youth.
- Reinvigorate and support the national adolescent reproductive health program, PNSAR.
- Raise awareness about the 2009 Act on Child Protection, and support subsequent behavior change in communities.
- Promote access to affordable and quality health care for young people, in collaboration with existing implementing partners and other institutions.

“According to many young people, the term AIDS stands for “system invented to discourage lovers” (SIDA: Système Inventé pour Décourager les Amoureux). Young people say they mainly engage in unplanned sexual intercourse, and they believe that “unused muscles shrivel,” so for them sexual organs should be used regularly.” Adolescents typically become sexually active at age 14 in rural areas and 15 or 16 years of age in the city. When it comes to family planning, two out of 10 youth are aware of contraceptive methods. Some say that contraception is dangerous for women and has harmful consequences. Adolescents and young people say that natural methods of family planning are difficult to put into practice. The community does not encourage young people to space births or respect the principles of safe motherhood. Early marriage produces young mothers—16 or 17 years old in rural areas and 17 to 18 years old in the city.”

—Excerpt from interview with the head coordinator of the Participation and Development of Adolescents (PDA) project, conducted by an NGO in Kananga (Kasai-Occidental)

- Leverage USAID Forward to promote youth participation and the strengthening of local youth-led organizations by supporting capacity-building activities for youth-led and youth-driven organizations working in health.
- For all proposals (e.g., RFAs, RFPs, APSs), ask implementing partners to identify and propose key interventions that directly impact youth issues and their livelihoods.

Civic and Political Participation

Background

The slave trade, colonization, unsuccessful decolonization, authoritarian regimes, and multiple armed conflicts that the DRC suffered has since independence from Belgium in 1960 have led to a breakdown of the state apparatus. War has ravaged basic social infrastructure, led to massive population displacements, impaired the ability of the state to meet basic needs (e.g., shelter, food, safety, and education) of local communities, and resulted in serious human rights violations along the way. These factors have had a very negative impact on the social contract between the state and Congolese citizens, as well as the sociopolitical organization of the country.

This situation has led to a “crisis of citizenship” represented by a perverse mutation from inclusive and responsible governance to an antisocial, exclusive, and irresponsible power struggle based on fear of the other, tribalism, corruption, easy enrichment, embezzlement of public property and the use of violence as a means of choice to express themselves or resolve personal or community problems.⁶⁰ Africa’s democratic wave of elections in the 1990s, a consequence of the end of the Cold War, was decisive for the DRC. Beginning with the National Sovereign Conference CNS (1990–1992), the country envisioned institutional and policy reforms that engendered hope about the prospects for positive change. However, the dictatorial regime withstood this democratic wave, which paved the way for the legitimization of the quest for political transformation through military means. The rise of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation (ADFL) of Congo-Zaire brought mayhem to the democratic momentum inaugurated by the CNS. Since then, the country has dealt with over 30 armed

militias primarily active in the eastern part of the country, which consist of the country’s future demographic: about 70% of the fighters range in age between 13 and 30.⁶¹ Violence, especially when it directly involves a future generation, has long-term consequences throughout society. As such, the country currently ranks as the one of the most corrupt countries in the world (154 out of 177), and has the lowest rate of women participation in decision making.⁶² With support from the international community, democratic revival efforts since the CNS include the Dialogue Intercongolais (2002, Sun City), which led to the drafting and adoption of a new constitution, enabling the rebuilding of the state (and the country’s first general elections in 2006. The country’s second general elections took place in November 2011, which in April 2012 resulted in the appointment of a new government whose stated ambition is to be “closer to the people and transform the Congo” into an “emerging country” in the heart of Africa.⁶³ Despite concerns from the political opposition and international community about the legitimacy and transparency of the 2011 elections results, the current People’s Party for Reconstruction and Democracy (PRD) have stated their interest to improve governance and increase involvement of its citizens in decision making, accelerating the improvement of social conditions for the Congolese people through access to quality basic social services.⁶⁴

In 2013, the government created the Ministry of New Citizenship with the view to changing the Congolese mindset and promoting good governance and democratic values. Through this ministry, the government has created a National Citizen Ethics Commission and outreach facilities to improve citizen state relationships. These structures are meant to hold political leaders and officials more accountable and ensure that all government development projects reflect the aspirations of local communities. The idea is that this increase in citizen participation and public scrutiny will improve transparency, social accountability, and private investment. Despite these government initiatives, challenges along the road to democracy and civic participation remain:

- Institutional government structures working on social development issues in the country do not yet promote effective involvement of local communities as part of the decentralization process;
- Provinces are not substantially involved in local development and poverty reduction issues;
- Local economies perform poorly, partly due to deficient socioeconomic infrastructure and regulatory framework/environment;
- Local political and institutional players are nominated and not elected (e.g., municipalities and decentralized services), with little accountability for consultation and collaboration with the local population for effective action; and
- Populations, including young people, are not involved in critical planning and monitoring of program activities that directly impact their socioeconomic well-being.

Assessment Findings

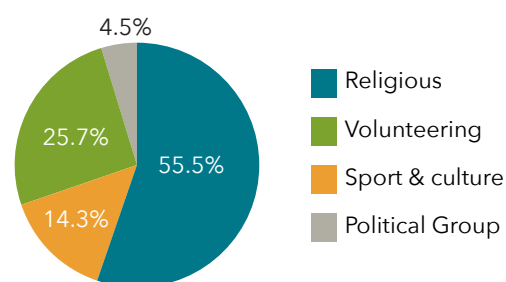
Our Democracy and Governance field research and analysis from the 512 youth participants is summarized in Table 11.

Table 11: Assessment Findings—A Summary of Findings on Democracy and Governance for Young People in the DRC

DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Democratic process launched	Poor youth participation in political activities
Massive youth participation in recent elections	Poor youth representation in youth institutions
Strong youth engagement in community activities	Poor government collaboration and willingness to listen to youth perspectives
	Poor local governance
	Limited freedom of expression

Understanding civic participation⁶⁵ among young people from the beginning served as an important gauge to their general involvement in the DRC’s democracy and governance process. 65% of youth in our research confirmed their participation in civic engagement activities, with more than 50% reporting their involvement in religious activities (volunteering, and sports and culture received the next-most responses), which reinforces the DRC’s deep-rooted faith and the church’s influence on young people. Political participation, on the other hand, was seen more as a civic duty to vote and change the country’s trajectory, than a right.

Figure 10: Areas of Civic Participation of YouthMap participants



In Orientale Province—different than other provinces—almost all youth interviewed actively participate in political activities. They participate essentially in the fight against negative practices (e.g., armed groups). This attitude is partly driven by a people shaken by war and because violence (e.g., armed groups) there is a means of access to political power and in turn impacts all aspects of life. Young people feel particularly impacted by this situation. A young man in Mbuji-Mayi expressed this disillusionment: “It’s the Ministers’, the Governor’s duty to know how many young people there are in the province, and how many of them are going through difficult situations, but they don’t do it, which means our situation doesn’t concern them! It is not up to us to go disturb their peaceful lives, we prefer to suffer than go talk to those people who have no ideas what youth go through.” To carry this point further back to the capital, a young girl in Limete, Kinshasa, added, “The authorities don’t listen to us. Often, even when they come around to claim to listen with roaming microphones, on radio or television, nothing happens.”

This interaction also revealed a sense of political victimization among young people. A significant number of young people feel politicians manipulate them by pitting them against one another during the elections and then abandoning them afterwards. For example, a young man from Kananga stated: “I am no longer interested in politics because it does not change anything in life even the promises made during the election season.” This same feeling is expressed among girls, who stated their participation as solely tied to “receiving some property during the election period.” Other young people stressed their negative experiences with politics through the term *anti-valeurs*, (using deception to win an election), whereby politicians are balancing the desire to serve community versus one’s own interests. This sentiment was expressed by a girl in Kolwezi who said, “I like politics, but I do not like to participate because in politics, there are a lot of grudges and the politicians are there to lie to the population.” In all study sites, the majority of young boys and girls were disillusioned by politics and the negative examples politicians set for their communities. According to one female participant in Lubumbashi, “Young people have the ability to participate in the political system in their country, but must be free to express their opinions. We are in a democratic country, and the young people must all feel free. It is their basic right.”

Despite the image that politicians are paid well and all the notoriety that comes along with positions of power and influence, the majority of young people want to engage in serving community. 50% of boys interviewed prefer to engage in community leadership, while 33% of girls prefer to work in the media. Overall, young people prefer civic engagement to traditional politics, since they value working together in groups and associations as a means to contribute concretely to social change. More profoundly, the majority of young people feel that civil society (more than politics) provides an easier outlet for their voice to be heard (e.g., petitions). Nevertheless, youth are disenchanted with the little attention society and political leaders in particular give to their demands and concerns. They bemoan the repression and intimidation present in the country. The research showed that young people want to be involved and contribute to the development of their communities and country (e.g., through awareness about hygiene and sanitation, HIV/AIDS), yet lack the tools and financial resources to support these actions.

Table 12: Why YouthMap Participants Do Not Engage in Civic Activities

	Number	Percent
Lack of interest	45	25
Lack of time	41	24
Do not know	9	5
Other reasons	7	4
Lack of opportunity	46	26
No Response	29	16
Total	177	100

With respect to politics and governance, young people are skeptical. They condemn the chronic lack of participatory processes, which neglects local communities and denies them their fundamental right to participate in the decision-making process. Youth frustration with politics can be illustrated through a group of youth from Kinshasa who stated that “access to basic services in the communities is very limited. But also, the lack of electricity in some neighborhoods, namely in Malweka, prevents us from getting information.” There is a deep sense of frustration, exclusion, non-representation, and non-integration in the management of public affairs. Figure 8 reflects these sentiments, as 74% of young people feel they either lack time or interest to participate in local governance. Regardless of the province, youth are disappointed and frustrated by their lack of voice in decisions that impact their lives, and they feel there is nowhere to turn. This frustration came out by one participant who said, “I don’t speak to anyone, because I know that there will be no solution. They don’t listen to us, not even a little. We await them during campaigning in the election period. That’s when they come to us.” Still, researchers also found young people who were hopeful about creating a future cadre of young leaders in the DRC. Youth-led organizations such as the Congolese Leadership Initiative (CLI) seek to develop the next generation of leaders as catalysts for change. Through intensive training in Kinshasa and Eastern Congo, the CLI’s peer-to-peer model of leadership development seeks to provide young people with the leadership skills that will help propel the country toward greater peace and prosperity—one community at a time.

Key Program Considerations

- Enhance and/or build local competencies (especially among youth) in the areas of community mobilization, management of human and material resources, and organization of discussion forums on the design of local governance and development plans. For example, the Leadership and Civic Participation program that the Kuvuna Foundation is implementing in collaboration with several civil society organizations in Kinshasa deserves to be analyzed, improved, supported, and extended to other youth initiatives.
- Support the government's decentralization program to promote local governance and ensure youth have a voice in the process.
- Motivate and support grassroots youth initiatives that develop a new generation of leaders by encouraging young people to be agents of change. The CLI's peer-to-peer model should be looked at for possible replication, because their emphasis on youth-led civic participation provides young people with the room to be innovative and dynamic leaders in their communities.
- Create youth exchange platforms around the country to allow young people to engage with each other on common themes with respect to civic and political participation in their communities.
- Support local youth-led organizations through USAID Forward, thereby fostering deeper networks with young people for greater support and coordination.
- Incorporating youth indicators into each DO and associated activities as part of USAID/DRC's M&E system.
- Incorporating youth-specific questions for analysis as part of standard topics to be raised in RFPs, RFAs, and other technical proposals.

CONCLUSION

The YouthMap DRC assessment sought out to answer several key questions about Congolese youth's needs, determine how well their needs are being addressed; and identify ways to more effectively support them. The more than 500 youth who participated in the assessment clearly articulated their needs, along with their respective challenges and aspirations. They recognize their journey ahead will be full of obstacles, yet plenty of opportunities as well. The top goal on DRC youth's priority list is no different than other young people around the world: secure meaningful work. Other important issues along the way include acquiring practical work skills and experience, becoming more involved in entrepreneurial activities, increasing participation in decision-making processes, and securing access to youth-friendly health and financial services.

At the same time, employers are enthusiastic about working with development partners and the larger community to increase the capacity of their current and future workforce. They are also interested in supporting 'job creators', since they understand the dynamics of a growing youth demographic coupled with the labor market's limited absorptive capacity. All stakeholders involved in the assessment recognize young people as potential and actual problem solvers rather than problems to be solved.

The YouthMap assessment's snapshot taken of the conditions faced by young people in four of the DRC's most important regions confirms a number of issues raised in other studies and reports. This report's focus on young people's opinions and strategies to address the many challenges, however, is relatively new. Getting young people to voice their opinions about employment, education, health, and civic participation has allowed us raise issues and to put forward solutions with the "end-user" in mind.

To summarize the report's key recommendations, there is a need to complete the following steps:

- Better align DRC's education and training to meet labor market demands and employer needs;
- Increase partnerships (and internship/job placement

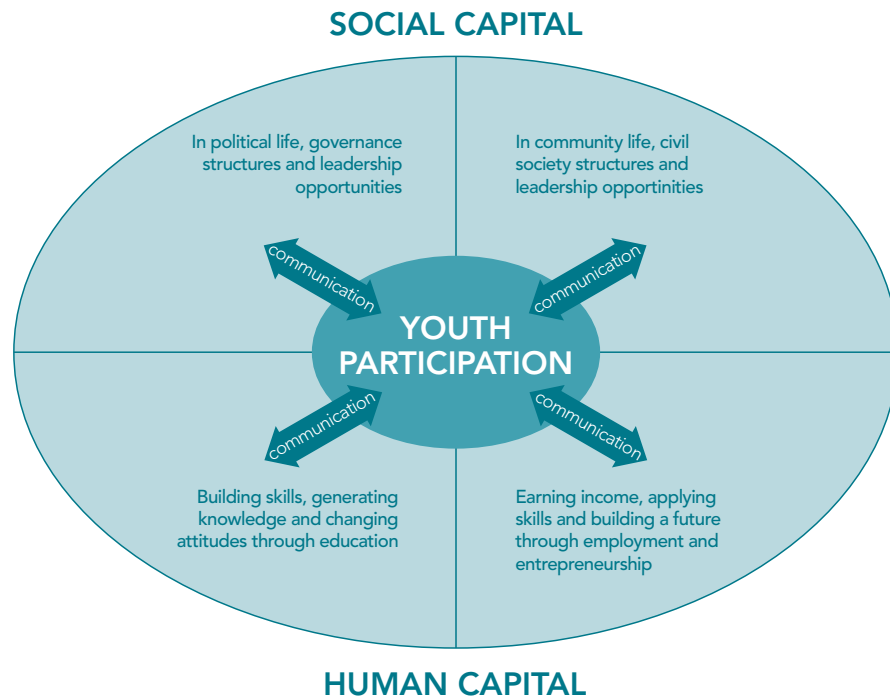
programs) between educational/training institutions and employers;

- Improve and increase general youth internship, apprenticeship, volunteering, and mentoring opportunities to build skills relevant to the job market;
- Promote youth entrepreneurship through increased access to training, mentorship programs, and financing opportunities that encourage youth participation in growth sectors such as extractive industries, agriculture, and transportation;
- Expand youth access to quality health care, including sexual and reproductive health and particularly family planning services;
- Improve and expand training for DRC's health workers, with a focus on quality of care for youth—specifically related to sexual and reproductive health, family planning, and interpersonal communications;
- Actively engage youth in government and nongovernment decision-making structures and processes.

Congolese youth have the desire and ability to drive positive social change and economic growth—when given the appropriate resources, tools, and opportunities. Youth see themselves as the future citizens of the DRC and wish for access to good education and training that is responsive to the labor market and will lead to jobs. DRC's youth demographics alone demands that young people take ownership and leadership for shaping their futures. National and foreign investments must focus on youth needs: their education, health, civic participation, and eventual employment as productive citizens. The GDRC (as part of its national development goals) and foreign donors such as USAID recognize the value of such interventions. However, there is still a cultural shift and mindset change that must take place to allow for the next generation of leaders and civil servants to emerge.

The journey will require the DRC's youth to develop the entrepreneurial, leadership, and life skills that will enable them to adapt to and actively participate in today's increasingly complex, interdependent world. To be

Figure 11 : YouthMap DRC framework



productive citizens that not only earn their livelihoods but also flourish in the workplace or marketplace, young people will need to develop and apply essential skills and competencies that include teamwork, creative thinking, problem solving, citizenship, and the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. This growth will not only breed responsibility, but also garner respect across ethnicities, religions, and nationalities—putting the DRC on a path toward greater respectability.

Figure 11 provides an overarching framework to illustrate Congolese youth’s potential to leverage social and human capital and help solve some of the DRC’s most challenging political, civic, and social challenges.

USAID’s new Youth in Development Policy recognizes youth as central to our global future—not just due to their population size, but in terms of the contributions they can make to communities, cities, and countries. They represent today and tomorrow’s teachers, politicians, entrepreneurs, and civic leaders who can set a positive development trajectory for the next generation of leaders. When youth are engaged and proper investments are made in their well-being (e.g. education, livelihoods, and health), significant demographic dividends⁶⁶ can result. USAID and other public and private partners are well-placed to support the GDRC in achieving these goals. With its rich natural and human resources, the DRC is ripe to benefit—on what is a complex, demanding, and yet promising journey.

ENDNOTES

1. UNFPA, *Status Report: Youth Sub-Saharan Africa* (2013), 40.
2. Xanthe Ackerman, Lauren Greubel, and Rebecca Winthrop, “The New Push for Education Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo,” Brookings Institute (2013), accessed June 2013, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2013/03/01-education-reform-congo-winthrop>.
3. UNICEF, *National Survey on the Situation of Out-of-School Children and Adolescents* (UNICEF, UNESCO, DFID, 2013), 9.
4. UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2013).
5. African Development Bank, *2012 Africa Economic Outlook* (2012), 2.
6. Life skills are defined by the World Health Organization as abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.
7. UNFPA, *Status Report: Youth Sub-Saharan Africa* (2013), 40.
8. *Ibid.*, 23.
9. On the other hand, gender inequality is referenced as a key contributor to the country’s 39.9% dip in the UN’s 2013 Human Development Index (HDI).
10. UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2013).
11. Role models are young people who have displayed positive knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes in their lives; overcome difficult life circumstances; demonstrated leadership skills; and are admired in their communities by peers.
12. The high urban sample—primarily peri-urban rather than rural locations, was based on agreement with the USAID/DRC mission.
13. Johannes Herderschee, Kai-Alexander Kaiser, and Daniel Mukoko Samba, *Resilience of an African Giant* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2012), 13.
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16. DRC Ministry of Planning, *Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (2011), 46.
17. African Development Bank, *2012 Africa Economic Outlook* (2012), 15.
18. UNICEF, *National Survey on the Situation of Out-of-School Children and Adolescents* (UNICEF, UNESCO, DFID, 2013), 9.
19. GDRC’s *National Youth Policy* defines youth as being between 15 and 35 years old.
20. DRC Ministry of Planning, *Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (2011).
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24. *Ibid.*
25. DRC Ministry of Gender, Family, and Child, *National Policy for Integration of Gender* (2008).
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28. Anne T. Sweetser and Nassrin Farzaneh, *Gender Assessment for the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (2012), 26.
29. DRC Ministry of Planning, *Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (2011), 42.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Xanthe Ackerman, Lauren Greubel, and Rebecca Winthrop, *The New Push for Education Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, Brookings Institute (2013), accessed June 2013, <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2013/03/01-education-reform-congo-winthrop>.
32. DRC Ministry of Youth and Sports, *National Youth Policy* (2009).
33. Ministry of Planning, *Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (2011), 42.
34. *Ibid.*, 43.
35. *Ibid.*

36. UNICEF, *National Survey on the Situation of Out-of-School Children and Adolescents* (UNICEF, UNESCO, DFID, 2013).
37. Ibid.
38. DRC Ministry of Primary and Secondary School, *Enquête nationale sur la situation des enfants et adolescents en dehors de l'école* (2012), 7.
39. Matata Ponyo Mapon, *Presentation Speech of the Government Program to the DRC Senate* (Kinshasa, DRC, December 10, 2012).
40. Ministry of Planning, *Second Generation Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (2011), 54.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., 56.
43. Ibid., 81.
44. Ibid.
45. Johannes Herderschee, Kai-Alexander Kaiser, and Daniel Mukoko Samba, *Resilience of an African Giant*, (Washington DC: World Bank, 2012), 96.
46. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the DRC's National Employment Office implements a registration system for the unemployed and issues biometric cards to registrants.
47. The IMF describes PEIGMA as tasked with producing indicators on job opportunities and job seekers; publishing key market indicators; conducting periodic surveys to determine labor needs; and preparing job descriptions to inform job seekers about opportunities.
48. African Development Bank, *2012 Africa Economic Outlook* (2012), 15.
49. Ibid.
50. Focus Group Discussion, Kinshasa (April 17, 2013).
51. African Development Bank, *2012 Africa Economic Outlook* (2012), 15.
52. Ibid., 14.
53. Ibid., 15.
54. Focus Group Discussion, Kinshasa (April 25, 2013).
55. UNFPA, *Status Report Youth Sub-Saharan Africa* (2013), 40.
56. UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2013).
57. There is new data being generated for the 2013 Demographic Health Survey (DHS) and ANC survey. At this time the researchers do not have access to this dataset.
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62. Transparency International, *Corruption Perceptions Index 2013* (December 3, 2013) accessed December 5, 2013, <http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/>.
63. Matata Ponyo Mapon, *Presentation speech of the government program to the DRC Senate*, Kinshasa, (December 10, 2012).
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65. Civic engagement or civic activity/participation references activities designed to make a difference in communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. This can be done through both political and non-political processes.
66. These dividends include economic and human resource development, increased health, and expanded peace, security, and democracy.

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