Resilient Youth and Their Social Ecology

September 29, 2022
9:00-10:30am ET
TODAY’S Agenda

Opening Remarks
- John Meyer | USAID Center for Resilience

Technical Presentations
- Jane Lowicki-Zucca | USAID Bureau for Resilience & Food Security
- Dr. Christine Allison | Making Cents International
- Rita Larok | Graduating to Resilience Activity
- Ronald Ariganyira | Graduating to Resilience Activity

Moderated Q&A

Closing Remarks
John Meyer
Senior Strategy & Impact Advisor
USAID Center for Resilience
Jane Lowicki-Zucca

Senior Youth Advisor
USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security
True or false?

Youth resilience is shaped by protective factors within young people themselves, within their families and other close relationships and those within their larger social ecology.
True or false?

Youth resilience is shaped by protective factors within youth themselves, within their families and other close relationships and those within their larger social ecology.
What shapes young people’s capacities amid adversity?
Youth and their social ecology

Social ecology is the study of how individuals interact with and respond to the environment around them, and how these interactions affect society and the environment as a whole.
Public Policy
National, state, local laws, and regulations

Community
Relationships between organizations

Organizational
Organizations, social institutions

Interpersonal
Families, friends, social networks

Individual
Knowledge, attitude, skills
Ages and Stages in the Life Course

- Early adolescence (10-14)
- Adolescence (15-19)
- Emerging adulthood (20-24)
- Transition to adulthood (25-29)
- Biosocial transition
- Cultural norms
- Diverse understandings across contexts
Positive Youth Development

✓ A “bridging” field spanning multiple academic disciplines and practice areas.

✓ Theoretical underpinnings in human development, community organization and development and social and community change.

✓ Strong roots in developmental psychology — seeks to explain young people’s capacity to change for both individual well-being and societal good through interactions between the individual and their context, or ecology.
Which of the following may introduce stressors that can inhibit youths’ cognitive and physical development?

A. Conflict
B. Poverty
C. Migration
D. Hunger
E. Living without parental care
F. All of the above
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A. Conflict
B. Poverty
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E. Living without parental care
F. All of the above
RFS Youth in Agri-food Systems Learning Activity, YP2LE
Shocks and Stressors Assessment
Resilience among youth in agriculture and water systems

September 29, 2022
Making Cents International
Key Shocks and Stressors

- COVID-19
- Desert Locusts
- Conflict
Exploring Responses to Shocks & Stressors

- Absorptive
- Adaptive
- Transformative

Individual Characteristics

Household Characteristics

Community Characteristics

Local Labor Market/Value Chains and Political Context

National and International Economic and Political Systems
## Key Results to Date from Bangladesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Coping Strategies</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scaling back production</td>
<td>(smaller livestock, different produce)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital sales with door-to-door distribution</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Migration</td>
<td>(specifically for young men)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteerism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic inactivity</td>
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</table>
Results to Date from Bangladesh

Key Supports

☐ Youth creativity
☐ Existing relationships with buyers and vendors (social capital)
☐ Optimism and persistence

Key Barriers

☐ Targeted assistance that excluded most youth
☐ Lack of support at the family/household level
☐ Uncertainty/lack of information for planning
Key Takeaways

Shocks and stressors experienced in adolescence become their frame of reference for hardships.

Individual and household characteristics seem to be significant drivers of youth outcomes.

The interventions youth identified are context dependent and not easily scalable.
What are the key program approaches that facilitate economic inclusion of youth?

A. Life skills  
B. Coaching  
C. Market linkages  
D. All of the above
What are the key program approaches that facilitate economic inclusion of youth?

A. Life skills
B. Coaching
C. Market linkages
D. All of the above
Rita Larok

Chief of Party
Graduating to Resilience Activity,
AVSI Foundation
"Resilient Youth and Their Social Ecology"

26-09-2022

Rita Larok
AVSI Foundation Presentation
Chief of Party – Graduating to Resilience Activity
Email: rita.larok@avsi.org
AVSI Foundation Uganda

OUR HISTORY

VISON
AVSI works for a world where every person, aware of his/her value and dignity, is the main protagonist of his/her own integral development and that of his/her community, even in crisis and emergency contexts.

OUR REACH
3 million last mile populations in Uganda each year

SECTORS
- Economic recovery and livelihoods
- Agriculture
- Environment and energy
- Health
- Food security and nutrition
- Disability
- Protection

Projects: 33
Local branches: 12
Staff: 690
Financial statement: €13,711,355
Direct beneficiaries: 2,600,000
Indirect beneficiaries: 1,800,000
Distance Support Program: 3,089
Children supported
Local partners: 150
Government institutions, INGOs, NGOs, CBOs, organizations from private sector
Our experience – USAID Sustainable Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families

Economic inclusion/ Graduation approach type – Household approach

- **Period:** 7 years (Apr 2011 – Apr 2018)
- **Donor:** USAID PEPFAR
- **Budget:** $40,041,414 ($36,045,184 USAID and $3,996,230 cost share)
- **Target:** 25,000 HHs, 125,000 people in 35 districts,
- **Reach:** 34,779 HHs and 208,674 people
- **Goal:** To decrease the vulnerability of moderately and critically vulnerable children and their households.
- **Implementation:** AVSI in a consortium with CARE, FHI360, TPO Uganda and 66 local partners
Our experience – USAID Sustainable Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families

Youth Resilience Approach

Economic inclusion/ Graduation approach type – Household approach

- **Family strengthening and access to critical services**
  - Parenting skills training: 7,814 caregivers (69% female) trained in parenting skills
  - Life skills training: 9,970 adolescents and youth (51% female) trained
  - Psychosocial support interventions: 15,419 people (69% female) supported with psychosocial activities
  - Community dialogues: 38,456 people (59% female)
  - Referrals to access critical services: 11,928 people (61% female) referred for critical services

- **Economic strengthening activities**
  - Savings groups, apprenticeship placements and trainings, financial literacy, enterprise selection, planning and management
Our experience – USAID Sustainable Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families

Main Activity Resilience Results:
• 12,416 (83.5%) out of 14,8762 enrolled active households “graduated” out of program support
• 3 year post graduation follow up found 75% (3 of 4 households) of graduated households resilient

• **Family strengthening** (OR 1.06, P<0.05) can enable a family transition from critical to moderate, slight vulnerability and eventual graduation
• Participation in family strengthening activities were found to enable maintenance of post graduation/ resilience status (OR 1.06, P<0.05)

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I haven't been picked by the police from the time I enrolled for Life Skills. I return home early and I am connecting well with other youth. I learned to “talk things out” and peer fights are a bygone.

Charles Kato - Kamwokya slum, Kampala District

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Each time I was afraid of raising my hand. I did not participate in class even when I had an answer. Today I speak with confidence.

Herbert Akampurira - Rubirizi District
Our experience – USAID Sustainable Comprehensive Responses for Vulnerable Children and their Families

Main Youth Life skills - Resilience Results:
- Strengthened relationships among youth and parents (43% to 65%)
- Excellent communication skills (17.7% to 53%)
- Very good psychosocial (PSS) well-being (0% to 86.7%)
- Significant association between self-care among youth treatment vs control (p= 0.000) e.g. displayed better stress management skills compared to the control group
- Corporal punishment from parents reduced by 95%, yelling reduced by 88% due to parenting training
- Life skills positively influenced self-confidence, esteem, self-worth and boosted youth decision making power and quality. Female youth resisted peer pressure, gained sensitivity to risky behavior

On stress management: “You look for social occasions like churches, games or reach out to others to seek for advice and they make you forget your problems” (FGD female trained youth, Rukungiri District)
Our experience – Game Connect

• **Period:** 3 years (Aug 2020 – Sept 2023)
• **Donor:** Olympic Refuge Foundation and GIZ
• **Budget:** $1,750,000 USD
• **Target:** 11,688 Refugee and Host community Youth in Kampala, Kamwenge, Lamwo, Adjumani and Kikuube
• **Reach:** 6,465 Youth
• **Goal:** Improved psychosocial wellbeing and mental health for refugee and host community youth (15-24 years)
• **Implementation:** AVSI in a consortium with Uganda Olympic Committee, Right To Play, Youth Sport Uganda and UNHCR
Our experience – Game Connect

Youth Resilience Approach

- Structured sport for protection, mental health and psychosocial support
- Parents/care givers sensitized on psychosocial support and relationships
- Peer to peer approach for sustainability and scalability
- Peaceful co-existence activities through sport – Annual sports events
- Sport skills development

Game Connect Videos
Our experience – Game Connect

Youth Resilience Results
- Structured sport for protection, mental health and psychosocial support

“Before the Game connect project, I was disrespectful and anything small would irritate me. It was hard to have friends because I never loved myself. I cursed myself for being Congolese and I attempted to commit suicide so many times I lived a stressful and poor life. When I went through the different life-skills in the project, I realized that my negative thoughts can let me develop a disorder and run mad. This intervention opened our eyes and mind and I request AVSI to enroll more youths for this intervention.” Naume Tumusenge
Our experience — No Means NO

- **Period:** 1 year (Oct 2020- Mar 2022)
- **Donor:** NNM Worldwide
- **Budget:** $129,062
- **Reach:** 4,064 girls reached with verbal self-defense skills and 3,638 boys taught defensive skills and healthier sexual mindsets
- **Goal:** To create a rape-free world
- **Implementation:** AVSI Foundation

“I’ve learnt that discriminating against women is a bad thing. My parents always told me that, but I didn’t believe. My instructor Moses explained why we shouldn’t touch girls and I followed his advice. I consider myself a champion because I like speaking to the boys who are still doing it – I want to see this bad practice end. Girls have become my friends and I care about how they feel.”

H. A. 13 years.
Our experience — No Means No

Youth Resilience Approach

- Improved verbal and physical skills to help prevent sexual assault and other forms of GBV among girls
- Reshaping boy’s harmful beliefs around gender and sexuality
- Improved network referral System
- Having Survivors in Recovery Anonymous (SIRA) beneficiaries with emotional and psychological wellbeing

“We know where to report abuse. Me I can report to my parents. I can report to the Chairman LC 1. I can report to the neighbor. I can report to the Community Development Officer. FGD with adolescent girls aged 15-20”
Our experience — *No Means No*: RCT: *Does the NMN program address SGBV and promote sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy?*

- Significant difference between control and treatment adolescents’ change in attitude and approval of all the critical norms that promote SGBV at end line (χ², p=0.000), such as a girl or a woman having sex with her partner/husband even if she doesn’t feel like it.
- Significant difference (χ², p=0.000) with treatment adolescents more willing to tell someone that they had experienced sexual violence and to report it.
- Significant difference between control and intervention female adolescents in Empowerment self defense skills (χ²=0.000), including awareness of the main safety goal of ESD and the three types of assault (verbal, intimidation and physical).
- Significant difference for all measures of self-esteem (χ², p=0.000),
- Significant difference for all the 10 aspects of self-efficacy (p=0.000).
Our experience – No Means No

Positive Attitude - Gender Norms

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<th>Baseline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
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Youth - Likelihood of Reporting Violence

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<th>Baseline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>95.9%</td>
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Youth - Awareness of Main safety goal of Empowerment Self Defense (Get Away)

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<th>Baseline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>98.7%</td>
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Youth - with good self-efficacy (finding solutions, planning, resourcefullness, confidence, hope)

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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
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Our experience — Graduating to Resilience

- **Period:** 7 years (Oct 01, 2017 - Sept 30, 2024)
- **Donor:** USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
- **Budget:** $36.7 million
- **Target:** 13,200 HHs (50% host / 50% refugee) — enrolled using Participatory Rural Appraisal
- **Participants:** 13,829 **women and youth** as primary participants + HHs
- **Implementer:** AVSI Foundation in a consortium with Trickle UP and American Institutes for Research (AIR)
- **External evaluator** — IPA conducting an RCT to measure impact and identify cost-effective graduation model
- **Goal:** Graduate extremely poor refugee and Ugandan HHs in Kamwenge from conditions of food insecurity and fragile livelihoods to self reliance and resilience
Our experience — Graduating to Resilience

Youth Resilience Approach

- Graduation approach/Economic inclusion (sequenced multi-sectoral approach and time bound)

- **Coaching** — embeds: Life skills, parenting, gender, preventative health, nutrition, WASH, Conflict management and relationships

- **Livelihood skills** — financial literacy, savings, business start/management, apprenticeship

- **Linkages and Referrals** — critical services — Health, GBV prevention, Education
Our experience — Graduating to Resilience

Main Youth Resilience Results:

- 73% of 6,629 households “graduated” from vulnerability to resilience
- 97.4% participants had good self efficacy (youth: 96.9%)
- 51.2% youth participants viewed GBV as less acceptable
- 96.8% youth in union who earn cash and have joint decision on use of cash with spouse
- 96.2% participants diversified their livelihoods (youth: 98%)
- 72.8% youth farmers used financial services (savings, agricultural credit, and/or agricultural insurance) in the past 12 months
- 97.8% participants including youth attended coaching sessions and found them beneficial leading to self efficacy
Lessons and Reflections
Our Lessons

- Structured and multi-sport therapies are effective in building youth resilience and can be used to treat psychosocial distress and mental health - Keep the youth ACTIVE

- Group coaching is effective – promotes social cohesion/ peer support BUT a Household level touch point is helpful for observation and tailored support

- Most Significant Activities identified by participants – Coaching, savings, asset transfer in a graduation approach type program

- Family approach – an inclusive way of working with an entire family while addressing individual youth needs

- Youth Resilience can be built best when interventions target various layers - youth, family, community level

- Soft skills – confidence, goal setting, being assertive, relationships and others are essential for youth resilience

- Engaging and working through youth peers is efficient and scalable
Ronald Ariganyira
Community-Based Trainer
Graduating to Resilience Activity
Thank You

Keep an eye on your inbox for post-event resources!

Questions or comments? Email contact@resiliencelinks.org