



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



MPEP SEMINAR SERIES

Exploring Frontiers in Inclusive Market Development

ENGAGING YOUTH IN INCLUSIVE MARKET DEVELOPMENT

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT

MAY 29, 2014

This document was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by the Feed the Future Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development (KDAD) project. The views expressed are those of the author and do not represent the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

CONTENTS

Presenters.....	3
Presentation.....	4
Questions and Answers	19

PRESENTERS

Rachel Blum, United States Agency for International Development

David Feige, Making Cents International

Devon McLorg, United States Agency for International Development

PRESENTATION

Kristen O'Planick: Welcome everyone. Actually I'm only going to introduce one of our panelists and she's going to handle the rest of it. Rachel Blum is in our Office of Education. She and I have been working together quite a bit over the last year and she's been teaching me a lot about youth engagement in the process since I'm more from the value chain background. And overtime we have realized that there are kind of two camps of people. There are the youth people, workforce development people, and then there are value chain market systems people.

And more and more our missions are trying to get you integrated into their programming to implement the Youth in Development Policy. We're realizing that there is a lot of learning that still needs to happen in this area and it would be good to try to take an opportunity to try to get those two groups together. And that's what we're trying to do here today. The format for this seminar series is usually slightly different.

Today we want a lot more dialogue, a lot more discussion, and a lot more examples from all of you in the audience here and on the webinar to really start sharing some of the early learnings and things that are emerging from what you're seeing in the field. I'll pass it over to Rachel.

Rachel Blum: Good morning everyone. Thank you so much. I'm so pleased with the turnout. As Kristen mentioned the topic that we're focusing on today is engaging youth in market development – or in increasing market development. Some of you in this room probably identify yourselves as market development practitioners and you might be saying what does youth engagement exactly mean? And I know some of you in this room are probably identifying yourselves as youth development people or youth development experts and you might be asking questions about, "Well inclusive market development – what's that?"

So we're really excited about bringing these two worlds together. Just in terms of why it's important to USAID we just have to first look at the numbers. Right now around the world there are close to 75,000,000 young people who are unemployed. And youth actually experience around the globe an unemployment rate that's double the global unemployment rate. It's about 13 percent for young people. Moreover, if we look at actually the projections for the future, that's even more interesting.

In Africa alone by 2020 the countries of Africa are going to experience about 122 million new labor market entrants. And about a third of them are going to be working on household farms and in rural economies. And then combined with that you have a large amount of urban migration where young people are moving to urban areas and obtaining livelihoods that way. You have a situation where there's a large influx of young people entering the labor market.

A large proportion of them are working family farms. Some of them are moving to urban areas for the first time and may not necessarily have the skill sets to adapt that situation. The question for us at USAID is well how do our market development programs respond to that challenge? For those of you who are less familiar with market development it's essentially a concept of developing markets and value chains in a way that promotes benefits to the poor. And it's an approach that involves all actors along the value chain.

It's working from poor household level producers up through small and medium enterprises to larger firms. When we talk about young engagement and involving youth in market development it requires an approach that is somewhat different than sort of a traditional approach of looking at where are there opportunities for profits? I think that there are a lot of lessons to be learned from youth development experts as Kristen mentioned. We're really excited about this opportunity to bring together these two worlds.

The format – the reason we decided on the potluck format is because we realize that there's very few – It's a very small niche of people who probably understand both worlds. And it's a really nascent area of development. And we'd like to further advance our understanding of what's the youth engagement perspective? What are the challenges that market development practitioners are facing in terms of providing opportunities for young people? And how do we bring those two together?

I'd like to acknowledge all of you here in the audience. And in advance I'd like to thank you for your participation. I really will be looking to you in today's discussion to provide examples from your experiences and from your projects, tools that you've used, things that you've learned through process so that we can begin to build an understanding. Before we do that I do want to acknowledge the speakers. We've invited a couple of folks to share some thoughts and experiences, just to get the conversation started.

We have Devon McLorg who works in USAID's Office of Education. Devon works on youth workforce development and also on access to

education in conflict and crisis environments. She also recently commissioned a study on youth engagement for USAID to help advance our Youth in Development Policy.

We also have David Feige who's working with Making Cents International. David has a rich background in value chain development, economic development; you name it – all things economic development: competitiveness, entrepreneurship. He'll be sharing his market development perspective and how making Making Cents has been integrating youth into market development and value chain activities.

I also want to acknowledge my colleague Clare Ignatowski in the back who is going to be moderating the online discussion. We have an enormous amount of people both from USAID missions and from implementing partners who are in the online discussion. She's going to be moderating that discussion and also highlighting things that are coming out of that conversation. With that I'm going to hand it to Devon and we'll start.

Devon McLord:

with education on the youth workforce development team and I am also leading the agency's new sub-working group on youth engagement at USAID. What is youth engagement? As I've discovered over the last couple of years working in this field people have a broad array of ways of defining this term. Some people define it quite broadly and might consider it as simply meaning to enroll youth as program beneficiaries while others might consider it to mean considering any program that targets youth as a youth engagement program.

Youth engagement specialists, however, frame it differently (and I'm looking at you Nicole) to think of it more narrowly to focus on how we can elevate youth as participants and partners in our work. So that's why I wanted to start today by helping us get onto the same page with a common understanding of what that definition should be. As Rachel mentioned we commissioned a study with JBS International (hi Matt) over the last two years and we proposed using the definition that you can see on the screen, which is from the Youth Leadership Institute.

And that is that you youth engagement is the active, empowered, and intentional partnership with youth as stakeholders, problem solvers, and change agents in their communities. While I like almost everything about this definition I think it's really important for us to focus on the word "intentional." If we're going to be really serious about getting youth meaningfully engaged in our work we need to do this with a purpose. And for the dynamic to be successful we need to

go beyond viewing youth as passive beneficiaries of our programs but instead to look at them as partners, as change agents, and as co-drivers of our work.

What does that look like? I want to share Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation with you. I'm sure that many people online and in the room are already familiar with this model but we find it as a very helpful framework for discussing youth participation in looking at the spectrum of what we can mean by youth engagement. The ladder presents eight rungs to illustrate the various levels of youth participation. And Hart highlights the fact that the three lower rungs that you can see: manipulations, tokenism, and decorations are examples of non-participation.

I would like to avoid discussing those today to aim us toward the higher rungs of the ladder. In the higher rungs we can see that participation really occurs when young people are consulted and informed, when there's adult-initiated shared decision making with young people, when young people lead and initiate action, and when young people and adults are sharing in the decision making process. As Rachel mentioned earlier, over the course of 15 months in 2012 and 2013 we worked with JBS International to commission a study on best practices and approaches to youth engagement in order to better inform us as an agency and hopefully to the broader field of what we can do to better partner with youth in our work.

The report, I think, very helpfully links promising practices to the higher rungs of Hart's ladder. And you all have a copy of the report with you at your seat. And I believe we're also going to make it available online for participants on the web. For example on rung five young people are consulted and informed. I don't think it's very surprising that many organizations choose to begin to engage youth in order to better inform their program designs. They're seeking youth input. They're seeking the youth perspective.

And this information should be used to better inform relevant programming, but ultimately response to young people's needs as they've identified them. The organizations that we reviewed for the study had a wide range of mechanisms to do this. And this included blogging spaces, social media sites where young people could directly interact with the organizations, standing up youth advisory councils and conducting youth surveys during the program design phase.

Examples on rung six – adult-initiated shared decisions with young people – this included engaging young people to conduct community level assessments, training them to facilitate focus groups among their

peers, and also training them to identify recruits for youth programs. And this is often accomplished through hiring young people on project design teams, internships, standing up service, volunteer work through organizations, and then in a more long term role hiring young people on as full-time staff members.

Along rung seven young people lead and initiate action. We found that a number of organizations have recognized that youth often go to them because they really do want to become agents of change in their communities. So for example we consulted with the Latin American Youth Center who identified a movement that young people at their organization had used the center as platform from which to mobilize a movement around immigration reform. And that in itself ended up catalyzing a much larger movement that had the support of their broader community. And people were really looking to them as leaders of change.

Lastly along rung eight people and adults share in decision making. Hart clearly identified this as the highest rung on the ladder and of meaningful participation. I think that it's likely beyond the scope for many of us in the room to start thinking about this right away. But some of the examples that we've seen have been really quite effective. Share decision making often happens when you have young people as part of boards of directors, on steering committees, or in helping to select new hires or programs to actually fund, which can be quite empowering.

For example the MasterCard Foundation has a think tank that includes young people from across Sub-Saharan Africa and they tap into this group to review all of the proposals that come in that are meant to advance young people's learning. And this helps the organization ensure that they're prioritizing activities that the young people see of value and see as something that will actually help affect change and make their lives better in the future. And it assures that they'll be more affective from the start.

So before I turn it over to David to help us link some of the concepts that I'm talking about back to the value chain work I want to highlight four areas that we think are really key to having successful youth engagement approaches in our work. And the very first it that you need to have a very clear, defined purpose when you're engaging young people. You need to include goals and objectives. You need to secure their buy in. You need to develop plans for implementation and M&E just as you would in any other activity.

As a second tip you should be ensuring that you have adequate resources. This is both financial and human resources for coordination purposes, for funding, and so that you can ultimately look to evaluate the work that you're doing when you partner with young people. And the third thing is really placing an emphasis on empowerment. We need to be building in feedback mechanisms, elevating young people's roles and responsibilities, and securing their ownership and buy in throughout the whole process for it to be successful and effective.

And I would say the last tip, and to me what I think is most important, is providing adequate support to young people throughout. To do all of these things we need to be training young people. We need to be mentoring. We need to be following up with them and being sure that we're setting them up for success and not for failure in these endeavors.

I hope that this brief overview has helped to put some structure on the concepts of how we're thinking at USAID about youth engagement and for us to think about how we might include youth better throughout the value chains. I know that we have many participants in the room who have a number of experiences and examples and tools to share with us during the potluck session. I'm looking forward to that. And with that I'll hand it over to David. Thank you.

David Feige:

Thanks Devon. Good morning everyone. It's my great, great pleasure to be here. I know we want to set aside a lot of time at the end of this for questions and discussion so I'm going to try to limit my presentation to about 20 minutes. First of all I guess I should ask if everybody can hear me okay? I don't know if this is on. To run really quickly through the agenda I think Devon did a really nice job of structuring how we think about youth participation in the context of USAID projects.

I did want to share a few thoughts about the way that Making Cents approaches this issue, much of which I think is reflective of some of the things that Devon was saying. We'll then talk a little bit about inclusive value chain development. How is it similar to or different from traditional value chain development approaches and how do we think about looking at this issue? We'll then try to apply some of those principles to a case study, the Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project which is a USAID funded, Fintrac implemented project on which we are a subcontractor. We'll look briefly at some of the principles and applications around inclusive value chain development and then extract a few of the lessons learned from that project.

When Making Cents looks at youth inclusion – I think it is fairly reflective of what Devon was saying as well – that I think traditionally we've sort of been conditioned to think about youth inclusion as structuring projects in such a way that young people are beneficiaries of what we do. And I think that while that is useful there's a far more powerful way of looking at it, which is how do we engage youth a little bit more actively in designing the interventions that are going to affect their lives?

And the term that we've applied to this at Making Cents is co-creation. This is a term that some of you may be familiar with already. It originated actually in the business world where firms have been more actively engaging their customer bases in the design of products for which they will ultimately become the end users. We like to think of young people in the same way, that young people are beneficiaries of our project and should have some say and some input into the way that those things are structured. We'll be more effective as an organization to the extent that we're able to incorporate them in that way.

The second is that there are a couple of different ways of thinking about inclusion in terms of the way that projects are structured. I think the more traditional way of looking at this is what we would refer to as targeting, which basically looks at projects or components of projects that are specifically designed to address the concerns of youth. But one of the things that we've tried to embrace at Making Cents is what we call project mainstreaming where we are more actively engaging youth across all project activities and across all project components.

That's something to be thinking about as well as we consider project design. And you perhaps a little bit like Hart's Ladder we use what we refer to as an inclusion continuum. This can be applied to young people. It can be applied if we're trying to incorporate women more actively in our projects as well, but ranges all the way from excluding to inclusive activities. And we think that one of the useful things about this framework is that it doesn't frame youth inclusivity as sort of an all or nothing proposition.

What we are looking to do is to move projects along the continuum such that when the project ends they're at a different point from where they started. We will often do a baseline to try to determine where the project is at the beginning. And if we can move a project from box one to box three or box two to box four we consider that a success. Project shouldn't be looked at as failures just because they

couldn't reach full inclusivity. The question is: are we moving in that direction?

I'd like to move on to some principles of inclusive value chain development. As Rachel mentioned I come at this very much from a value chain development perspective. That is my background. And one of the things that I found as I moved in this space is that youth inclusive value chain development is not a radical departure from value chain development as we do it now. A lot of the principles – the practices hold. What is important I think is to recognize is that inclusive value chain development recognizes that value chain development is not by its nature an inclusive activity.

And by that I mean as value chain practitioners know one of the first things we often do in the course of a value chain analysis is to identify opportunities and constraints for project stakeholders. And it's important in this context to recognize that young people face a different set of opportunities and constraints from other value chain actors. And it's important in the course of the value chain analysis to identify those things and to come up with strategies to deal with them.

We'll look at a bit of an application of this as we talk about the Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project in a moment. In terms of the way that we think about this, and rather than asking how can we include youth, what we like to think about is how can young people be incorporated into value chains in a way that makes those value chains more efficient and/or more profitable. And we think this important for a couple of reasons. One, we don't want to lose site of the competitiveness perspective as we consider the integration of young people into value chains.

But also because we recognize that the sustainability of youth inclusive initiative is closely tied to the ability of young people to actually raise the competitiveness of those value chains to the extent that other value chain actors see a benefit in including young people in their value chains. That is very, very closely tied to the sustainability of these initiatives. And then the final point I wanted to make here is that there are several points in the course of the value chain development process that we can think about including young people.

One is at essentially project kick-off when the value chain selection process is done and thinking about how can we incorporate criteria related to youth inclusion as we select those value chains to ensure that we have value chains in which youth are already active participants or where there are potential entry points for them. The

second – and this is I think more reflective of the way that KHCP – that that project went. Once the value chains have actually been identified how do we consider youth inclusion in the context of value chain upgrading strategies and what benefits can they bring?

And then the third is going back to the idea of co-creation. How do we incorporate young people more actively in actually be a part of the design of those upgrading strategies? And one thing I wanted to point out, because we don't have a lot of time to go through it today, on your chairs you have seen a three-page Inclusive Value Chain Development Guide. This is not meant to be comprehensive but it is a way of framing the way that we think about inclusive value chain development and asks some of the questions that you may want to ask at these various changes of value chain selection and value chain analysis and value chain implementation.

How do we think a little bit more carefully about including youth at each point in the process? Hopefully you'll find that to be a useful resource. Like I said it's not intended to be comprehensive but is sort of a starters guide, hopefully useful both to people who come at this from the value chain perspective and are more interested in incorporating kind of youth inclusive principles as well as youth practitioners who are interested in being able to actually apply the value chain approach to their populations.

With that I'd like to go into a couple of comments around the case study. As I mentioned the Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project is a USAID-funded project. It started in 2010. It was not originally actually part of the Feed the Future portfolio but over the course of the project we recognized that a lot of the Feed the Future principles were increasingly incorporated into project activities. As I mentioned, Making Cents was a subcontractor on this. And the project focused primarily on three high value export oriented horticulture value chains: market vegetables, sweet potatoes, and passion fruit.

Actually I want to jump to this slide first. As we think about applying some of the things we talked about in terms of identifying opportunities and constraints for young people in existing value chains this is what we did within the context of this project. One of the things we recognize and for people who have worked in agricultural development (especially in value chains) will recognize this as a huge problem pretty much everywhere which is post-harvest loss, estimated by most in Kenya at around 40 percent of 35 percent which is a fairly common (in my experience) amount of post-harvest loss.

While this is a serious constraint for the value chains themselves it also represents an opportunity for young people to get involved and we'll talk about that in just a moment. The second is the unwillingness of older farmers to change to more profitable crops. One of the things that we found in talking to people is that – this was true of coffee in particular out there – irrespective of what the margins – on what they were selling – were "We've always done coffee. We're always going to do coffee."

Whereas young people had kind of demonstrated a flexibility of mind to change to more profitable crops as the market changed. And in this case that happened to be bananas which were making far higher margins. We found young people a lot more adaptable in terms of switching projects as the situation changed. The third is the average age of farmers. This is also something I think that is probably generalizable to every country that we work in. They are between 50 and 60 years of age. I think the average in Kenya was probably about 58 I think is what we found out.

And this is important because a lot of the agribusinesses and lead firms in these value chains are recognizing this as a very, very serious problem and that their future supply base is at risk. In terms of engaging the businesses themselves in this process this is a very important selling point and one that a lot have woken up to now. Something else that we saw a bit of is a trend toward parents being more willing to set aside plots of land for young people to experiment with different things than the parents might be doing. This is not something we saw I would say systematically but we did see examples of it and we saw more examples of it certainly than I think we had seen in the past.

This also I think provides some opportunities for young people. In terms of the constraint side one of the biggest constraints that we saw is the attitudes of value chain actors toward young people as value chain participants as well as the attitude of a lot of young people towards agriculture itself as a career field. And we'll talk about that in a moment as we look at some of the lessons learned as well.

Lack of assets (in particular land) lack of access to finance, fragmented markets which are difficult to access and how do you know not just what to product but where to find the markets to actually sell those in, the perception (or some would say the reality) of sort of the unreliability of young people as suppliers, especially with respect to side selling and things like that as well as something that Rachel

alluded to earlier which is that a lot of young people lack the skills and the knowledge to be product value chain actors.

Once we had conducted this analysis we started to look at what young people were currently doing and where we saw some entry points, where we saw opportunities for them to engage in other value chain activities in which they may not have been involved in the past. And as it turned out most young people for cash flow reasons are involved in short cycle activities. These require small plots of land, low initial investment. Things like flowers, nurseries, baby corn all made sense for them. At first glance French beans also seemed to fit the qualities and the attributes of a value chain in which they might be able to be involved.

But upon further investigation this particular value chain required a lot of specialized financing that young people didn't have access to. There were a few young people involved in French beans but not a whole lot of them. Then we started looking at some of the potential entry points. What else could young people be doing that was consistent with the kinds of skills and interest that they had themselves? And one thing you'll notice as we look at these is these are all basically either off-farm or what I would call barely on-farm activities.

This is largely reflective of the interests and the skills that young people have. And I think it's important that we recognize that. Young people don't want to plow the fields. That's what their parents did. That's what they're trying to get out of. And I think it's important that we recognize that in terms of our program and project interventions. But activities that reduce post-harvest loss – I referred in the previous slide to the 40 percent post-harvest loss in Kenya. So sorting, grading, drying, packaging, loading, were all activities I think that were very consistent with what young people can bring to the table.

Transport from farm to the market was a big one. We met a lot of young people who had bicycles or motorcycles that they were using basically for recreational use that could easily be turned into a commercial business as well and serving as a link that is often broken between the farms themselves and the markets. And service provisions: spraying, pest management. Another one that's not on here is basically anything that involves technology obviously is of interest to youth and is something that they're fairly adept at.

I wanted to go into a few of what I considered some of the more generalizable lessons learned out of KHCP. I would be curious as we move into the audience participation part after this to what extent you

all feel like these are things that you have observed as well. Are there other things that you've observed? Are there things on this list that you think are perhaps context specific? But the first one is recognition that not all young people are interested in agriculture, as I mentioned. Or they're interested in very specific things within the context of agriculture and trying to force them into, like I said, plowing the fields is probably like trying to put a square peg into a round hole.

And in our project interventions need to reflect that. Related to that is the importance of what we call instrumental agriculture which is basically the treatment of agriculture as a means to an end. We saw a lot of 18 to 24 year olds who were actively involved in agriculture but it's not where they expected to be career wise. They were either using it to pay for school or to save money to start a business; recognizing the sort of transient nature of youth that not all of these people will be in the agriculture field long term and that their interest may be a little bit different.

We talked earlier about co-creation. I won't go into that a lot more. For anybody who has done farming as a business in rural areas you'll recognize this as very, very important. Framing farming as a business really changes the perceptions and the attitudes that you have towards agriculture. I talk to a lot of young people and when I would ask who here is interested in agriculture as a career field one or two hands would go up. But when I asked, "Who here is interested in starting their own business?" nearly everybody's hand went up.

Being able to connect those two things, to create that link for them so that they understand agriculture is a very legitimate business just like any other is, is important I think in piquing their interest. The next one – I thought this was kind of interesting and critical because we talked a lot in the earlier slide about some of what we would call the value chain constraints to youth inclusion. I think if I had to identify one single constraint that was probably more important than any other it was up here. It was a mindset issue.

Young people just like everybody else need role models. And I don't know how many young people I talked to who said, "I can't start a business," and this in agriculture and outside of agriculture. They said, "I can't start a business because I don't know of any other young people who have." So to the extent that you're able to locate whether they're project beneficiaries or not, people that you can hold up as success stories and have them come in and talk to them. It will change the mindset of young people and can be a very catalytic thing.

And it's very, very inexpensive to do as well. And getting family buy in; in terms of trying to change mindsets on projects, which I think is probably a component of every project activity that we do, you'll find that the people who will most easily buy in are the young people. The most difficult thing is to get their parents to buy in and you will need their support. They are a source of moral and financial support for young people. In a lot of cases young people are either working in the family business or they may be working in agriculture with the family, and the family basically has a vested interest in not allowing them to participate in project activities.

And we fairly systematically saw that the young people who were most successful were the ones that had essentially the most supportive parents. I think looking at the family unit, and not just young people alone, is very important. Helping the businesses – the lead firms in each value chain – to understand the value that you bring – We talked a little bit earlier about the aging farmer populations. I think that this is critical. These are their markets. These are the people that they'll be selling to. Getting their engagement and buy in is very important.

Related to that – and this one might be a little bit controversial because I know we've talked a lot in value chain development about the dangers of suppliers being linked to a single buyer because they lose negotiating power and so on, but we fairly systematically saw that lack of access to market information and lack of access to a given or fixed supply or demand rather – a market for their products – was consistently a constraint that young people face.

And while this may not be in all ways the optimal solution in terms of creating sort of a short term cash flow for young people this seemed to be a pretty good starting point.

When we were in Kenya we worked with three different kinds of groups. There would, I would say, older youth groups that featured young people from about 24-35 years of age. In Kenya 35 is the ceiling for the definition of youth. There were younger youth groups that tended to be 8 to 24 years of age. And then there were mixed groups that were predominantly made up of adults but frequently included young people as well. Of these three I was least encouraged by the prospects of the younger youth groups.

And the reason for this was that because of what we talked about earlier with respect to instrumental agriculture a lot of these populations were fairly transient in terms of the agriculture space. Because of that the continuity of those groups tended to be fairly low

in their reliability as suppliers tended to be fairly low as well. And when we went and talked to the businesses themselves they echoed those concerns. It's something that I think probably is maybe not great news or not great for us to hear.

But at least in my experience the prospects for those groups I thought were not great. I think to the extent that the younger population can be integrated into other groups; that probably provides maybe a more promising road for them. In contrast the groups from 24 to 35, one in particular, was probably the most impressive group that I saw – extremely energetic, extremely actively involved. They actively discouraged anybody over 35 being part of the group because they felt like people as they got older got a little bit lazier and set in their ways.

And I am above 35 so I can say that that's probably true. You know this group was in an area basically where there was no exporting going on at all. And they had managed to link to export markets. So it was a very, very impressive, sophisticated group. And the mixed groups; it's probably a little bit of a slower road because it does some time for adults to get accustomed to bringing young people in. But there is very legitimate value in my experience to including young people in those groups.

And the older farmers, once they had included the young people, I think recognized this as well. In particular on the marketing committees that exist in associations the young people brought not only energy and drive but the ability and willingness to use technology. And the other thing we found that was kind of interesting; when the older farmers went to sell their products they tended to sell to the same person they'd sold to for the last 15 years whereas young people would actually actively seek out – They would seek out markets.

They would talk to different buyers. They would basically engage what we would call price discovery. They would try to find out who was buying for the highest price on that given day and they would sell to them. And it was interesting talking to some of the groups and recognizing – seeing the skepticism that some of the older farmers had initially of youth involvement and then actually seeing the way that they performed and the value that they could bring and the way that that changed their perceptions.

And then the final point I wanted to make before we move onto some of the discussion is that there are multiple models for youth inclusion. And I think it's important to recognize that there's more than one way

to do this. You know the model under KHCP was basically one where we identified value chain breaks and tried to encourage youth involvement as entrepreneurs and raising the competitiveness of those value chains. But the group based model was also legitimate as well as companies that are simply hiring a lot of young people.

I think for every project – for every context – a different model might be appropriate. In some cases it may be a combination of models that you want to try out and see kind of what gets the most traction. But it is important I think to recognize that there is more than one way to do this and there is not in any absolute sense a better way. There are different options and I think they need to be considered on a case by case basis.

The other thing that I wanted to mention that I didn't put on here that Rachel had asked me to comment on was from a design perspective what's the difference if you're trying to include youth part of the way through the project or whether you're trying to do so from the outset. KHCP was an example because of kind of where it fell in the timeline of USAID's activities that they were basically trying to do this midstream. I can say with a fairly high level of confidence that it's easier and better to do this to the extent that you're able to incorporate this at the outset in the project design both because of the length of time that remains as well as the –

You know once the project has been designed it becomes – There's a narrower set of options really for including young people. So one of the things I was encouraging in the context of KHCP is basically just to try some things out; pilot some things, see what gets traction, and build on that as you consider future project designs and interventions. I think that in this case there were I think a couple of years left to run on the project at that point trying to hit significant numbers of young people in a meaningful way. Starting midstream is a pretty difficult thing to do

I think just something to keep in mind is we may be trying to tweak existing projects to be more inclusive of youth and as we consider new project designs going forward.

That's all I have for the time being. I guess we'll move on now to –

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- David Feige:* That's all I have for the time being. I guess we'll go on now to –
- Rachel Blum:* Before we do that I just want to make sure that we have an opportunity to ask any clarifying questions or anything specific to the presentations. We'll start with that and then I have prepared a few questions of my own to get the discussion going. And I also welcome you all to prompt the discussion as well. We'll just start over here in the front. I think we have some mics. And also we'll welcome questions from the online discussion and my colleagues in the back. If there's anything interesting or salient that's coming out I welcome you to pose those questions as well. We can start right here. Sorry, he's got the mic right there so we'll start there.
- Dan Norell:* Dan Norell from World Vision. This is a question for David – a clarifying question. In terms of the – You said towards the end that youth were willing to try different buyers and to do price discovery. But then you also said earlier that working with one buyer seemed to work well. If you could clarify those two statements they seem to be inconsistent.
- David Feige:* Yes. Do you want to do one question at a time or a bunch of questions [*inaudible comment*]?
- Rachel Blum:* That's a good idea actually. Yeah let's just take a couple questions and then we'll answer them. And these are the clarifying questions.
- Andrew Baird:* Andrew Baird from RTI international. David if you could just comment a little bit on your experience: gender with the youth in agriculture and also any findings on education and impact that levels of education might have had on success.
- Male Audience:* Hi I have two quick questions for David. There was a slide with a line item that said there was difficulty finding access to finance for French beans I think. And I was wondering if that was just symbolic of a broader discussion on difficulty for finance and agriculture or if there's something specific about that value chain. And the second question is in response to your comment about youth being reluctant to engage or embark on entrepreneurial ventures because they don't have peers that do; is that another way of saying that we need a mentorship program that would stimulate greater interest in that?
- Female Audience:* I have two questions. The first one is you mentioned the multiple models: entrepreneurship, employees, and group members. I wanted

to know for this particular project is it primarily entrepreneurship activities or employees that are being engaged because in the former case you need a different supporting system, the environment, which may take longer to establish and measure results. In the latter case we wanted to look at the attitudes of the firms as employers and their attitudes on employing these young people.

And secondly assuming that youth engagement is indicated for an inclusive value chain project how do you measure? You mentioned earlier that you wanted to engage the youth in order to improve the value chain efficiency and productivity and profitability. How do you measure that as an indicator?

Joy Chen:

I have a couple of clarifying definition questions. One that we discussed a little bit earlier was on the definition of youth or as it's culturally by Mitzi. And we had a good discussion here where USAID – It was commented from Clare that USAID has not created yet another definition but we consider investments for those between the ages of 10 and 29. And many African countries look at up to 35. Local definitions are important. And Margie Brand from Ecoventures added that for her project staff they're using a definition of the country, often 24 and other.

We define youth beneficiaries at stage of life. So it's dependent on others and their market setting or social setting where they're vulnerable because of their age. And we had another good clarifying question. This hasn't been answered yet. It comes to us from Tara from Mercy Corps. It says, "How does USAID differentiate between value chains and market systems?"

Female Audience:

I have two quick questions.

Rachel Blum:

Let's just stop there. Let's give us a chance to answer those first. And thank you for the online clarification about the definition of youth. So David there are a lot of questions directed to you. Maybe you want to touch on those.

David Feige:

I'll do the best I can with all of these. If I skip over something please let me know. The first question I think had to do with the single versus multiple buyers and confusion around that. When I was referring to the single buyer that was in the context of a youth specific group. When I was talking about youth being engaged more in price discovery that was in the context of a mixed group that was predominantly adults and included some young people. That was the function they played within that context. Does that make sense? Okay.

Second question was Andrew's I guess around gender and education. First of all on the gender thing that might be an interesting part. I don't know Rachel to the extent to which you want to deal with this in some of the discussion for other people to talk about their experiences. I have less experience on the gender inclusion side. I can say that organizationally we don't treat gender inclusivity in a radically different way than we do youth inclusivity in the sense that the approach is the same. The challenges will be different.

But the approach that we use is a fairly similar one which, again, trying to identify constraints and opportunities that are specific to that group. But I'm happy for actually anybody from Making Cents to chime in or anybody else in the course of the discussion. Education levels – That sort of cuts both ways I think in the sense that yes higher education tends to result in more sophisticated individuals who are able to engage in more sophisticated things. At the same time the more education people get the more inclined they are to move to an urban area and get a different job.

This is something I didn't mention earlier but I think it's also important to recognize that I'm not sure that our goal should be to try to keep people in rural areas. To the extent that young people are interested in migrating into urban areas that's got to be their choice. I think as practitioners what we should be thinking about is how we can frame the options in rural areas such that they understand what their options are as opposed to trying to force them into cities or to stay in rural areas themselves.

That's a personal opinion. It might not be shared by everybody but that's kind of what I think about that. So from the education perspective everybody should get as much education as they can. And if that causes them to move to into an urban area so be it. The question about access to finance; yes there is a general access to finance issue for – It's just that the difference between the French beans and the other crops were that French beans actually required finance and the other ones really did not. Yes there is a generalizable issue there. There's no question about it. It was the reason that young people engage in the crops that they do.

Mentorship – Rachel did you want to speak to that one.

Rachel Blum: I'll speak to that a little bit later or I'll have others speak on it.

David Feige: Okay so I'll skip over that one. The question about KHCP – I think that was yours about entrepreneurship. Yes this was focused on – This

was an entrepreneurial model. It was focused on that and it was partly a function of kind of where the project was and what was possible at that point. Again it's not to say it's a better model than any others but the emphasis was very much there. It was not on employers that were employing young people. And then I think we had a question about measuring value chain efficiency and productivity.

I don't think the measures of that are any different than you would use in a traditional value chain competitiveness project. You're sort of measuring a before and after. Attribution is always a little bit tricky. I would be interested – for people who are in monitoring and evaluation – in what ideas you have. I mean obviously looking at the entire value chain you want to look at things like sales and revenues and things like that. From the perspective of young people themselves in measuring the extent to which they benefiting from those you may want to look at incomes and things along those lines.

But yeah I think many people here may have some ideas as well in terms of how those things can best be measured.

Rachel Blum: That raises an interesting point and I think it's also related even to Andrew's question about education levels. You know David you're presenting a project in which really I think it sounds like the primary focus of the project is about upgrading of value chains and creating opportunities for the poor but not necessarily targeting a specific population of youth.

David Feige: Correct.

Rachel Blum: I do know that in several USAID missions and in programs the youth themselves are the primary purpose. And especially given the unemployment demographics that I illustrated earlier, oftentimes we're faced with a development challenge of how do you increase economic opportunities for young people who don't have those? And so I wonder – It raises a question because you're presenting a great example of mainstreaming of youth into a value chain perspective. How does that change when your lens is a little bit different – it's shifted more toward the young people themselves?

And to what extent does as value chain approach apply? And particularly around dealing with different youth of different education levels, and also even on the issue of scale if you're trying to achieve a certain level of scale of employing young people what have we seen from value chain programs that give us confidence that that might be the right approach for addressing youth unemployment or youth

incomes? I'm going to ask that question actually to the broader audience.

This is where I'd like to ask your experiences in terms of applying a value chain approach to reach a specific youth population. Eileen – hello.

Eileen: I'm Eileen from Global Communities. We engaged in a project with the Gates Foundation a few years back in Ghana that was specific to youth and empowering youth. And we used a value chain approach to that. As you said youth was the entry point to that. But we took that value chain approach and looked at, as you did similarly in Kenya: where are there opportunities in this value chain? And in this case we were looking at solid waste management. Where can youth get involved in this value chain?

We had similar results in the sense that the youth were willing to take on opportunities that adults were not willing to take on in that value chain: collecting solid waste management from households, teaching households how to separate – actually doing some sources separation themselves. We taught them how to make compost. And we also engaged them in co-creation along the way as we faced challenges. For example they were so enthusiastic and got source separated going so quickly we actually didn't have production ramped up yet.

That caused problems in the community when people realized their waste wasn't being turned into compost as had been promised. So the youth were able to take this problem and solve that themselves. They also solved challenges of looking at, for example, when there wasn't enough raw material to match the sales that they were making for finished product. They sought out new sources of raw materials.

Rachel Blum: So with that in terms of the level of scale – what were you measuring in that project, at least in terms of youth employment or incomes?

Eileen: We were measuring multiple things: looking at income, looking at number of youth employed. These projects were taking place in densely populated slum areas and with youth who were more qualified as vulnerable youth, lower levels of education. We were looking for that sort of harder to measure high impact, high value, and sustainable jobs for youth.

Rachel Blum: And so in numbers are we talking about the hundreds or the thousands? I've seen some projects where it's only a couple of hundred. I've seen some maybe you're getting about 2,000.00 maybe 5,000.00.

Eileen: In terms of scale these are in the hundreds, not in the thousands. It was a smaller project. It is one however that can be scaled up – most definitely. With a longer term perspective with additional funding the model can definitely be scaled up.

Rachel Blum: I think my experiences are that the sustainability is much higher but in terms of reaching young people – I'm sorry the sustainability is much higher in terms of the sustained income to young people. But the scale from value chain is – Often there are tradeoffs. If you want to reach a large number of young people you may not get the numbers that you're looking for. But they are much more impactful. I don't know if others are the same.

Angelina Gordon: We're going to take the lady on this side.

Female Audience: Yes, I have two quick questions. I see would like to see empowerment and AID Foundation. I see that there's a lot of push in agriculture when we're dealing with youth, especially (in my experience) in Sub-Saharan Africa. I want to know why that push is focused mostly on agriculture, number one. And secondly there is a missing link that I noticed that we miss out. Education does not necessarily translate to those soft skills that people need to do to perform their work.

And being a Nigerian American that has been on the continent understudying things I noticed that that's a huge opportunity that we leave out on the table because you can show somebody how to be a farmer but there are some skills that the need to learn before they can be successful. We're talking about continuum and sustainability. How do we help the nonprofit organization who understands both countries and both continents to be able to reach out better to those youth who truly can make things sustainable?

We lead them to a point but they can't sustain because they are missing some things, some trainings that would help them to get their business to that level that we are all aspiring to. That's my question.

Rachel Blum: Yeah and I think that question gets to this concept of co-creation. And how do we engage youth in actually starting in the design of these projects and implementing them from the start? And we have a couple of folks in the audience here who have really nice, concrete examples of co-creation. Nicole Cheetham here is from Advocates for Youth from example. Bonnie you might also have something to say – Bonnie Politz from Creative Associates. Nicole we talk about in the USAID report a lot about examples of integrating youth at the organizational level.

When we talk about project level and some of these issues about being more responsive to youth and their particular needs, whether it's life skills or other types of opportunities and supports what are some real concrete ways that we as project implementers can begin to think about co-creation? We may not be youth organizations but we may have very good intentions of engaging youth. And while we may not necessarily be at a place where we're going to have youth on our board of directors tomorrow what are the ways that we can take action now to start to work with youth to engage them in project design and implementation so that we are addressing some of these real needs that were just mentioned?

Nicole Cheetham: Thanks for the question and thanks for this event. It's really fascinating – very interesting to me coming from a sexual reproductive health youth background to hear more about value chain development. I think various people have touched on some of the core elements of what can be done to engage young people meaningfully in program design and implementation. Maybe if I just illustrate an example to make a point and to raise a few of those practices.

One of the programs that Advocates for Youth runs are multiple youth councils that are at the state level and at the international level where groups of young people do advocacy and mobilization work to advance sexual reproductive health and rights policies in their countries throughout the global level. And I think engaging them in that work; some of the things we do to try to make it meaningful and powerful are – Devon had mentioned a few of things already. But at the get go there is clarity and transparency about what the partnership is between our organization and the young people we're working with.

For example on these youth councils there's like an understanding in a letter or a contract or something of that nature that outlines their responsibilities and roles as well as the organization's responsibilities and roles and the context of this work that their doing because it's not just about what they're taking charge of and doing but also what the organization is offering them in terms of support and training and resources.

Usually – although it depends on the context – remuneration of some nature is really important as we've heard. Young people aren't making money. They don't have financial resources. And yet engaging them requires their time and effort. Usually that's an important piece to address. Domestically we have a policy

organizationally, for example, that any young people we engage there is also remuneration. That's just a given.

I think the other piece that several people raised is the training. It's really important to provide young people with training so that they're equipped to engage in the work that they're engaging in. And also along with that some opportunities to shine and speak out and advance. These councils; we train them yearly but then there's also a lot of proactive linkages that we try to get to our young people so that they can elevate their own professional development. Whether it's speaking at the United Nations Conference or attending a workshop to get further training we're working very intentionally to get them those opportunities.

And then I think two more pieces – Accountability also; we've found that it's helpful for our young people to know that there is accountability with the work they're doing and that we value the work we're doing. So when they're engaged with advocates they are reporting out, whether it's at the community level or to their supervisor. You know they're reporting out sort of the work that they're doing and that work then is communicated to our board of directors and other stakeholders so that they know that they're playing – what they're doing has a bigger role.

I mean it extends beyond the actual community that they're in or the campus that they're working at. And then finally I think another important practice gets a little bit to sort of having models. It's the cross-sharing, so getting our young people together across programs and countries or regions or just districts to share what they're doing and learn from each other has also been important.

Rachel Blum: Are there any online comments related to that topic?

Joy Chen: There are an overwhelming number of comments on this discussion.

[laughter]

It's a little hard to synthesize. At our peak we had 145 people joining and a lot of sharing around projects and connections make. That's good to see.

Rachel Blum: Well we'll have to make sure to distribute the transcript.

Online

Administrator: Right now we're picking up on this concept of co-creation – what that means. I know that you've mentioned that, Rachel a number of times. And I think there may be different definitions of that.

Rachel Blum: Yeah I agree and especially it depends on what your target – what the purposes of your program – I think one of the interesting things that really struck me David was your comment about how does engaging youth ultimately result in better profits or better performance along the value chain as a whole? And one of the things that strikes me is there isn't a ton of evidence (and this is cited in the report) about youth engagement. I think we all know as practitioners and our experiences if you don't include youth in the process you're going to make a lot of mistakes along the way.

What is that right level of engagement? What's necessary? What's appropriate especially given the amount of resources that you're giving about to invest in young people? And I think people are often making hard decisions. I don't know what the strategies are for building that evidence base. I think to the extent that we have research and evaluation priorities within our youth projects, our youth market development projects, I think incorporating that level of understanding would be a really important thing to integrate into our learning agendas.

Bonnie Politz: This is Bonnie Politz. I agree and I think we should just spend a minute focusing also on adult behavior change.

Rachel Blum: Yeah, thank you.

Bonnie Politz: If we don't change while we're still trying to increase and we see "younger people" even up until age 30 who are now coming into management and ownership and leadership positions, whether that's as an entrepreneur or in an organization or a company there's the core need to change adult behaviors and understanding of who young people are. I think David what you talked about in terms of the mixed groups is that those opportunities to actually even identify leaders who are taking the step and who are now advocates for this, of bringing them together and almost setting up peer networks where if there's a business owner who's saying, "I've done this and I have seen the benefit.

I do see the need to do this. I'm committed now not only myself but in my organization or company. And I'm willing to either via Skype or somehow be an e-mentor to somebody who is wondering whether this is something they're really willing to do." Sometimes that peer mentorship will mean more than those of us who have it in our heart

and know it and don't yet have sort of the hard data are pushing it. If they're talking to each other as business leaders and entrepreneurs they may then – That concept may grow.

But if we don't change the behavior of adults and the understanding of things like the adolescent brain research and other things we know that can make a difference particularly for young people who've experience trauma coming into the workforce who we don't want just a job, but we want a career pathway. That's I think just a really important thing to focus on.

Devon McLorg:

I'm going to jump in here quickly because I'm really glad you brought that up Bonnie because it's something we talked about as we were developing the report. And I know it's something that Advocates for Youth pays a lot of attention to in terms of having trainings that they call youth/adult trainings to train the older staff and advocates for youth, or the adult allies I guess we should call them, on how they can better work with young people and vice versa. And David when you were presenting it struck me also when you talked a lot about the families and the fact that the families and the parents and the adult relationships that young people have; they really need to buy into this as well.

And what we can be doing at the project level in the field to be working with adults and community leaders to recognize that young people should be elevated and that we should be looking to them to contribute.

Rachel Blum:

So we'll do one online question and then we have a question here in the back.

Joy Chen:

Something else to add to this discussion. Eric asked, "There seems to be government failure in most of the developing countries on youth involvement and market development against the background that the market is about profitability and not devoting enough space for growth. But we know that in such a situation we must be a major player for a market to come back in terms of youth involvement. And how do we ensure moving forward that governments will be leaders in such policy?"

Rachel Blum:

I'll first respond to that and I welcome others to comment. I think that's a great question because one of the things David highlights is some of these constraints around access to land. And as generations progress young people are getting access to smaller and smaller plots of land. Inheritance rights don't necessarily make it easy particularly for young women. Also there's the comment about access to finance –

how financing isn't necessarily available for young people to take advantage of the opportunities that are there.

And also not to mention skills; many of our education systems around the world have failed young people. This really does require a huge policy effort and a government effort to really start to be thinking about how do we adjust our policies and our programs to reflect this changing dynamic and changing demographic. The first thing that comes to mine even in talking with Nicole from Advocates is the involvement of youth in the policy debate.

And I don't think that most – Okay one thing is I think market development programs, just by the process of looking at how policy influences market dynamics I think there's an opportunity for us to be looking at a much bigger picture. I'm not sure I see a lot of programs looking at these policy issues from a macro perspective but I think that there's an opportunity when we talk about value chain analysis looking at how do policies related to markets influence young people and influence their ability to enter into these markets both in terms of land, in terms of finance, in terms of skills.

I think that's something that we should be making much greater effort to be looking at. And I think someone else had something to say about that. Yes, and then we'll get to your question in the back. No?

Dan Norell:

Dan Norell again from World Vision. Just to speak into the questions around – and maybe going back to a little bit of what David was talking about earlier. In terms of youth out in the field, and I just got back from Malawi on a USAID-funded project. I think the growth area is really around the input/supply part of the value chain. A lot of these youth finish school, leave school. The earlier statistics around in terms of Africa; the number of those youth who are leaving school – that really does become an opportunity as we think about growth of economies in rural or urban areas.

So that whole input/supply around seeds, fertilizer, tools, spraying, pest management; that whole area I think is very important. One question I have for the group is given that we have economic development folks here and they're at the panel and also education folks, how do we work together in terms of for youth who are in school so that they are well, ready, and prepared for those economic activities out of school? And the *Economist Magazine* did an article on agriculture in America.

One of the things they said was very important about success of agriculture in America is the youth organizations such as 4-H or

Future Farmers of America. And the why is because it's learning by doing which is the 4-H motto. A farm youth; you actually raise sheep as I did when I grew up on the farm in 4-H. It's not about going to a classroom, although you do meet with clubs. You're learning and you give demonstrations. But you also actually learn by doing.

How can the two parts of the panel up there, but also us here in the community representing different sectors; how do we work together to help youth to get ready for those markets? And then when they do leave school, to actually be able to create their own jobs through self-employment?

Rachel Blum: I'm going to take the question in the back and then Gene.

Eric Meade: My name is Eric Meade. I'm in independent futures in the field of human development. From a perspective of developmental psychology if you're defining youth as 10 to 29, maybe 35 and then you're talking about adult behavior, you're talking about an incredible span where there are very nuanced differences across that trajectory. I guess the broader question in my mind is how do you nuance the youth engagement depending where they are? And it kind of ties together the education and then when is the appropriate time to talk about a job? When is the appropriate time to talk about an allowance? There are those types of question. IN the programs how has that been handled?

Rachel Blum: I'm actually going to turn the question back to you and ask you how we should handle that. This is actually a phenomenon that we see. I sometimes work with missions where they know that addressing youth issues is important. Youth unemployment is massive in their country or they're experiencing an influx of youth into the population. And they have a mandate to integrate youth into their economic programs. It begs the question of well what youth are we talking about?

On one side you could look at we're just going to target anyone within this age range and if we just happen to hit that number we've checked the box. Another approach is to really look more strategically at who's going to benefit from market engagement? Or who's dealing with the biggest constraints? There might be an approach of looking more specifically at a specific cohort. And I'm not sure – I don't have the answer to that question. I don't know what the tradeoffs are of either approach.

And I actually sort of ask you in the audience to share your experiences in working through some of those issues.

David Feige: Wow.

Rachel Blum: Exactly wow.

David Feige: That's the last question. *[laughter]*

Eric Meade: I guess making a quick comment I think the point made earlier about do you want people to stay on the farm or do you want to go to the city. I think it's understanding where this engagement takes place within a life trajectory of a human being. And if it's somebody who's making a little bit of money reducing post-harvest loss by transporting it on their bicycle or doing something just at the very granular level and they're making a little money that's kind of like giving your kid an allowance and you're engaging. But it's more about just developing basic accountability.

If you're 30 years old and you're, "Hey wouldn't you like to be self-employed?" it's just a different conversation. But when we talk about co-creation, which is this egalitarian thing I think it's important to think about the nuanced differences among the people of the room if they're at different developmental stages.

David Feige: I'd like to make a comment to Dan's comment which is that for the most part our youth engagement begins at probably 18 years of age. I would say 18 to 29 is the most common cohort and this was point out earlier in some African countries the age goes up to 35. You know our work has traditionally been in developing entrepreneurial behavior inside of agriculture or outside of agriculture. It doesn't really matter that much. The point at which we most often intervene is about 18 years of age or later.

For the most part that's too late. Entrepreneurial mindsets are development much, much earlier than that. I agree. I mean the 4-H, junior achievement, programs like that; to the extent that they're able to be involved and engage with young people much, much earlier. If you think about it, in the U.S., that's basically the age which you're going to college. It's late. I think that's something to consider. I agree with the comment.

Female Audience: Could I make a comment.

Rachel Blum: I'm sorry we had one question here and then we'll get to you.

Jeanne Downing: Jeanne Downing from USAID. I wanted to speak to the Mercy Corps question about market system versus value chain and also about

scale. I think that as we start using this language increasingly of market systems we're thinking of not just the value chain but the linkages between value chains, the employment of spinoffs of value chain development, the multiplier effects, the imitation, the crowding in of other business, so sort of a broader market system of multiple value chains, non-farm activities, labor employment, etc.

I think looking within that broader system, the opportunities for – It would be interesting to look at the opportunities for youth, even for example for horticulture in Kenya, all of those spinoffs, some of which I think you brought up in terms of services, etc. And then the issue of scaling; my thought about that is there's a lot of – maybe an obsession with scaling within USAID right now. I think it kind of relates to the market system's approach because thinking of if you look at the system as opposed to – We're used to looking at projects.

How can the project –? But if we think about projects as facilitators looking at the existing system and how can we leverage that system to leverage the scale of impact on youth? Behavior change, policies, and I don't think it takes away those opportunities. But instead of us – And I can image that public goods would be important in terms of strengthening of youth skills. But how might we leverage existing systems so that skill development can happen without projects or after the end of projects?

Tim Nourse:

Tim Nourse from Making Cents. I just wanted to follow on one thing that Dave was saying in terms of the entrepreneurial or the soft skills. One thing that we're spending time on effectively is on the life skills that underpin entrepreneurship and trying to reinforce those for that segment which is at the 20 and plus age because they've missed those in school. Just as a follow on I think there's an opportunity looking at entrepreneurial life skills and how you can reinforce those for a variety of economic activities.

And then just a comment – it was a follow on in terms of the KHCP case is interesting in that it was really a retrofit. And I think as David mentioned if we can look at some of these issues right up front with a selection of the value chains we can be a lot more effective in terms of finding the right opportunities and finding good opportunities for scaling up and increasing the profits that occur to young people. But what's interesting is the incentives aren't always there for project.

In the solicitation process it might mention something about youth. But when they get to it their hard indicators are on revenue job creation. And so the youth fall to the wayside. There have been a number of projects where we'll come on as the inclusion, the capacity

builders, and that aspect is still there. But the youth is dropped in terms of the overall USAID objectives. Perhaps as we look at designing programs how we can help the implementers and the missions to also have the incentives to also design and encourage their programs to develop programs for youth.

Cecelia:

I'm sorry. I think everybody already touched on it. My name is Cecelia. Based on people that work in Africa one thing we didn't mention is cultural awareness. If you're looking at cultural awareness I think once we understand the culture of the community where we are going I think it would help us a lot especially I think David commented to three groups. Why some groups are kind of not very active and some groups are very active?

Because the groups that are very active is already mature enough to have their own family and become a man or a wife and be able to support themselves. But those who are really young have to get some kind of okay from their family and say, "Yeah this is where we want you to go." Looking at African areas you'll never be old for your family to tell you this is what you're supposed to do. *[laughter]* Okay? So we have to understand that again we have to understand the culture of the community to be able to really know can we be able to get them to do what we want them to do or get the help they need.

That's one. Another thing is about the land. There's a lot of land. Africa is the second largest continent. They have land. But if you really want land you have to get into the community and bring the community in and say, "This is what I want to do," so that they can be able to really develop a land or give land to the youths to be able to do their famine and learn from famine.

I remember when I was in school. We learned famine but it was from the elementary school. Then when you grow up your parents perceive you to do something different. So I think cultural awareness is very important for us to start with so that we can be able to reach what we want to reach. Just a comment.

Rachel Blum:

One more. Katie we'll take you. I'm sorry that we can't take others. Right here in the second row.

Katie Vickland:

Thank you Rachel. This was a great session. I know I've really learned a lot and I just wanted to share two comments from our Peru Cocoa Alliance which is a global development alliance in Peru. We're planting Cocoa and short term crops in former Cocoa growing areas with USAID and it's just a pleasure to be the implementing partner

there. Katie Vickland with CARANA. I just wanted to go back to where we started which is the centrality of a value proposition behind the market system program.

How are we creating value for the poor farmers? How are we creating value for the small business owner? How are we creating value for the youth, bringing them into the jobs? So it's fundamentally working from the demand side to understand. For example in Cocoa there's a high demand for fine flavor and traceable cocoa. Well traceability means technology. We're using GPS positioning. That is sexy. That's exciting. And it's not your grandparent's agriculture.

We are finding that by going where the youth are, by using social media and by going to the youth centers and sharing this exciting new opportunity I think it's an open question. Yes most youth do want an office in air conditioning. But when we present data showing you can significantly increase your income. You can be your own boss. You can be signing these market contracts. You can be using technology. I think it's an open question and I'm really excited to see how this pans out what other people's experiences are about youth involvement on the farming side in addition to all of the non-farm opportunities.

One open question that we're seeing, and I'm very interested in learning from others; you mentioned that you do tend to apply new technologies and try new crops at a quicker rate than more experienced farms for a number of reasons. And we're seeing that as well. And I think as we look at how do we encourage others to take youth seriously, when they see that their farms are flourishing and growing and creating income and creating opportunities that's one way for others around them to sit up and say, "Wow they've got something that I want and I want to learn from them." And that'll increase their stature in the community.

The other thing we're seeing, and we're still cleaning up our data on this question is as we reach out to youth, as we reach out to those under 29 to 34 we are almost naturally bringing in more women, whether it's due to cultural openness on both the male and the female sides. So we are seeing that as we reach out to youth it's almost a twofer and we're really excited about exploring is that true and to what extent is it true and why is it true? I just wanted to raise those points.

Rachel Blum:

Can I squeeze one more comment in? Matt? Matt was an instrument part of the youth engagement report that we produced.

Matt: Yeah I spent about a year working with Rachel and Devon and Clare and Bonnie and some other people in this room and I just want to say thank you for the opportunity. It was wonderful. And also Nicole was a very big part of that. So I know we've got to wrap up here but I just want to talk about Hart's Ladder. We saw that the highest rung on Hart's Ladder is the shared decision making. But really I've seen other models of that which goes a little bit beyond that which is youth-led and adult supported.

There's kind of a crossover into the market development is something called the Urban Youth Fund that's implemented by UN-Habitat. They provide small seed grants to entrepreneurial firms or start-ups that have a specific percentage of youth that are in management and are implementers or very integrated into those businesses. It's a different model a little bit than what we've been talking about there today but I just wanted to throw it out there as something you could look into or a different kind of model. Thank you.

Rachel Blum: What I'm definitely hearing is when working with youth you have to be flexible and be thinking about a variety of approaches as David mentioned. And I think what you're highlighting is be willing to try different things and being flexible to be responsive to where youth are. Thanks for helping wrap that up. Are we at the conclusion? Kristen did you want to say anything?

Kristen O'Planick: Thank you all for your input today. It's been a very rich discussion and I'm encouraged that everybody has so many things to say. I definitely want to continue this conversation, continue to bring these two groups together to keep learning from each other. I think we have a long way to go but there's a lot out there as evidenced today in this packed room and the online webinar. I'm excited to go back and read through that conversation later. We will be sending out the event resources for those of you who want to revisit this later.

But please keep feeding your learnings to us. Please help us keep finding opportunities to cross over these two groups so that we can continue to exchange going forward. Thank you for coming today, thank you to our panelist.

