



YOUTH AND LIVELIHOODS

Investing in a Youth Dividend

An analysis of donor strategies, programmes and funding for youth and livelihoods in conflict- and crisis-affected contexts

FEBRUARY 2012



Note to Reader

Youth issues have been gaining increasing attention around the world. As the size of the global youth population, aged 15-24, continues to grow at unprecedented rates and in light of the recent role that youth have played in North Africa and the Middle East, public sector agencies, as well as private foundations, have turned their attention to the role of youth in social, economic and political development, particularly in conflict-affected or post-conflict countries. Talks of the “demographic dividend” illustrate the stark recognition within the field of the essential and prominent role that these young people will play in economic growth, peace building and sustainable development. In the past decade, numerous donors—both bilateral and multilateral—have published youth policies or strategies, commissioned research and analysis related to youth, and developed a range of youth-targeted programmes and initiatives.

Despite the heightened interest and activity, however, youth issues have yet to be clearly defined in a comprehensive, multi-donor review of youth programming. Moreover, there is a lack of information about youth programming and funding and to what extent they are in line with donor policies and strategies. Further complicating the issue is the difficulty in obtaining such data, with insufficient clarity on whether youth issues have been mainstreamed across other sectors or specifically targeted by programmes.

In 2011, the Youth and Livelihoods team in the International Rescue Committee’s Child and Youth Protection and Development (CYPD) unit commissioned Lyndsay McLean Hilker and Erika Fraser to produce this report in order to address this information gap. Based on an in-depth desk-based review and interviews with representatives from key donor agencies, the analysis includes trends in donor strategies, programmes and funding. The report has a specific focus on youth livelihoods development in conflict- and disaster-affected contexts, covering youth education and skills training, employment promotion, and livelihoods strategies.

The content included in this report was up to date, as of November 2011. However, the IRC recognises that the field of funding will continue to change. This report is intended as a baseline, and new changes and updates will be reflected in future reports.

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Mission Statement

Founded in 1933, the IRC is a global leader in emergency relief, rehabilitation, protection of human rights, post-conflict development, resettlement services and advocacy for those uprooted or affected by violent conflict and oppression.

The IRC’s **Child and Youth Protection and Development (CYPD)** unit works to prevent and respond to violence against children — and their abuse, exploitation and neglect—helps children access their right to a quality education, and helps youth become active contributors to social and economic development.

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Acronyms

AGI	Adolescent Girls Initiative
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
BMZ	Bundesministerium Für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSD	Civil Society Department
CSO	civil society organisation
CYPD	Child and Youth Protection and Development
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DFID	Department for International Development
DFID-CSO	Department for International Development-civil society organisation
FCAS	fragile and conflict affected states
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Society for International Cooperation, Ltd.)
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for International Cooperation)
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDP	internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INCAF	International Network for Conflict and Fragility
IRC	International Rescue Committee
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC Committee	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
POVNET	Network on Poverty Reduction
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SME	small and medium enterprises
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollar
YEP	Youth Employment Programme
WB	World Bank
WDR	World Development Report

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Executive Summary

In recent years, there has been growing donor momentum around youth-focussed programming with a focus on the role of youth in social, economic and political development, especially in conflict-affected countries. However, there is a lack of detailed information about donor policies and strategies and whether and how these strategies have been matched by an increase in funding and specific programming to meet youth needs.

The International Rescue Committee commissioned this report to **analyse key trends in donor strategies, programmes and funding to meet the needs of youth (aged 15-24) in conflict- and disaster-affected countries, with a specific focus on youth livelihoods development**. The report is based on an in-depth desk-based review of available donor policy documents, programme and project information sourced from donor websites or staff members, as well as interviews with donor representatives. It focuses on the major public sector donors that have worked on, with and for youth over the last decade. Annex A provides information on the policies, strategies and programming of individual, bilateral and multilateral donors.

In terms of overall approaches of donors to youth, the analysis finds that **youth issues and needs are rarely mentioned in donors' overall strategic priorities and plans**. The exception is CIDA (Canada), which has recently made "children and youth" one of its three core strategic priorities. Nonetheless, there is a number of **overall trends in donor policy-making, which has implications for donor programmes on youth in conflict- and disaster-affected contexts**:

- **Aid budgets have been maintained but there is increased focus on aid effectiveness and demonstrating results**. This has led to greater sectoral and geographical concentration by donors, as well as a shift to larger-scale programmatic approaches and alignment with partner government priorities. In many cases, this has resulted in donors dropping youth development as an explicit strategic priority and reducing scope to fund smaller-scale projects on youth.
- **There is a greater focus on "security" issues and increased donor funding to "fragile" contexts.**¹ This includes areas such as improving economic opportunities and tackling exclusion, especially for marginalised groups. There is also explicit recognition of the importance of youth in disaster- and conflict-affected contexts, due to their potential to contribute to development and peace building or to destabilisation.
- **There is a renewed donor focus on "inclusive" and agriculture-driven economic growth** with increased engagement in private sector development – especially in developing SMEs, creating an "enabling environment" for business, improving access to finance and employment creation, especially for marginalised groups with youth often specified as a target group.

In the mid- to late-2000s, a number of donors published specific strategies related to youth (or children and youth) and/or on specific sectors like youth employment. However, in many cases, these policies have been superseded in the wake of sectoral concentration and organisational

¹ The concepts of "fragility," "fragile state," "conflict-affected" and "disaster-affected" are contested. While most donors have converged around the DAC definition of "fragile states" ["States are fragile when state structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of their populations"], others stress that fragilities also exist within wider society and compound state fragilities, that there is wide variability within and between states, and that fragilities have international as well as domestic causes. Overall, this report applies the typology of fragility developed by Stewart and Brown (2009), which stresses the following dimensions of fragility: (1) *Authority failures*—Situations in which the state cannot or does not protect its citizens from violence and/or criminality. (2) *Service failures*—Situations in which the state cannot or does not provide access to basic services such as health care, education, and infrastructure. (3) *Legitimacy failures*—Situations in which the state lacks public support or is only supported by a small minority or interest group within the country. The report will use the terms "fragile," "conflict-affected" and "crisis-affected" somewhat interchangeably to reflect individual donors' uses in strategies and programming, while recognising that not all countries which are "fragile" are necessarily "conflict-" or "crisis-affected" and vice versa.

rationalisation. Therefore, **today, the approach of most donors is to “mainstream” or “integrate” youth issues across other sectors**, for example, by including a specific youth component or identifying male and/or female youth as explicit target groups.

Very few donors have a specific department or dedicated advisors who focus on youth issues, and **policy responsibility for youth is often spread across departments**, including departments working on education, economic recovery/development, humanitarian aid, conflict and peace building, and civil society. As a result, and because programming is decentralized to country level, **implementation of central commitments on youth appears to be variable**. Nonetheless, some agencies have developed specific toolkits on youth-related programming in different sectors, which they are using to increase or maintain a youth focus and improve the quality of programming.

All donors finance or implement development programmes on, with or for youth and some donors have a long track record of implementing specific youth programmes or targeting their programmes at youth. The challenge is that most donors are currently unable to generate accurate quantitative information about their levels of spending on youth, as there are no youth markers in their project management systems. (In September 2011, CIDA began to employ an existing policy marker to collect information on investments targeting youth.) Nonetheless, this study has looked at examples of donor programmes by searching donor publications, websites and project databases. An analysis of available information on the types of programmes implemented in conflict- and disaster affected contexts suggests that there has been a number of **positive developments over the last five to ten years in terms of programming for youth**:

- Recognition that youth are an important target group in conflict- and disaster-affected contexts not only due to their potential to contribute to growth and peace building, but also because their exclusion can be a factor in leading a minority of youth to engage in violence.
- Increased investment in formal and informal education for youth, including relevant and market-linked vocational and skills training.
- A greater focus on local economic recovery with youth among the key target groups, including specific youth employment creation programmes.
- Recognition of the importance of focusing on the specific needs of adolescent girls and ensuring their participation—both to realize their rights and because of the catalytic effect this can have on their families and communities. This has been backed up by new initiatives.

Nonetheless, an analysis of existing strategies and programming also suggests that several **specific gaps and challenges remain**:

- Limited comprehensive analyses of the situation of youth in specific conflict- and disaster-affected contexts.
- A lack of age-disaggregated data to highlight the specific situation and needs of youth.
- Limited evidence and lesson-learning on the impacts of youth-related programming.
- Challenge of not only mainstreaming youth across different sectors but also ensuring that youth issues and needs are adequately prioritised.
- Challenge of accounting for performance against policy commitments on youth due to lack of tracking system.
- Few examples of comprehensive empowerment programmes, despite the increased use of the language of “empowerment.”
- Reliance on an unproven assumption that general development programmes will automatically benefit youth in contexts with high youth populations.

- A need to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the informal sector and whether and how this can provide opportunities for youth.
- A need for further capacity-building of youth networks/associations to advocate for youth.
- A need for better research on the links between youth, livelihoods and violence prevention in order to develop a more comprehensive approach to youth and post-conflict recovery.

The report therefore makes the **following general recommendations**:

- Invest more funding in age-disaggregated statistics and data.
- Undertake context-specific analysis of the situation of youth in each fragile context.
- Improve monitoring, evaluation and lesson learning on youth-related programming.

Recommendations for **funders**

- Accord more overall priority to youth development in disaster- and conflict-affected states.
- Undertake a review of experience and best practice in implementing youth programmes.
- Nominate a specific unit/advisor responsible for driving policy and programming on youth.
- Where appropriate, target youth explicitly in sectoral programmes, integrating specific objectives and indicators to define and monitor outcomes for youth.
- Find innovative ways to finance smaller, catalytic projects on youth development in conflict and disaster-affected countries.
- Develop a system to enable specific monitoring of commitments and expenditure on youth.

Recommendations for **practitioners**

- Improve the evidence base and advocate for a greater focus on youth in fragile states.
- Engage funder/donors in a dialogue about different modes of engagement to support youth.
- Improve communication of what works in youth development in fragile states and why.
- Commission or contribute to specific studies on areas related to youth livelihoods.
- Continue to improve support and capacity building for local youth networks and associations.

1.0 Introduction

In recent years, there has been growing donor momentum around youth-focussed programming with a focus on the role of youth in social, economic and political development, especially in conflict-affected or post-conflict countries. This has not only been in response to debates about the “youth bulge” in many developing countries and evidence that a significant proportion of perpetrators of violence are youth, but it is also in recognition of the fact that youth have the energy and potential to make a positive contribution to economic growth, peace building and sustainable development.

Over the last decade, a number of bilateral and multilateral donors have published youth policies or strategies, commissioned research and analysis related to youth, and launched a range of programmes and initiatives targeting youth. In addition, a number of private sector foundations have launched new programmes focussed on youth. However, because youth is rarely treated as a sector in its own right (like education or health) and is not officially recognised as a cross-cutting issue (like gender) by most agencies, there has so far been no comprehensive multi-donor review of youth programming. In particular, there is a lack of information about whether and how donor policies and strategies have been matched by an increase in funding and specific programming to meet youth needs. There is also limited information on whether youth issues have been mainstreamed across other sectors or whether youth are specifically targeted by programmes.

The International Rescue Committee’s Child and Youth Protection and Development (CYPD) unit, Youth and Livelihoods team commissioned this report to fill this information gap. It analyses, in greater depth, trends in donor strategies, programmes and funding, to meet the needs of youth (aged 15-24) in conflict- and disaster-affected countries. The report has a specific focus on youth livelihoods development—covering youth education and skills training, employment promotion, and livelihoods strategies.

Given the very limited amount of quantitative information available about donor expenditure on youth, this report focuses on providing a baseline of information on current donor policies and strategies that relate to youth, how these commitments are fulfilled, and the types of youth and livelihoods programmes funded. The following section outlines the methodology used for this study and summarizes the types of information available. The report then includes the following:

- An overview of donor approaches to youth;
- A summary of the key trends in donor policies and strategies over the past five years that are relevant to youth;
- A summary of key trends on programming and funding over the past five years that are relevant to youth;
- Implications, conclusions and recommendations for funders and practitioners; and
- An annex with further details of the strategies, funding and programmes of key bilateral and multilateral donors.

2.0 Methodology

The report is based on an in-depth, desk-based review of available donor policy documents, programme and project information sourced from donor websites or staff members (See Annex B for bibliography.), as well as interviews with a number of representatives from key donor agencies. It is focussed on the following major public sector agencies, which have worked on youth issues over the past decade:

Bilateral agencies

Australia	AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
Canada	CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
Denmark	DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
United Kingdom	DFID	Department for International Development
Germany	GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Society for International Cooperation)
Norway	MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
	Norad ²	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
Sweden	Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
Switzerland	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
United States	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
United States	USDoS	United States Department of State

Multilateral agencies³


ILO	International Labour Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank

In some cases, it was difficult to obtain up-to-date information. Some of the information obtained from databases do not keep up with the highly fluctuating nature of donor contributions and the initiation of projects.

The report acknowledges that there are other public sector bilateral agencies not included in this report, as well as in-country public sector agencies that may also target youth in their programmes (e.g., ministries of labour, foreign affairs or agriculture) and some private foundations (e.g., MasterCard Foundation, Nike Foundation) that have recently launched flagship programmes for youth populations.

² Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) is the technical arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

³ This report recognises that as UN agencies, the ILO and UNDP are not donor agencies but are nonetheless represented in this report, because of their significant investments in youth livelihoods and education through support to governments as well as through implementing partners.



The findings and analysis included in this report have been shared in draft and final form with all donors for approval prior to publication and therefore reflect the best available information at the time of publication.

3.0 Context: Overview of donor approaches to youth

The overall priorities of donor organisations are set out in overarching policy documents such as white papers and strategic plans, which are periodically updated or replaced. These documents give an understanding of the broad strategic priorities of each organisation, the thematic sectors of focus, countries of focus and the priority accorded to work in conflict- or disaster-affected contexts. They also allow the examination of whether and how youth are mentioned in overarching policies and strategies as a target group, sectoral priority or cross-cutting priority. As the next section discusses in greater detail, **most of these overarching policy documents make no reference or only a cursory reference to youth.** The exception is CIDA (Canada), which has recently made “children and youth” one of its three core strategic priorities.

Nonetheless, in the mid- to late-2000s, **several donors published specific strategies related to youth (or children and youth) and/or on specific sectors like youth employment.** An analysis of these documents allows for an understanding of the level of priority accorded to working with youth in general and on youth livelihoods in particular, although, as the next section discusses, some of these strategies have since been superseded. In their policies and programmes, the majority of donors (e.g., CIDA, DFID, GIZ, SDC, USAID, UN agencies and organisations) use the UN definition of youth, aged 15-24. See Box 1 below. Some donors also treat children and youth as a combined category in their programming (e.g., CIDA and Norway).

Box 1: Donors' definitions of youth

AusAID – No explicit definition of youth found in current policy documents or on website.

CIDA – CIDA refers to children as those under 18 and youth as those between 15 and 24.

DANIDA – No explicit definition of youth found in current policy documents or on website.

DFID – DFID refers to youth as aged 15-24 years, while recognising the complexity of the concept. See 2009 report to DFID on 'Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states.'

GIZ – GIZ refers to children, as people aged 0 to 14, and youth, as all people aged 15 to 24. GIZ refers to both of these categories together as young people.

Norway – Norwegian MFA tends to treat “youth and children” as one target group in their programming, rather than focus specifically on youth aged 15-24 or over.⁴

Sweden – No explicit definition of youth found in current policy documents or on website.

SDC – SDC's Youth Policy document defines youth as 15-24 years.

UN agencies and organisations – All use UN definition of age 15-24 for youth.

USAID – USAID defines youth as age 15-24. See USAID *Youth Livelihoods Development Programme Guide*. However, they are also adopting a broad definition to include adolescents (10-14) and early adults (25-29) in recognition that the definition of this transition period is context dependent.⁵

Most donors state that their current approach is to “mainstream” or “integrate” youth issues across other sectors, for example, by including a specific youth component or identifying groups of male and/or female youth as explicit target groups. Probably as a reflection of this, very **few donors**

⁴ Interview with Norad representative

⁵ Presentation by Nicole Goldin and Mark Hannafin (October 25, 2011). *Consultation with USAID on the new policy for youth in development*, hosted by the Alliance for International Youth Development at InterAction, Washington, D.C.

have a specific department or advisors who focus on youth issues. (The exceptions are GIZ and the World Bank.) Policy responsibility for youth is often spread across departments, including departments working on education, economic recovery/development, humanitarian aid, conflict and peace building, and civil society.

Nonetheless, **all donors fund or implement development programmes with or for youth** and some donors have a long track record of implementing specific youth programmes or targeting their programmes at youth. The challenge is that **most donors are unable to generate accurate quantitative information about their levels of spending on youth** in general, on specific sectors like youth livelihoods or on youth programmes in disaster- or conflict-affected states. This is because, at present, **no donors, except CIDA, have a specific “youth” marker in their project management system** (as they do for gender), which would allow them to accurately quantify the number and location of projects and overall levels of funding devoted to youth overall or to specific sectors.

Since September 2011, Canada’s development agency **CIDA has been systematically employing existing policy markers** to qualify and collect information on investments, one for children and a second for youth. This supplements the standard OECD project sector codes and allows CIDA to account accurately for its funding under its “children and youth” strategic theme (one of CIDA’s three priority themes). In the summer of 2011, CIDA began to employ the policy markers for children and youth for reporting purposes to support the implementation of the CIDA Children and Youth Strategy. See Box 2 below on details of how the marker works. CIDA is able to produce information on projects which have youth issues as a “principal” or “significant” consideration in their design and outcomes. (This works in a similar way to most “gender” markers.)

Box 2: CIDA’s draft children and youth marker: Marker on youth issues

Youth issues	Activities which aim to improve the lives and/or promote and protect the human rights of youth, specifically to enable young people to build and utilise their human capital and become productive adults. For example, investments which aim to create opportunities for obtaining education, acquiring skills and/or participating fully in all aspects of society. Youth can be defined as people between 15 and 24 years of age. However the term more generally represents the period of transition between childhood and adulthood, the nature and length of which vary from one individual or society to another.	Level 2 (Principal): Youth issues were the primary consideration in the planning and design of the project or programme, and the primary outcomes or results directly relate to youth issues as defined here.
		Level 1 (Significant): Youth issues were considered in the planning and design of the project or programme, and/or secondary outcomes or results could be related to youth issues as defined here.
		Level 0 (Not targeted): Youth issues were not a consideration in the planning and design of the project or programme, and there are no anticipated outcomes or results that relate to youth Issues as defined here.

Beyond this, only a few donors have published specific information about their youth projects, but this usually comprises examples of youth programmes rather than a comprehensive overview of the whole portfolio and funding levels. A few donors have online project databases through which it is possible to conduct a keyword search for projects related to youth (e.g., DFID, World Bank). However, these searches generally look for the word “youth” in the project title or description and are not based on official project sector codes related to “youth.” Furthermore, many donors do not explicitly separate

their programming for children (i.e., age 0-18) and youth (i.e., age 15-24), but present this more broadly as programming on “children and youth.”

Therefore, this report focuses on providing **a baseline of donors’ current policies and strategies on youth in general and those specifically related to youth livelihoods in disaster- and conflict-affected contexts, as well as an analysis of current trends.** The report includes examples of the types of programming on youth undertaken by each donor organisation and, when possible, some indications of the magnitude of funding. Annex A provides **specific information on the strategies and priorities of individual bilateral and multilateral donors.** The next sections of this report summarize the key trends we have identified across donors in terms of policies and priorities and programming and funding relevant to the youth/youth livelihoods sector in disaster- and conflict-affected countries. See Annex D for a list of countries considered.

4.0 Key trends in donor policies/strategies relevant to youth livelihoods

There are several important trends in overall donor policy making, which have implications for donor strategies towards youth:

Trend 1: Aid budgets have been maintained, but there is increased focus on aid effectiveness and demonstrating results. In spite of the austerity programmes in place in many donor countries as a result of the current global economic crisis, there has been no noticeable cut to aid budgets in most countries. However, in light of budgetary pressures and following the 2005 Paris Declaration and 2008 Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), there has been increased focus on aid effectiveness amongst most donors—particularly on alignment behind national government policies and delivery systems, harmonization and cooperation between donors to improve the efficiency of aid delivery, and measuring and demonstrating results. In practical terms, this has led to the following changes:

- **Many donors have moved to concentrate on fewer countries and to deepen their commitment to these partner countries.** For example, over the last two years, key bilateral donors such as CIDA, DANIDA, DFID, SDC and USAID have announced the closure of bilateral programmes in several countries and are instead concentrating on a core list of partner countries, where they will invest more funds. See Annex E for lists of partner countries.
- **Several donors have also moved towards greater sectoral concentration,** both at an overall global level and in specific countries, as part of a “division of labour” between donors and partner governments. **In many (but not all) cases, this has meant that the area of “youth development” has been dropped as an explicit strategic priority.** This is either because it is considered as cross-sectoral, as opposed to a sector in its own right, or because it has been dropped in favour of other key sectors such as education, health or economic growth. Nonetheless, as discussed later, many agencies have made an effort to mainstream youth issues across sectors.
- **Most donors are continuing to shift from the old “project” modality towards larger-scale programmatic approaches** such as sector-wide approaches (e.g., DFID, GIZ, Sida, World Bank). These approaches frequently result in multi-donor programmes in which the national government or a UN agency is the main in-country partner. Some international and local NGOs and analysts have expressed concern that this **reduces the scope for donors to fund smaller catalytic projects or pilot projects, including projects that work with youth at a community level.**
- **The move towards alignment with partner country priorities** has created the opportunity to achieve greater impact in key sectors. However, it has also **reduced opportunities to work in key sectors that the government might not prioritise (e.g., youth).** In some countries, for a variety of reasons, governments do not focus on youth issues, and, as a result, these issues do not receive significant funding.
- **The focus on demonstrating results has meant that many donors have tightened their requirements on demonstrating evidence of impact, cost-effectiveness and value for money⁶** (e.g., AusAID, DANIDA, DFID, Norway, Sida, USAID, World Bank). While this is certainly prompting more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of development programmes, there are **concerns that this is skewing aid programmes towards a focus on areas in which it is**

⁶ Donors were undertaking work on aid effectiveness and value for money metrics in preparation for the OECD’s 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in November / December 2011 (<http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhlf4/>). Usually, value for money calculations look at everything from control of costs to delivery of outcomes.

easier to make progress and easier to quantify results and away from less obviously quantifiable areas, like social transformation, social exclusion, or violence prevention—all of which are key to youth development.⁷

Trend 2. There is a greater focus on security issues amongst donors and increased donor funding to “fragile” contexts. Over the last five years, a number of donors have increased their focus on security, conflict and fragility issues. This is a result of increasing recognition of the inter-linkages between conflict, insecurity and poverty. In some cases, there has been a more explicit linking of development assistance with national and global security interests (e.g., DFID and USAID). Overall, this has resulted in the following specific trends:

- **There have been increased policy and funding commitments to fragile states:** Many donors now include addressing conflict and fragility and promoting stability among their key strategic priorities and accord significant proportions of their aid budget to fragile states (e.g., AusAID, DANIDA, DFID, Norway, SDC, Sida, and USAID). Several donors (e.g., DFID and USAID) have also announced a specific increase in funding to fragile states. For example, DFID has committed to focus 30 per cent of aid in “fragile and conflict-affected states” (FCAS) by 2014.
- **There has been a proliferation of studies, reports and guidance on the causes of conflict and fragility and “how to work” in fragile states.** The last decade has seen a significant increase in the amount of academic and policy-related research on the causes of conflict and fragility as well as how development organisations should engage in fragile states. For example, the OECD-DAC has produced a series of publications on working effectively in situations of conflict and fragility⁸ and is currently undertaking an *International Dialogue on State Building and Peace Building*. The recently-published 2011 World Development Report also focuses on *Conflict, Security and Development*.⁹ Some of the conclusions of these studies are a significant influence on current modes of donor engagement in fragile states and are relevant here:
 - Institution-building is important for managing competing interests and conflicts effectively and to mitigate violence. This includes not only building an effective and resilient state, but also strengthening markets, civil society organisations, dispute resolution mechanisms and societal norms.
 - It is important to improve citizen-state relations, in which citizens—especially the excluded—have a strong voice and the state is more responsive to citizen interests.
 - It is necessary to improve the provision of everyday security and justice for all citizens—especially vulnerable groups—within the rule of law.
 - It is important to provide opportunities for all people in a society to earn a decent living with particular priority to job creation in insecure areas.
 - There is a need to manage the pace and balance of political and economic reforms in order to manage expectations but not further destabilize fragile situations.
 - It is vital to invest in conflict/violence prevention and risk reduction assistance (or disaster risk reduction—DRR) as well as response.
 - It is important that all development programmes be conflict-sensitive to ensure they “do no harm” and support the dynamics of peace.

⁷ For critiques of the way the new focus on results and evidence is being implemented, see <http://bigpushforward.wordpress.com/>.

⁸ See http://www.oecd.org/document/57/0,3746,en_2649_33693550_46582713_1_1_1_1,00.html.

⁹ See <http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/>.

- **There is wider recognition of the importance of youth in disaster- and conflict-affected contexts.** Several donor policies and statements on fragile contexts (e.g., DANIDA, USAID, World Bank) highlight the importance of engagement with youth. These policies not only recognise the potential of youth to contribute their ideas and energies to peace building, reconstruction and development, but they also highlight the destabilising potential of a large youth population (the so-called “youth bulge”)—combined with unemployment and poor educational opportunities—which they claim can lead to instability, radicalisation and violent conflict. They highlight the importance of working to improve access to post-primary formal and informal education; increase the access of young people to safe, profitable and sustainable employment; and increase the participation and voice of youth. One donor representative interviewed said that the “Arab Spring” has highlighted to donors how much more priority needs to be accorded to youth in fragile contexts.
- **There have been increased political pressures on development ministries to contribute to initiatives to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism.** Over the last decade, and in light of an increase in international terrorism, many Western governments have increased their efforts to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism. They have identified linkages between terrorist incidents perpetrated in the West and grievances in other countries, including many developing countries. As a result of this, development ministries have come under pressure to contribute more clearly to preventing radicalisation and violent extremism in the countries where they work. In some cases, this has led to **new “de-radicalisation” programmes and projects often targeted at preventing youth involvement in violence** (e.g., education and training, employment creation, youth participation).

Trend 3. There is renewed donor focus on economic growth and employment creation. Over the last five years, a number of donors have also renewed and expanded their focus on economic growth. This is now a key strategic priority of several donor agencies (e.g., AusAID, CIDA, DFID, DANIDA, USAID) with emphasis on the need for “inclusive” and “pro-poor” growth that creates economic opportunities for poor people and excluded groups, including youth.

- **There is increased engagement in private sector development and creating an enabling environment for business.** The private sector is viewed as the engine of economic growth—creating jobs, increasing trade, providing goods and services to the poor, driving innovation, and generating tax revenue. Many donors are increasingly working on “enablers” to help create a favourable policy, legal and institutional environment for business and investment, including through reducing corruption, as well as on “drivers” such as increasing productivity, specialisation, trade openness, and investment in innovation. **Many donors are particularly focussed on supporting the growth of small and medium enterprises (SME), which usually have greater benefit for poor people, including youth.**
- **There is an increased focus on agriculture-driven growth.** Research by the World Bank (WDR, 2008) has suggested that growth in agriculture is twice as effective at reducing poverty as growth in other sectors. Given the majority of the poorest people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, many donors view supporting increases in agricultural productivity as key to reducing income poverty and increasing food security. This has led to a renewed focus on rural reforms and the agricultural sector by a number of donors (e.g., DFID, World Bank). While these policies do not explicitly mention youth, it is widely recognised that many countries have a large rurally-based and frustrated youth population and that these reforms are important for youth. At the same time, however, some donors point to the fact that large numbers of youth

migrate to urban areas in search of opportunities, so **there also needs to be a focus on job creation and inclusion for urban youth.**

- **There is a specific focus on inclusive growth and employment creation.** Donors stress the importance of “inclusive” or “pro-poor” growth, which is broad-based across sectors and inclusive of the majority of a country’s labour force. There is a particular focus on **increasing employment opportunities** (including through providing skills training) **for the poorest groups, including youth.** Several donors have also identified the importance of **increasing access to finance, and supporting entrepreneurship and economic opportunities for young people** (Canada, Denmark, UK, and US).
- At the same time, there is emphasis on the need to empower poor people so that they can benefit from growth¹⁰ and to provide social protection mechanisms to support poor people to deal with livelihoods risks and vulnerabilities. However, **youth are rarely mentioned in donors’ recent strategy papers and discussion documents on social protection.** One key exception is the World Bank’s concept note on consultations for the Social Protection and Labour Strategy 2012-22. The Bank identifies youth unemployment as a priority issue and notes the need to develop a better understanding on what works for youth entrepreneurship and self-employment, but it remains to be seen whether the consultations and final strategy report will continue to highlight the importance of youth.

Trend 4: Over the last decade, **a number of donors have prioritised youth as a strategic area of focus. However, the level of prioritisation of youth issues has varied in response to shifts in strategic priorities and structural changes,** and the approaches of many donors have changed. See Box 3 below and Annex A for more details.

- **In the mid-2000s (2004-2007), many donors published overarching strategies, policies and reports on youth development,** which committed them to prioritise youth in their development programmes, either through mainstreaming/integrating youth issues across sectors and country programmes and/or by designing specific youth programmes (e.g., Norway, SDC, UNDP, World Bank).
- Since this time, as a result of internal restructuring, re-prioritisation and changes of government, **many of these policies and strategies have been superseded or have not been fully implemented.** Today, only CIDA (Canada) has “youth” (children and youth) as one of its explicit core strategic priorities. Instead, **most other donors state that their current approach is to “mainstream” or “integrate” youth issues across other sectors,** for example, by including a specific youth component or identifying groups of male and/or female youth as explicit target groups. However, **very few overarching donor white papers and strategies make anything more than a cursory mention of youth.**
- Probably as a reflection of this, **very few donors have a specific department or advisors that focus on youth issues** (or even livelihoods issues more broadly). Policy responsibility for youth is often spread across departments, including departments working on education, economic recovery/development, humanitarian aid, conflict and peace building, and civil society. GIZ retains a project team on youth, working on youth promotion and sports, and another BMX-commissioned project team called the *“Sector Project Implementation of Children and Youth*

¹⁰ The OECD recently commissioned a series of papers, which stress the importance of economic, political and social empowerment to ensure poor people benefit from growth. This series of POVNET papers is not yet public, but includes a paper on the empowerment of poor people for pro-poor growth in fragile states – which mentions the situation of youth.

Rights,” which promotes the rights of young people. The World Bank’s Children and Youth Unit has recently been disbanded.

- Equally, **in most bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, programming is decentralized to country level**, and, therefore, decision-making on particular priority programme sectors and approaches is determined by donor country offices within the broad strategic priorities at institutional level. However, **unless there is clear guidance from the center on where, when and how to integrate youth issues in programmes, implementation tends to be ad-hoc.**
- In some cases, donor agencies have recently produced **specific guidance and toolkits on how to undertake youth-related programming in specific sectors like youth employment and violence prevention.** For example, USAID has published a “*Youth Livelihoods Development Programme Guide*” (2008) and a guide on “*Development Assistance and Counter-Extremism*” (2009) with a major focus on youth; GIZ (formerly GTZ) published a toolkit (2010) for working with youth, “*Systemic Prevention of Youth Violence*,” including guidance on “youth and violence” and “youth employment.”¹¹ The OECD also recently (2011) produced a programming note on “*Reducing the Involvement of Youth in Armed Violence*.”
- The next section reveals that most donors in fragile states are currently focusing programming in **increasing access to post-primary formal and informal education and training, addressing youth unemployment, and preventing youth involvement in violence. Another major growth area has been specific policy and programme initiatives on adolescent girls,** focusing on empowerment broadly, as well as educational and economic opportunities.
- It is also important to note that **a couple of private foundations have also invested in youth issues in the last five years.** Since 2005, the **Nike Foundation**¹² **has been investing in adolescent girls** and has launched major initiatives jointly with the World Bank and DFID. (See below.) The work includes not only providing resources for programming, but also advocating for girls in policy reforms and measuring impact. The **MasterCard Foundation, launched in 2008, also has a primary focus on youth and microfinance,** supporting programmes to integrate access to finance, business skills and employment with educational opportunities (the “learning, earning, saving” strategy).

¹¹ <http://www.gtz.de/de/themen/uebergreifende-themen/jugend/31724.htm>

¹² http://www.nikefoundation.org/what_we_do.html

Box 3: Overview of key donor policies, strategies and approaches relevant to youth livelihoods

CIDA (Canada) In 2009, CIDA established three overarching priority themes, one of which was “securing the future of children and youth.” In 2010, it produced its *Children and Youth Strategy*, which focuses on three areas: (i) child survival, including maternal health; (ii) access to a quality education, including increased access to learning opportunities for youth in and out of school; and (iii) safe and secure futures for children and youth (violence prevention, human rights, child protection). In follow-up to this strategy, CIDA is currently reviewing priorities for funding and programming, but it retains a significant portfolio of projects which benefit youth, including projects on technical and vocational education and training (TVET), entrepreneurship and employment creation.

DFID (UK) In 2007, DFID commissioned the *Youth Mapping Study* to look at how the organisation works on youth across its programmes. This noted several examples of successful programmes involving youth as partners but recommended a more systematic approach to youth, especially in fragile states. In 2009, DFID then commissioned two reports: (i) *Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states*, and (ii) *Youth, jobs and inclusive growth*. The reports reviewed the evidence in these areas and made recommendations for DFID policies and programmes, including proposing that DFID capitalize on opportunities to include a greater focus on youth in its programmes. In 2010, the DFID-CSO Youth Working Group published an online guide *Youth Participation in Development*. This guide was made available to all DFID offices worldwide for consideration in designing programmes and consulting with youth. As a result of internal structuring in 2011, the overall lead for work on children and youth transferred from the Equity and Rights Team to the Civil Society Department. This department has traditionally focussed on DFID’s policy and programming work with civil society organisations and stakeholder management—working with youth-related NGOs (e.g., Plan International, Save the Children) through specific programmes, rather than specifically focusing on policy related to youth. CSD is part of DFID’s policy division and is in the process of defining its work priorities in this area, but one specific measure that has been taken is that, under the new strategic Programme Partnership Arrangement funding, a consortium of youth organisations (led by Restless Development) has been funded for the first time. As part of this, CSD will consider how best to develop a global picture of DFID’s work on children/youth. CSD will be working closely with DFID country offices and other departments that include consideration of youth in their work, including the conflict, humanitarian and security department (youth involvement in violence), the education team in the Policy Division (post-primary education), with the Research and Evidence Division and with the Stakeholder Outreach team in the Communications Division (that leads on the International Citizens Service).

GIZ (Germany) Since 1997, youth had been a strategic priority for German cooperation, and the former-GTZ had implemented a wide range of youth programmes—both multi-sectoral programmes and specific assistance to youth ministries, networks and CSOs. However, following the 2005 Paris Declaration, as Germany moved towards sectoral concentration and because youth was not viewed as a stand-alone sector, there was a gradual reduction in specific youth projects and their approach moved towards mainstreaming youth issues into broader sectoral programmes. Since 2008, GIZ (GTZ) has recognised the need to renew the focus on children and youth issues in German cooperation. This led to the creation of a specific project team “Sector Project on Implementation of Children and Youth Rights,” tasked with ensuring that children and youth issues are not only mainstreamed into all sectors across country programmes, but also mainstreamed in the BMZ’s policies and strategies so that the German Development Cooperation more systematically includes children and human rights standards and principles into their work. BMZ has also commissioned a review—undertaken by the German Institute for Human Rights and due out in early 2012—of its work on children and youth to see how this might achieve greater impact.

ILO The work of the ILO on youth employment aims at improving opportunities for young people to gain and maintain decent jobs. Through its Youth Employment Programme (YEP), the ILO provides technical assistance in a wide array of youth employment-related areas, with the overall objective of strengthening national capacities to develop policies and programmes that enhance employability, improve employment prospects and increase earnings of young people. Key donors to this programme include Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Direct Trust Fund, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, The MasterCard Foundation, MDG Fund, Netherlands, Norway, One UN Fund, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and UN Peace Building Fund.

Norway In 2005, Norway produced a development strategy on children and young people called *Three Billion Reasons*, which committed Norway to target its development efforts in four areas: (i) the right of children and young people to development with a focus on education, (ii) the right of children and young people to survival with a focus of health, (iii) the right of children and young people to protection, and (iv) the right of children and young people to participation. One of the specific commitments was to finance vocational and entrepreneurial training.

SDC (Switzerland) In 2007, SDC published a youth policy, which committed SDC to mainstream youth across its work and to particularly work to address youth unemployment, especially in conflict situations. However, SDC subsequently underwent an internal re-organisation and the policy was never implemented. Nonetheless, SDC has a strong focus on inclusion, vocational education, and post-primary education, and many of these programmes are explicitly focussed on youth or have youth as a target group. Overall, SDC uses a lens of inclusion and targets marginalised groups, including women and youth. For example, SDC's 2009 annual report stresses the importance of providing educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups including vulnerable young people and adults.

UNDP In 2006, UNDP/BCPR was one of the first organisations to publish a report on youth in fragile states, *Youth and Violent Conflict: Society and Development in Crisis*, which identified the scarcity of education and employment opportunities as key factors underpinning young people's sense of exclusion from society; it also highlighted that this could lead to youth engagement in violence. This was followed up by a lessons learned document and a whole series of reviews were planned of youth programmes in conflict-affected contexts. However, at the end of 2007, the two staff members with youth expertise who led this work were re-assigned and not replaced. Since 2008, there has been no one with explicit responsibility for youth and more recent UNDP/BCPR strategy documents have not explicitly identified youth as a priority issue. Nonetheless, in practice, many UNDP programmes target youth, in particular, programming by the Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Group (employment creation and youth livelihoods), the Conflict Prevention Group (youth, conflict prevention and peace building), and the Governance and Rule of Law Unit (youth political participation).

UNECA UNECA has been a proponent of addressing youth issues as part of the development agenda in Africa. The commission assists African governments to formulate and implement youth policies, strategies and programmes. In 2006, the ECA organized the 5th African Development Forum on "Youth and Leadership in the 21st Century." UNECA currently supports the implementation of the outcomes from the ADF on youth, such as the African Volunteer Youth Corps Programme, production of the *Africa Youth Report* and the implementation of the Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009-2018). In 2009, UNECA published the inaugural Africa youth report entitled, *Expanding opportunities for and with young people in Africa*. The report analyses the major challenges faced by African youth, examines the causes of youth unemployment and argues that improving youth employment is a critical priority alongside education and human resources. The *Africa Youth Report* entitled *Addressing the youth education and employment nexus in the new global economy* highlights youth employment, education and political participation as key priorities for youth empowerment and development moving forward. As part of the ECA strategic focus on social development, there would be a stronger focus on youth and fragile states.

UNICEF In 2011, UNICEF's annual *State of the World's Children Report* was entitled *Adolescence: An Age of Opportunity*. The report highlights the need for a greater concentration of resources, planning and political will to promote adolescent rights. It argues for investment in free compulsory secondary education, to promote equitable access to post-primary education, to provide specialized programmes for out-of-school and crisis-affected youth and to include adolescents in initiatives in conflict and emergency settings. UNICEF also hosts the *Voices of Youth* website for online discussion and dialogue between 15-24 year olds.

USAID The U.S. has been one of the most active donors in the area of youth with a focus on livelihoods development, education and violence prevention. In 2008, USAID produced the *Youth Livelihoods Development Programme Guide*. USAID's Education Strategy for 2011-2015 identifies "tertiary and workforce development

programmes” as one of its three priority areas. Youth are also clearly identified as a core target group in USAID’s approaches to countering extremism,¹³ which identify core problems of relative deprivation, frustrated expectations and social exclusion and propose that skills development, supporting the transition to work, employment creation and supporting entrepreneurship should be key priorities. USAID was also finalizing a youth in development policy framework at the end of 2011. This framework was being developed by, with and for youth in order to call attention to the need to invest in youth for the development of societies and nations.¹⁴

US State Department The State Department is making significant investments in youth livelihood/education programming, not only as a result of counter insurgency efforts, but also in terms of their increased focus on the Middle East. For example, the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) which involves a key component on the economic and political empowerment of women and youth and improving education. Youth looks set to continue as a core theme for the US with both USAID and the State Department currently in the process of developing new youth policies.

World Bank In 2002, the World Bank established the Children and Youth Unit to guide and contribute to more effective work on children and youth development. It has had a particularly strong focus on youth unemployment issues and the WDR (2007) *Development and the Next Generation* outlined three priorities for investment in youth: (i) expanding opportunities (increasing the quality and quantity of education, smoothing the transition to work, supporting the civic engagement of youth); (ii) enhancing capabilities (life skills); (iii) providing second chances (remedial education, retraining, rehabilitation). The World Bank’s recent (2011) *Education Sector Strategy* stresses the need for second-chance and non-formal learning opportunities. However, the Bank has recently undergone some restructuring and the Children and Youth Unit has been disbanded and merged under the Social Protection Unit.

¹³ See USAID (2009) *Development Assistance and Counter-Extremism: A Guide to Programming* http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/publications/docs/da_and_cea_guide_to_programming.pdf.

¹⁴ Presentation by Nicole Goldin and Mark Hannafin (October 25, 2011). Consultation with USAID on the new policy for youth in development at InterAction, Washington, D.C.

5.0 Key trends in programming and funding relevant to youth livelihoods

Until about five years ago, most funding for youth programmes in conflict-affected countries tended to fall into one of the following three categories:

1. Emergency funding in camps, focussed on keeping idle youth busy with recreational activities and non-market driven vocational training
2. Reintegration funding, as part of a DDR process focus on psychosocial aspects of return and reintegration into families and communities
3. Development-oriented funding, focussed on post-primary education and accelerated learning for youth

However, **in the last five years, there have been noticeable shifts in the approach to programming for or including youth in conflict- and disaster-affected contexts.** These are the results of a wider recognition of the connections between large or growing youth populations and conflict and fragility, as well as evaluations and lesson learning in specific areas such as vocational education and economic empowerment. The key trends are listed below. See Annex A for more details on the specific programming and funding of individual donors.

Trend 1: There is a greater focus on improving educational opportunities and skills training for youth.

- **There has been increased investment in formal and informal education opportunities for adolescents as well as primary age children.** Although most donors are still primarily focussed on financing primary education to meet the MDGs on education, in the last two to three years, a number of donors (e.g., Norway, USAID and the World Bank) have recognised that it is also important to invest in educational opportunities for adolescents—both formal secondary education and accelerated learning programmes, as well as less formal literacy programmes for out-of-school youth, life skills courses, second chance and non-formal learning opportunities and vocational training. The World's Bank Adolescent Girls Initiative and DFID's Girl Hub are good examples.
- **There has been ongoing funding to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes but with a clearer link to market opportunities.** TVET continues to be a key area of focus for a number of donors (e.g., AusAID, Norway, USAID, World Bank), but there is a much stronger focus on quality assurance and ensuring that TVET projects are linked to market demand and that there are accompanying measures to link training to employment creation. There is also an increased focus on supporting youth to gain specific employability skills, such as critical thinking and ICT skills (mainly basic computer operation skills, Microsoft Office, setting up and using email, Internet browsing). Finally, many donors are making specific efforts to target poor, disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups, including marginalised youth.
- **There has been a greater focus on the education-to-work transition.** Several donors have developed programmes to specifically work on smoothing the transition between formal- and non-formal education and the employment market. This includes support to areas such as job market information dissemination, careers support, internships /placements, employer incentives to recruit youth, etc. For example, USAID's EQUIP 3 programme is focussed on preparing out-of-school youth for work, civil society and family life.

Trend 2. There is increased focus on employment and economic opportunities for youth.

- **There is a greater focus on local economic recovery and livelihoods recovery in disaster- and conflict-affected situations, including youth as the main or a key target group.** As part of a wider agenda on post-crisis recovery, state building and peace building, several donors have prioritised economic recovery, particularly at the local level. For example, in 2009, the **UN system adapted a new policy on employment creation, income generation and reintegration, which UNDP and ILO have adapted for post-crisis contexts.** This uses a three-track approach: (i) shorter-term livelihoods recovery and stabilization (e.g., emergency employment, community infrastructure rehabilitation, asset replenishment, enterprise recovery, reintegration and set-up packages); (ii) medium-term local economic recovery (e.g., vocational training, microfinance, SME development, especially for youth and women); and (iii) long-term sustainable employment (e.g., policy and institutional reforms, capacity building of ministries, private sector, professional organisations, etc). BCPR in particular favours a community-based approach, which targets vulnerable populations—including youth, women and IDPs—and their households and communities as part of a comprehensive strategy. Similarly, **USAID also has a strong livelihoods development approach in its youth work** with large projects in Haiti, Kenya, Rwanda, and Somalia. It also invests in microenterprise projects for youth.
- **Overall, there has been an increase in funding for youth employment creation programmes.** In recent years, more donors have prioritised funding to youth employment programming, especially in conflict-affected states. Most donors now focus on linking initiatives that improve the employability of youth with employment creation initiatives and initiatives that attempt to ease the transition between education and training and the job market. In many cases, youth employment creation is seen as a proactive strategy to prevent youth involvement in violence or extremism. Some of the key elements of donor youth employment programmes are listed below. See Boxes 4 and 5 for examples of approaches by the Danish and German governments.
 - Supporting the development of and reforms to national and local youth employment policies and strategies
 - Improving linkages between employment supply and demand, e.g., improving labour market information, supporting employer incentive schemes to employ youth – job vouchers, on-the-job-training, internships
 - Focusing on decent and productive work, linking employment promotion and anti-child labour programmes and child protection concerns
 - Focusing on the school-to-work transition including career guidance, internships, apprenticeships, job applications
 - Supporting youth entrepreneurship through access to finance/microfinance, supporting networking, establishing youth enterprise centers, supporting youth business associations, supporting business skills training, etc.
 - Supporting intensive public works and “jobs for peace” programmes in post-conflict contexts to rehabilitate infrastructure and provide immediate job opportunities to youth
 - Increasing efforts to target vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups of youth who have previously been excluded – youth inclusion focus
 - Some initial work on establishing safety net programmes for unemployed groups, including youth

Box 4: GIZ: Programming approaches to youth employment (GTZ, 2008).

GIZ favours an integrated approach to youth employment promotion with three components:

- (i) **Promotion of employability** – implementation of market-oriented TVET systems, policy advice on TVET reforms, skills development for young people in the formal and informal sector, entrepreneurship education for young people, promotion of social work for young people to cover life skills, and health education.
- (ii) **Promotion of linkages/matching** – establishment of sound labour market information systems, improvement of job counseling information and placement systems for youth, policy advice on national youth employment policies and plans, empowerment of youth organisations to advocate for prioritisation of youth employment, and monitoring of labour standards.
- (iii) **Promotion of employment opportunities** – support to young entrepreneurs (training, mentoring, microfinance), creation of favourable economic environment for SMEs, establishment of incentive systems for employers to hire young people (e.g., internships), and promotion of local public-private partnerships.

Box 5: The Africa Commission's five international initiatives to promote youth employment—initial funding from Denmark

In 2008, the Danish government launched the Africa Commission to look at how to best support Africa to foster youth employment promotion. Its final report (May, 2009) concluded that private-sector-led growth was the most effective route to more and better jobs for young people. In January 2010, Denmark launched five follow-up initiatives aimed at creating job opportunities for Africa's youth in cooperation with African governments and institutions and other donors, to which it has devoted approximately US\$200 million of startup funding.

Initiative	USD (approx.)	Description
Benchmarking African Competitiveness	4 million	Improving the business climate and Africa's competitive edge by making sure that the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report covers all African countries.
Access to Investment Finance and Capacity Development	83 million	The creation of an African Guarantee Fund in partnership with the African Development Bank aims to mobilize loans for US\$3billion and reduce the cost of access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's).
Unleashing African Entrepreneurship	20 million	Both in start-up and existing enterprises, provides advisory services and access to finance in order to allow young people to translate their good ideas into practical plans. The initiative will be implemented in partnership with the ILO and Youth Employment Network. It is expected that this initiative alone will create 40,000 new jobs and 20,000 new businesses.
Access to Sustainable Energy	50 million	Ensuring access to energy at the local level by launching a new initiative in partnership with the EU and the African Development Bank. More than three-quarters of Africans lack access to electricity—a major constraint to economic development, doing business, and standards of living.

Promoting Post-Primary Education and Research	36 million	Specifically, the initiative will increase the quantity and quality of artisans through apprenticeships, especially in the rural areas. Also, it will link tertiary research and business practices especially to expanding agricultural output.
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Trend 3. There is an emphasis on more effective re-integration of youth ex-combatants.

- **There is increased emphasis on the “re-integration” element of DDR programmes.** Many donors have recognised that “re-integration” packages have often been inadequate to help young ex-combatants re-integrate socially and economically into their communities. There is now an increased focus on whole-of-community approaches that target the receiving community more broadly to support the re-integration of young ex-combatants (e.g., USAID¹⁵) and on securing employment opportunities for ex-combatants (e.g., USAID).

Trend 4. There is an increased focus on adolescent girls.

- **There are greater efforts to mainstream gender and new initiatives on adolescent girls.** Several donors explicitly prioritise the mainstreaming of gender equality in their programming on children and youth and/or in disaster- and conflict-affected contexts (e.g., Norway, UNDP) or across their programming in general (AusAid, CIDA, DFID, SDC and World Bank). In addition, in the last three years, a number of donors have announced major new initiatives of adolescent girls, based on the recognition that the education and employment of girls has a positive impact of their families and children and long-term benefits for poverty reduction. See Box 6.

Box 6: New initiatives on the empowerment of adolescent girls

Girl Hub: In 2010, DFID and the Nike Foundation launched “Girl Hub,”¹⁶ an initiative that focuses on the empowerment of adolescent girls. They advocate for changing policies to focus on girls’ needs, communicate to girls, and support girls to exercise their voice.

Adolescent Girls Initiative: The World Bank’s US\$20 million Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI)¹⁷ which was launched in 2008 focuses on economic empowerment of girls—in particular, the transition of adolescent girls into productive employment, including in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Rwanda and South Sudan (Nike Foundation is also a partner)—job and skills training, employer incentives, and linking trainees to labour demand.

United Nations Girls Education Initiative: The United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI)¹⁸ was launched in 2008 and works with national governments to remove barriers to learning for girls, such as violence in schools and emergency situations. It prioritises both basic education and literacy and empowerment for adolescent girls and women. Partners include CIDA, DANIDA, DFID, ILO, Norway, Sida, USAID, UNESCO, UNFPA, and World Bank. There is also the **UN Interagency Task Force on Adolescent Girls**, an informal network chaired by UNICEF covering social and economic development for girls.

¹⁵ Some countries like Norway have supported such trends through multi-donor funds, rather than via bilateral aid.

¹⁶ See <http://girlhub.org>.

¹⁷ See

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/0,,contentMDK:21914520~menuPK:336910~pagePK:64020865~piPK:51164185~theSitePK:336868,00.html>.

¹⁸ <http://www.ungei.org/index.php>

In terms of **specific figures on levels of funding to youth in or specific sectors like youth livelihoods**, as mentioned above, **no accurate or comprehensive information is available**, which would enable a judgment to be formed about the extent to which donor strategies and policies are being implemented. However, the research and analysis undertaken for this report has obtained a few figures, which give an idea of the order of magnitude of funding by some donors:

- Between 2009 and 2013, **UNDP/BCPR** is seeking funding to provide approximately US\$155 million in financial, programmatic and technical support to UNDP country offices in crisis-affected countries, of which about US\$80 million is for livelihood and economic recovery programmes with a youth component or youth as a target group.
- The **ILO** manages 52 on-going youth employment projects around the world totaling USD123 million.
- The **World Bank** undertook a review in 2010 of “youth investments in the World Bank portfolio.” This concluded that the bank’s children and youth development portfolio grew five-fold from US\$949 million in FY 2000 to US\$4.8 billion in FY2010. This review also showed that children and youth projects are spread across the sectoral and geographic portfolio but that the largest investments (more than half of portfolio) were in South Asia and Latin America. Eighty percent of investments were in the education sector, but 60 per cent of investments were managed by other sectors. Searches in the World Bank database suggest that major sectors of investment include technical and vocational education and training, second chance learning, and short-term employment provision.
- **CIDA** has provided preliminary estimates of US\$156 million, using the draft children and youth marker, designed to measure the level of bilateral aid in 2009/2010 to children and youth in eight conflict-affected countries.
- **Sida** has allocated around US\$233 to support CSOs in 2011. This budget includes approximately US\$46, which is reserved for projects focussed on children and youth but the specific priorities will be outlined in the next few months.

Our analysis has also revealed a number of **differences between donors in terms of funding modalities and implementation partners for work on youth in disaster- and conflict-affected states**:

- The **main donors who provide substantive funds for international and local NGOs for youth and livelihoods related programmes in disaster- and conflict-affected states** are DANIDA, GIZ, the MasterCard Foundation, Norway, SDC and Sida.
- Given the need to reduce administration costs, **some donors (e.g., DANIDA, DFID, Norad, Sida) favour framework agreements/core funding**, as the mode of engagement with international NGO partners, and a number of such agreements exist between these donors and NGOs working on youth issues. Another modality is **centralized funding mechanisms**, like DFID’s *Civil Society Challenge Fund*, which makes periodic calls for NGOs and other organisations to submit tenders in line with general or particular sectoral priorities.
- **Some donor organisations have introduced particular requirements for their financing of NGOs.** For example, in 2005, DANIDA introduced a self-financing requirement for NGOs with a framework agreement with DANIDA, which increased to 10 per cent in 2007. From 2010, there are also stronger requirements with respect to the documentation of results. DFID has also

introduced a far more rigorous results framework for its programme partnership arrangements (PPA). Norad's civil society department provides core funding to a number of key NGOs working on youth (e.g., Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan, Right to Play).

- **Some organisations, such as the World Bank, work almost entirely through government ministries** in this area—most commonly the ministries for education, youth, or labour.
- In terms of individual projects and programmes on youth, some donors appear to have a **preference for funding local NGOs, CSOs and organisations** rather than international NGOs (e.g., GIZ, Sida, the World Bank).
- There is a **general trend for bilateral donors** (e.g., DFID, USAID) **to invest funding in multilateral programmes**, including multi-donor initiatives, such as those implemented by UN agencies.
- **Some organisations are solely or primarily focussed on providing technical advice** to other organisations or national governments (e.g., UNECA – advice to the AU and African governments; UNDP/BCPR – mainly works with UNDP country offices and other UN agencies).
- **Some organisations primarily coordinate multi-country and multi-donor programmes** on behalf of other donors (e.g., ILO).

6.0 Conclusions

There have clearly been **some positive changes to youth strategies and programming in conflict- and disaster-affected contexts**. The following are particularly noteworthy:

- The recognition that youth are a very important target group in these contexts due to their potential to contribute to growth and peace building and because their marginalization and exclusion can be a factor in leading a minority of youth to engage in violence.
- The increased investment in formal and informal education for youth, including relevant and market-linked vocational and skills training.
- A greater focus on local economic recovery, including specific youth employment creation programmes, with youth among the key target groups.
- The recognition of the importance of focusing on the specific needs and participation of adolescent girls, both to realize their rights and because of the catalytic effect this can have on their families and communities. This has been backed up by new initiatives and funding.
- The development of specific toolkits on youth-related programming in different sectors, which they are using to increase or maintain a focus of youth and improve the quality of programming.

Nonetheless, an analysis of existing strategies and programming also suggests that **a number of specific gaps and challenges remain**:

- **Limited comprehensive analyses of the situation of youth in specific conflict- and disaster-affected contexts.** Although several donors recognise the significance of youth in these contexts—both as a potential driver of growth and development and as potential contributors to instability—there is a distinct lack of comprehensive analyses of the situation of youth in specific countries. This study has identified a number of ad-hoc studies that have been undertaken on the situation of youth in particular countries, which donor representatives have found extremely useful to their programming (e.g., a participatory youth study by DFID Zimbabwe in 2009¹⁹), but on the whole, such studies are not undertaken and this severely limits understanding of the particular challenges and risks youth face and how these might best be addressed.
- **A lack of age-disaggregated data.** The lack of analysis on the situation of youth is compounded by a widespread lack of data disaggregated by age – whether in terms of national development statistics or baseline and impact studies for specific development programmes. This can mean that the specific situation and views of youth are neither recognised nor taken into account in wider programming.
- **Limited evidence and lesson-learning on the impacts of youth-related programming.** In some cases, monitoring and evaluation of youth-related programming has been weak and there has been a limited amount of lesson-learning—especially between agencies—on how best to programme to meet youth needs and which specific approaches are most effective in which circumstances and why.
- **A lack of understanding on how to mainstream youth across different sectors and ensure that youth issues and needs are adequately prioritised.** The information gathered in this study suggests that youth issues have tended to be de-prioritised in the wake of donors rationalizing their sectoral priorities and organisational structures.

¹⁹ See McLean Hilker, L., Fraser, E. (2009). *Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States*, p 40. <http://www.gsdc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3436>

- **Challenges of accounting for performance against policy commitments on youth.** In the absence of a specific youth marker in project systems or alternative systems to tracking programming, donors are unable to give a comprehensive picture of the extent to which they are addressing youth issues and needs.
- **Few examples of comprehensive empowerment programmes, despite the increased use of the language of “empowerment.”** While there is certainly value in programmes that target specific sectoral areas like vocational training or employment creation, the limited situational analyses that do exist of youth in disaster- and conflict-affected contexts stress the multiple challenges and inter-related forms of exclusion that youth face, which result in frustrated expectations and disempowerment.²⁰ Yet, in recent years there appears to have been a decline in multi-sectoral youth programmes that attempt to address the range of challenges facing youth in order to empower them economically, politically and socially. (e.g., GIZ used to implement many programmes of this type—working simultaneously on training and skills, job creation, political participation, life skills, etc., but has changed strategy over recent years.) The exception is that there are still a number of programmes that take a broad approach to the economic empowerment of youth (e.g., with components on education and skills, TVET, supporting enterprise development, microfinance, etc.). Nonetheless, there is still a need to simultaneously focus on social and political empowerment, whether through additional programme components or through complementary programmes.
- **Reliance on an unproven assumption that general development programmes will automatically benefit youth** in contexts where the youth population is high. A number of donors state that youth are amongst the key beneficiaries of their programmes, even though youth are often not explicitly identified as a target group. This assumption requires further analysis and testing. For example, years of experience on gender has shown us that women are often excluded from the benefits of development programmes, which has often worsened their relative situation. Similarly, it is important to build specific measures, components and indicators into programmes to ensure that youth benefit, especially the poorest and most vulnerable groups. Projects and programmes should specifically articulate the anticipated outcomes for youth, rather than simply reference the youth population as a beneficiary.
- **The need to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the informal sector and whether and how this can provide opportunities for youth.** UNECA’s 2011 report on African youth will highlight that the informal sector remains the primary source of employment and income for most of Africa’s youth and that we need to develop a better understanding on how to support youth to benefit from informal sector opportunities and the potential linkages between the informal and formal sector.
- **The need for further capacity-building of youth networks and associations to advocate for youth.** A number of donors have given support to youth networks and CSOs at a national, regional, or local level. For example, a CIDA project in Iraq and Lebanon aims to support youth through focussed activities and networks to build the youth movements in these countries. At a policy level, in 2010, GTZ produced a concept paper *Capacity Development for Youth Promotion*,²¹ which outlined the capacity development framework and how it related to GTZ youth promotion strategies and programming. However, there is scope to give further financial

²⁰ See McLean Hilker, L., Fraser, E. (2009). *Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States*, p 40. <http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3436>

²¹ GIZ’s concept paper on capacity development, newly entitled “*Capacity Development for the Implementation of Children and Youth Rights*,” is currently being updated. It will provide information on young people in development cooperation, introduce the capacity development framework and present examples from GIZ projects in which comprehensive capacity development measures were undertaken to further the implementation of children and youth rights in partner countries.

and technical support to youth networks and associations to enable them to advocate for youth interests and implement programmes for youth.

- **A lack of research and analysis on the links between youth, livelihoods and violence prevention in order to develop a more comprehensive approach to youth and post-conflict recovery.** On the whole, direct projects on youth and peace building or violence prevention have largely been implemented separately from projects on vocational education or youth employment—although the motivation for the latter is often violence prevention. Although GIZ has published (2010) a handbook on the systemic prevention of youth violence, which established a unique link between youth and violence prevention,²² there needs to be more research to generate evidence of the linkages. There is also scope for improving the integration of projects as part of a wider vision of the role of youth in post-conflict recovery and the scaling up of existing projects that do this, such as integrating peace education and conflict resolution skills into the curricula of formal and non-formal education and skills training; targeting employment programmes (e.g., community infrastructure rehabilitation) at specific groups of youth at risk of violence; involving youth in community rehabilitation efforts; and financing youth organisations and networks to undertake dialogue and reconciliation projects, elections and human rights monitoring, etc.

Many of these issues have been highlighted in recent workshops. For example, the recent policy roundtable on *An Enabling Right: Education for Youth Affected by Crisis*, organized by INEE in November 2010, identified gaps in disaggregated data and empirical data on what works and does not work in youth programming. The roundtable and framing papers also identified gaps in coordination, funding, educational content and youth participation in crisis situations.²³

Equally, a recent symposium on *Engaging Youth in Conflict-Affected Areas* hosted in January 2011 by the Center for Peace Building International and Search for Common Ground identified challenges such as a lack of data, weak monitoring and evaluation systems and poor coordination on programming with youth in conflict-affected areas.²⁴ See Box 7 for a summary of issues raised.

Box 7: “Engaging Youth in Conflict Affected Areas: An Update on Challenges and Successes, and a Roadmap for the Future” A two-day symposium

Recurring themes throughout the symposium included

- The need to have a **clear rationale** for why we engage youth, for public advocacy purposes;
- The need to clearly **define “conflict-affected areas”** as they relate to youth programming;
- The **lack of data** or other empirical evidence that would indicate the status, challenges and progress around youth and conflict programming;
- The **current lack of monitoring and evaluation structures** and tools for programming that target youth in conflict affected areas;
- The need for an articulation of the shape and structure of **meaningful youth participation** in programming;
- The **unrealised potential of inter-agency collaboration** in many youth/conflict subsectors.

²² GIZ. (2010). *Systemic Prevention of Youth Violence*. <http://www.gtz.de/de/themen/uebergreifende-themen/jugend/31724.htm>

²³ INEE. (2011). *Outcome Report, INEE Policy Roundtable 2010*, 15–16 November 2010, Geneva, Switzerland. http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/documents/store/outcome_report_jan2011_2.pdf

²⁴ Center for Peace Building International & Search for Common Ground. (2011). *Engaging Youth in Conflict Affected Areas: An Update on Challenges and Successes, and a Roadmap for the Future*, Summary of a Two-day Symposium January 20/21, 2011, Washington, D.C. See also: <http://networkforyouthintransition.org/forum/topics/engaging-youth-in-1>

In relation to funding of youth programming, practitioners working across the youth and conflict sector identified some of the following key challenges:

- **Inconsistent donor funding flows:** Donors are reluctant to fund grassroots youth programmes in times of ongoing violence. They prefer to work with local governments. They have complex, multi-faceted funding processes which can be daunting for local organisations to understand.
- **Blurring of categories between “youth” and “children.”**
- **Inconsistent measures of success:** Practitioners and donors need to collaborate to create and coordinate standard indicators for youth programming in conflict and emergencies.

7.0 Recommendations for funders and practitioners

This analysis suggests a number of general recommendations in terms of policies, programmes and funding in the area of youth livelihoods in disaster- and conflict-affected contexts:

- **Invest more funding in age-disaggregated statistics and data** (as well as disaggregation by gender and disability status) via support to national statistics institutes and other national data collection organisations as well as ensuring the collection of disaggregated data and analysis in programme design, monitoring and evaluation.
- **Undertake context-specific analysis of the situation of youth in each fragile context**, looking at the specific risks and challenges faced by different groups of youth and the opportunities to work with youth, meet their needs and enhance their role in peace building and development.
- **Improve monitoring, evaluation and lesson learning on youth-related programming** across and between development agencies to develop an evidence base on which approaches are more effective under which circumstances and why.

For **funders**, this analysis suggests the following specific conclusions and recommendations:

- **Accord more overall priority to youth development in disaster- and conflict-affected contexts.** Despite widespread recognition of the importance of youth in disaster- and conflict-affected states, there is a lack of comprehensive strategies in this area. There needs to be a more systematic approach to analysing the situation of youth, and when appropriate, including more explicit objectives related to youth development in key policies, strategies and programmes in disaster- and conflict-affected states.
- **Undertake a review of experience and best practice in implementing youth programmes** with a view to understanding how best to address youth issues across programming in general, and in fragile states in particular, i.e., which of the following approaches are most effective in particular situations and why. (N.B., The BMZ review will be completed in 2012.)
 - Mainstreaming/integrating youth components in other sectoral programmes – drawing together best practice;
 - Including (specific groups of youth) as identified target groups for particular interventions;
 - Focusing explicitly on strengthening the youth sector (e.g., support to youth ministries, youth CSOs and youth) and implementing multi-sectoral youth programmes;
 - Adopting a “twin-track” approach, i.e., mainstreaming youth in other sectors and targeting youth development as a sector in its own right.
- **Nominate a specific unit or advisor with responsibility for driving policy and programming on youth.** There is a need for such a unit or advisor to provide more explicit guidance to different country and sectoral programmes on why, when and how to focus on youth with examples of best practice for analysis, programming, monitoring and evaluation. Without this, youth issues risk being de-prioritised.
- **When appropriate, target youth explicitly in sectoral programmes**, integrating specific objectives and indicators to define and monitor outcomes for youth.

- **Find innovative ways to finance smaller, catalytic projects on youth development in conflict and disaster-affected countries.** Smaller projects can be critical to support the piloting of new approaches particularly at community level. These can be funded through mechanisms like challenge funds and small grants initiatives managed by third parties.
- **Develop a system to enable specific monitoring of commitments and expenditure on youth.** This is important to ensure that policy commitments are matched by programming commitments and funding. In this respect, it will be important to review the development and implementation of CIDA's new children and youth marker to see if this system can be used by other donors.

For **practitioners**, this analysis suggests the following specific conclusions and recommendations regarding opportunities for improving the extent, quality and impact on work on youth livelihoods in fragile states:

- **Improve the evidence base and advocate for a greater focus on youth in fragile states.** There is a need to pull together the rationale and evidence for why it is important to work on youth development in fragile states—drawing on analysis of recent events in the Middle East where possible. Current openings for advocacy work include the new WDR (2011) on conflict, security and development; the major donor focus on “inclusive growth” (e.g., DFID, OECD, and the World Bank); the new UNICEF *State of the World's Children Report* on adolescence (which argues for greater resources and political will to support youth); and ongoing and recent work by the OECD-DAC on empowerment for pro-poor growth (POVNET), reducing youth involvement in violence (INCAF), and working effectively in situations of fragility (INCAF). There is also scope to work more closely with organisations like UNECA that are already engaged in trying to raise the profile of these issues with African governments.
- **Engage funders/donors in a dialogue about different modes of engagement to support youth.** There is a need to challenge the implicit assumption that youth will automatically benefit from wider development programmes and review various modalities to better address youth needs in fragile contexts (e.g., mainstreaming youth vs. specific youth projects vs. youth components).
- **Improve communication of what works in terms of youth development in fragile states and why.** Practitioners could undertake a more comprehensive review of programming on youth in fragile states with a specific focus on areas such as youth livelihoods, youth empowerment and violence prevention to draw together and communicate key lessons. Possible avenues to explore include the development of an online resource/knowledge center approach, which pulls together the results of research and key evidence with programming guidance, case studies, etc.²⁵ or lobbying for an existing resource center to include a section on youth (e.g., www.gsdr.org).
- **Commission or contribute to specific studies on areas related to youth livelihoods** (e.g., the impacts of emergency employment and cash-for-work programmes; how to support youth in the informal sector; and the links between youth livelihoods and broader post-conflict recovery and peace building approaches).

²⁵ Examples from different sectoral areas (which vary in their exact objectives and quality) include the Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and Girls (<http://www.endvawnow.org/>), the Berghof Handbook on Conflict Transformation (<http://www.berghof-handbook.net/>), and The Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (<http://www.alnap.org/>).

- **Continue to improve support and capacity building for local youth networks and associations** to enable them to better advocate for youth interests vis-à-vis their own national governments and at the community level.

