

VISION FOR VULNERABLE YOUTH INITIATIVE (VVYI) PHASE II ENDLINE EVALUATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vision for Vulnerable Youth Initiative is a Barret Family Foundation (BFF) funded project operational since 2017, implemented by World Vision Canada in collaboration with seven World Vision country offices namely: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Peru. The central objective of the Youth Ready-VVYI was to overcome obstacles hindering young individuals from pursuing education, obtaining employment, and establishing sustainable entrepreneurial ventures. During the phase II (October 2019 to Sept. 2023) of VVYI program, a total of nearly 140,000 youth benefited from the project among which 11,000 (62% Female) are direct beneficiaries in 7-countries. During this period, 1,362 youth found employment, 4,789 resumed their education and 2,078 started their own businesses. These figures excluded the number of youths who reached through other funding sources.

In-depth endline evaluation was conducted by employing mixed survey methodology using Kobocollect Computer Assisted Personnel Interview. Data is collected from 2,934 (1,610 youth, 1,099 parents, 104 community leaders, and 121 local partner) respondents living in 7 Latin America countries. The gender distribution across all survey individual maintained at 50% representation of women and young girls, underscoring the project's commitment to reaching the most vulnerable individuals in among the project beneficiaries, to learn how the project has equally benefited the vulnerable young girls. The three key evaluation analysis results are:

A. POSITIVE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

The positive and sustainable impact of the project on the well-being of youth in the implementation area is clear. The vast majority of respondents, including 79% of youth, 78% of parents, 84% of community leaders, and 87% of local implementers, express agreement, or strong agreement that the project has positively influenced their economic situations. The findings are well-aligned with the program's primary intermediate outcome "1100 Female and male adolescents and young people facing multiple forms of vulnerabilities access opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship and educational services".

Similarly, a significant number of survey participants recognized the program's influence on education within their community. About 88% of youth and adolescents, 87% of parents, 97% of community leaders, and 87% of local implementers affirmed that the program has facilitated the continuation of education for youth and adolescents who were school drop-out. Additionally, it has established platforms that enable youth to engage in community project design and participate in decision-making processes.

In response to a question on major benefits of the YR project, 13.2% of the surveyed youth and adolescents reported the project has enhanced access to education. Additionally, 38.9% received employment training, leading to improved economic situations. Furthermore, 38.3% noted advancements in business skills, particularly in entrepreneurship, while almost 10% mentioned the reinforcement of life skills. The program is implemented in a participatory manner, ensuring that all actors share common responsibility in shaping youth and adolescent life, including parents and caregivers (mothers, fathers, and/or guardians); community leaders; and local project implementing partners.

B. THE PROJECT REDUCED ACCESS GAP FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

The project has contributed to narrowing the gender and disability induced gap in accessing resources and enhanced participation and decision making. Youth Ready program provided intervention aiming advancing gender equality and social inclusion within the community. Almost 80% of youth and adolescents observed a favorable shift in narrowing gender gaps and promoting social inclusion (GESI) in the community. Establishment of youth networks and platforms improved service accessibility and empowered youth, especially girls and youth with disabilities (YWDs), to express their perspectives and meaningfully participate in community dialogue. Notably, youth with disabilities actively participated in decision-making through networks established by the program. The endline evaluation survey emphasized the program's positive impact on enhancing gender equality, social inclusion, and human rights. Moreover, 97% of youths recognize its constructive contributions toward creating productive self-aware citizens. Additionally, 79% youth, 76% of parents and 76% of community leaders witnessed the program's endeavors in creating more opportunities for youth with disabilities, ultimately enhancing their access to services. The acknowledgment of the program's positive influence on GESI resonated among parents, community leaders, and local partners.

C. REASONS OF ATTRITION IN THE PROGRAM

Several factors contributed to the discontinuation of program participation by the youth and adolescents. A survey conducted among youth who left the program before completion shed light on key challenges and barriers towards successful completion. The top three factors include: i. program participation requirements (such as the need for government identification, supporting letters from local authorities, and distance to registration sites); ii. Resumption of employment to fulfill family economic needs after they have enrolled in YR program; and iii. Overall economic situation (including lack of money for transportation). The evaluation indicates that young girls and women are more prone to dropping out of the program. Additionally, it is highlighted that over 75% of dropouts occur before reaching module 2. Specifically, there is a higher likelihood of discontinuation during the first and second modules, particularly in the stages of "Who I am" (42%) and "Ready for employment" (26%), with an additional 20% dropping out occurring during the third module. Women and girls with Children under 5 years of age are more likely to drop-out compared to males, for every man who opts to discontinue the program, two women make a similar choice.

In conclusion, the project has achieved its intended goals of improving well-being for youth and adolescent, and their families; creating enabling environment for enhanced access to services such as employment, education, and business opportunities besides social, mental and emotional supports; and improved youth participation and decision making. The project contributed to sustainable local development agenda by working hands-on-hands with local community-based organizations, faith organizations, private sector actors, local implementing partners and government institutions.