

Youth Development Programme, Uganda

Report about the Second Project Visit (mid-term evaluation)
for the Jacobs Foundation

as deliverable for the mandate

"Evaluation of the new Livelihood programme
in W&E Africa mandate"

submitted by

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List of Abbreviations

DC	Depot Committee
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice
GHA	Gender Household Approach
HRNS	Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung
JF	Jacobs Foundation
MFI	Micro-Finance Institution
PO	Producer Organization
VSLA	Village Saving & Loan As- sociation
YDP	Youth Development Project
VTC	Vocational Training Center
YFFS	Youth Farmer Field School
YSTC	Youth Steering Committee

0. Introduction

This second project visit from August 31 to September 9, 2014 had the following objectives:

1. Review the intervention logic by comparing what was originally planned with what has been implemented,
2. Assess the progress of the project by looking at intended and unintended outcomes as well as at activities and factors that have contributed to the them,
3. Refine the instruments for measuring results to ensure that monitoring will yield reliable and valid data for the evaluation at the end of the project.

Reviews and evaluations can be used for accountability and learning purposes or in other words for proving and improving.

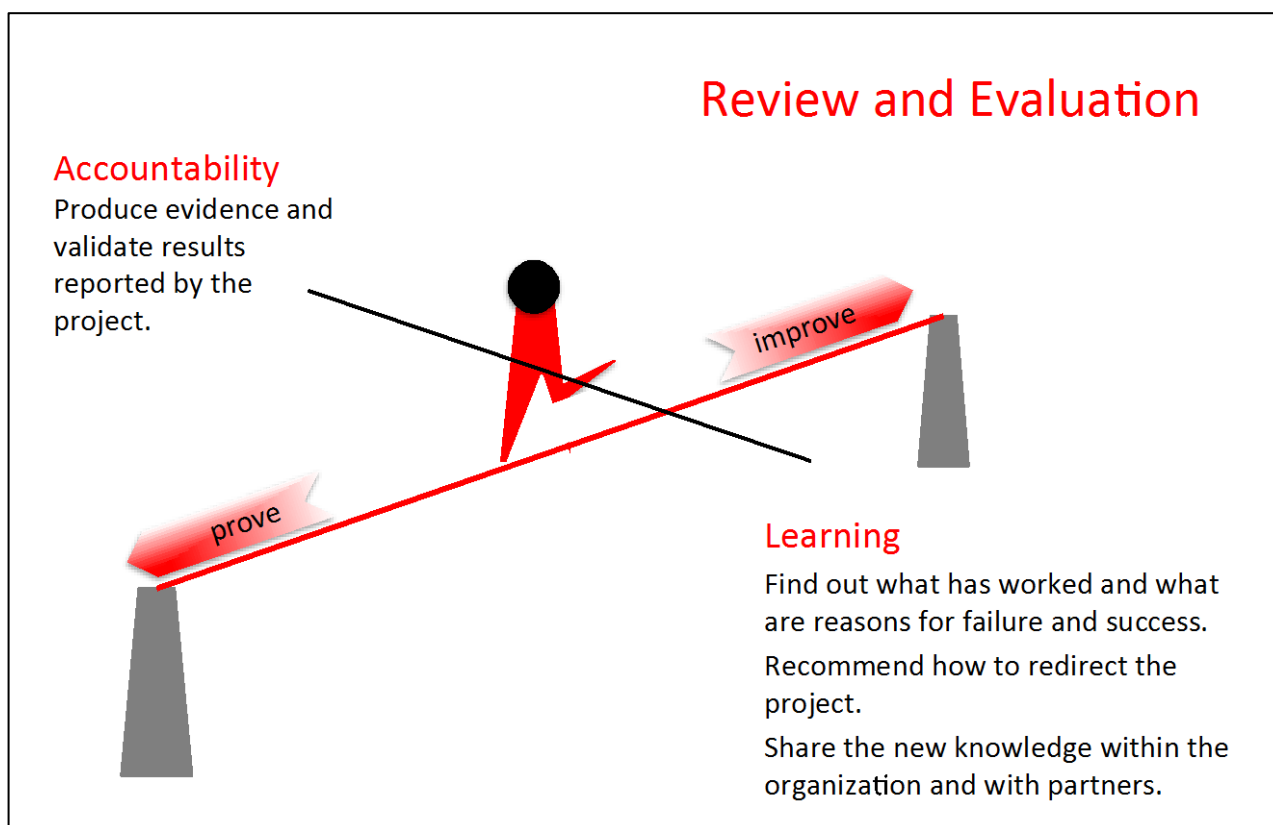


Illustration 1: Purposes of Evaluations

This mid-term review was designed primarily as a learning exercise. The aim is to find out what has worked so far, why it has worked and what to adjust. In a bit more than a year from now, the final evaluation should provide as much factual evidence as possible backed by numbers from tracer studies and quantitative parts of the result measurement framework and the yearly progress reports.

The agenda proposed by HRNS helped to gain a fairly good insight into the development of the project, because the evaluation consultant could look at it at different locations from different perspectives. He was able to ask and discuss each question at different places with different actors and thus was able to triangulate the information given.

Agenda:

- Sept. 1: Agreement on the agenda, review of the current situation of the project and conducting a stakeholder analysis
- Sept. 2 – 4: Field visits to different locations of three out of four Depot Committees (DC) in Mityana¹. In each DC we had a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with DC board members and Youth Farmer Field School (YFFS) facilitators as well as a FGD with participants of the YFFS. Additionally, we visited various demonstration plots and interviewed graduates from VTC St. Teresa and change agents (couples promoting the gender household approach).
- Sept. 5: Discussion of the findings and primary conclusions as well as adaptation of the result chain (colleagues from Jacobs Foundation joined from Sept 5-10)
- Sept. 6: Drafting of the report
- Sept. 8: Verification of findings in a workshop with field staff from Mityana, debriefing and discussion of the conclusions and recommendations
- Sept. 9: Report writing

This report is the fruit of discussions and exchange among many persons involved in the project:

- HRNS and YPD staff
- Jacobs Foundation staff who joined on September 5
- Countless youth, women and men in the project area: Members of DC/YSTC, facilitators, change agents and, last but not least, several groups of people who in Mityana are called “young blood”. We talked in offices, under trees and on demonstration plots.

I would like to express my gratitude to all of them for a most interesting and productive project visit. I have learned a lot about the significance of project ownership, extension as a process of learning and organizational development as well as the power of a smart approach to gender issues.

New or renewed documents that resulted from this cooperation are:

1. Updated Result Chain²
2. Stakeholder Analysis³

This report has the following structure:

1. Discussion of the approach
2. Vocational Skills Training – findings and conclusions
3. Youth Farmer Field Schools – finding and conclusions
4. Recommendations for Project Implementation
5. Lessons learnt so far and relevant topics (questions, hypotheses) for the final evaluation

1. Discussion of the Approach

Result Chains

Project plans are always hypothetical constructs about the future and how we intend to intervene in order to bring about the envisaged changes. Result Chains are tools for depicting intervention logic. Therefore we compare the original Result Chain (March 2013) with the Result Chain (September 2014) that depicts what at present is happening in the project area. The two “snapshots” illustrate quite well how much has changed within the 18 months between the two evaluation project visits. What looks like a most astonishing leap forward for the consultant might have been a steady development for those who implement the project.

¹ Detailed program in annex 1

² See page 4

³ See page 6

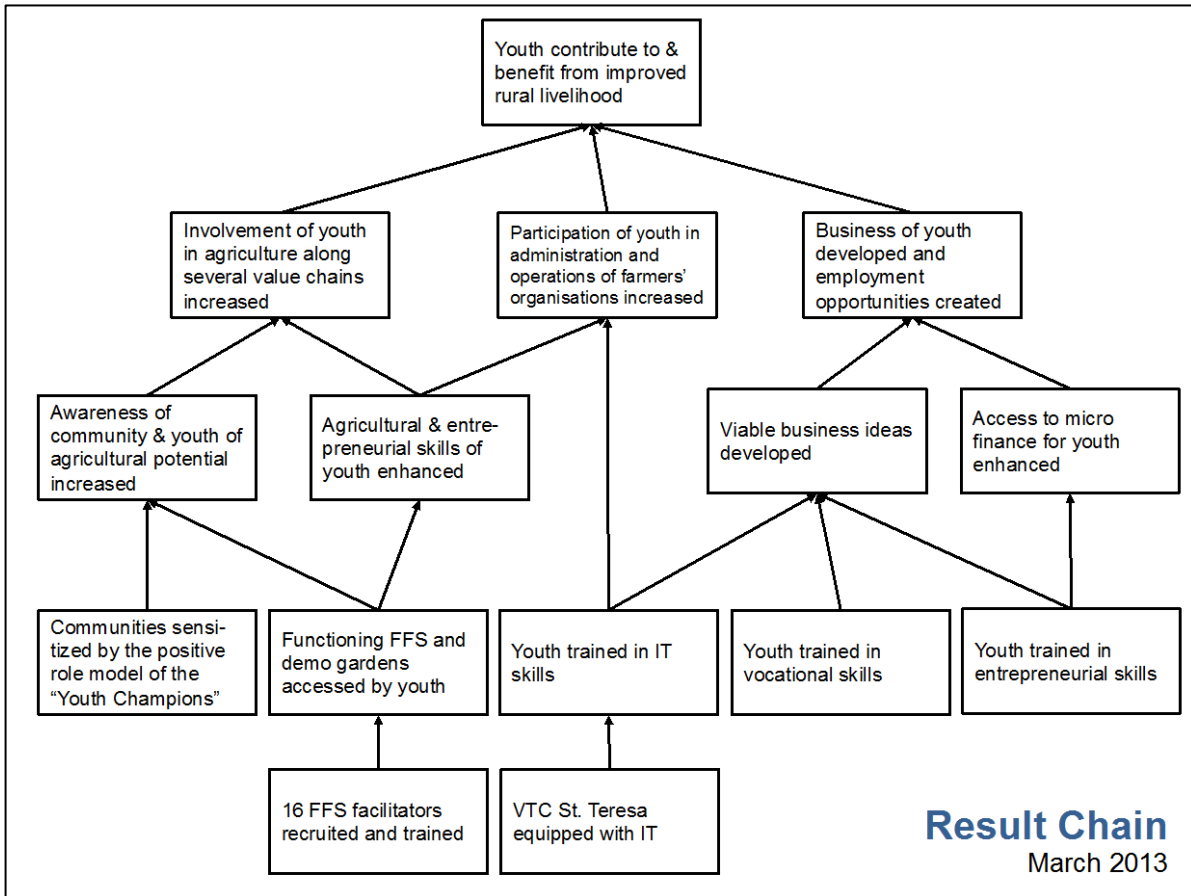


Illustration 2: Result Chain March 2013

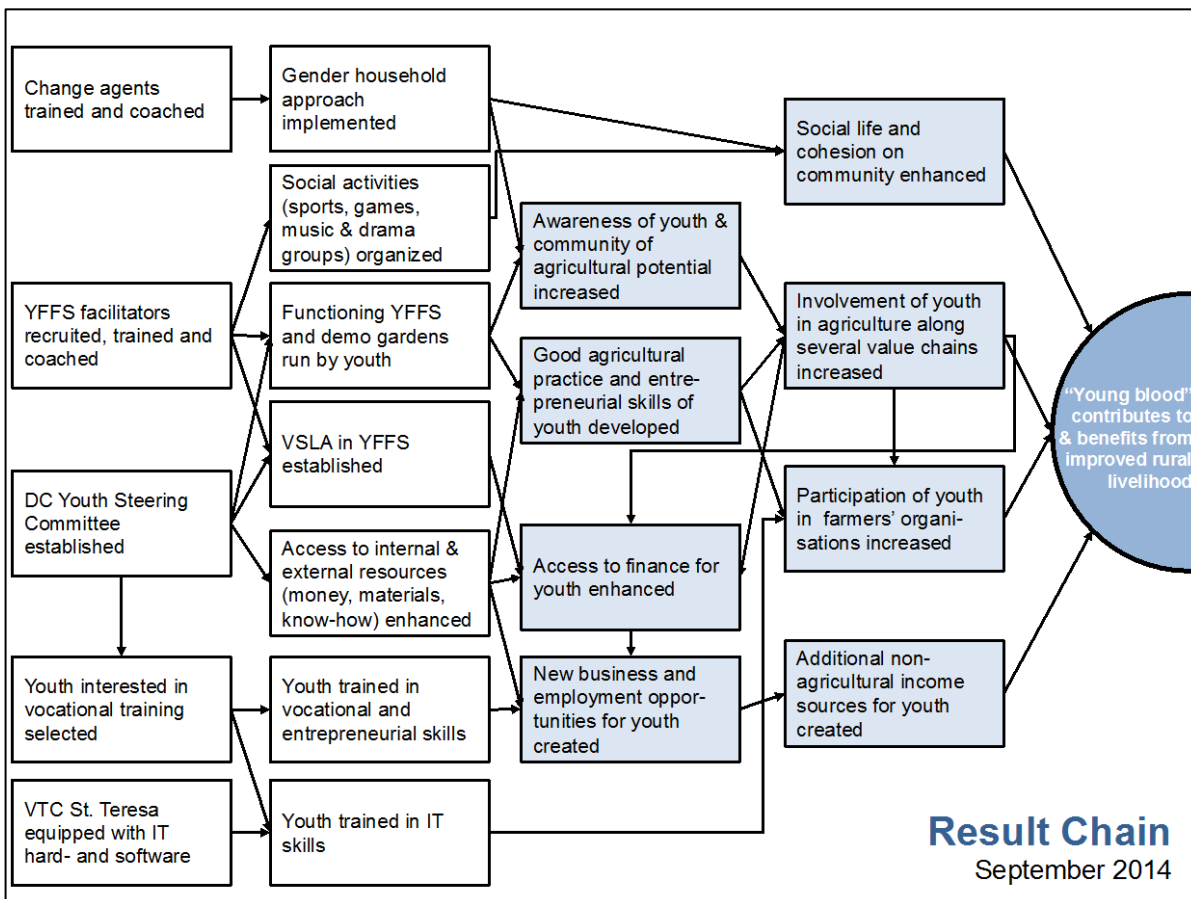
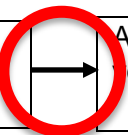


Illustration 3: Result Chain September 2014

As it can be seen easily, the new result chain did not only change its direction, but also has become more complex. In the two columns at the left side new cards describing activities were added, which result in changes in the columns at the right side. The impacts statement at the far right remains the same with a small but significant exception: The term “youth” is replaced by “young blood”. As discussed in the first report, the Western concept of youth as a distinct phase of life does not exist in Mityana (similar to other African regions and countries). Either you are married and an adult or unmarried and a child. At the beginning of the project, the notion was that unmarried young women and men would be the target group. In reality the members of the Youth Farmer Field Schools (YFFS) are considerably older than expected and many of them are married and run their own household. The age range is between 15 and 40 years, most of them in their twenties or thirties.

At this point it is also necessary to shed some light on two activities (Cards) and one link between activities (arrow) that were added or changed. Further significant changes will be discussed in detail in the chapters 2 and 3:

DC Youth Steering Committees (YSTC) established	With the creation of the YSTC the DCs show a high degree of ownership. They become the gate-keepers for organisations that wish to become partners and support and collaborate with the YFFS.
Social life and cohesion enhanced	Adults and youths alike are surprised by the changes that have been happening in the social life of the community, and the increased cohesion. Although the training in good agricultural practices (GAP) remains their core business, the YFFSs have diversified their actions: Social activities like sports, games and drama groups increase social cohesion. The establishment of Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA) strongly reinforces this cohesion. The gender household approach with its change agents, who model appropriate cooperation and interpersonal relationship at home, is another enabling factor.

Involvement of youth in agriculture along value chains increased		Access to finance for youth enhanced	The outcomes of the training at VTC St. Teresa in terms of gainful non-agricultural occupations are below expectations. Due to the good agricultural practices (GAP) learned in the YFFSs, farming seems to be more attractive than working in the trades. Everybody is involved in agriculture, at least part-time, because it brings quick returns, which in some cases can be invested in tools for starting a business. One graduate stated explicitly: First I make money by cultivating my plot and then will set up my business.
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Although nobody mentioned it explicitly, another quite significant change was made: The project has changed its name from “youth and education project” to “youth development project”. Seemingly education has triggered development in a broader sense.

Stakeholders

Without going into details, the two stakeholder analyses also show a considerable increase of partners who have or would like to have some stakes in this project. The number and quality of linkages to other organisations can be good measures for the reputation of organisations because success attracts “friends” who want to be part of the successful experience and therefore contribute to it. Like the roots of a tree, such linkages provide stability as long as the organisation stays focused and does not divert from its purpose due to tempting opportunities.

Stakeholder Analysis

March 2013

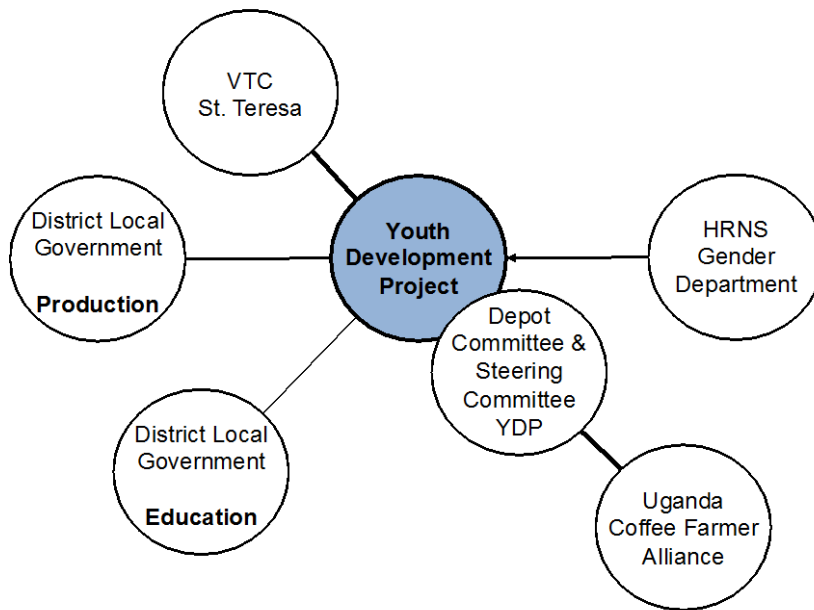


Illustration 4: Stakeholder Analysis March 2013

Stakeholder Analysis

September 2014

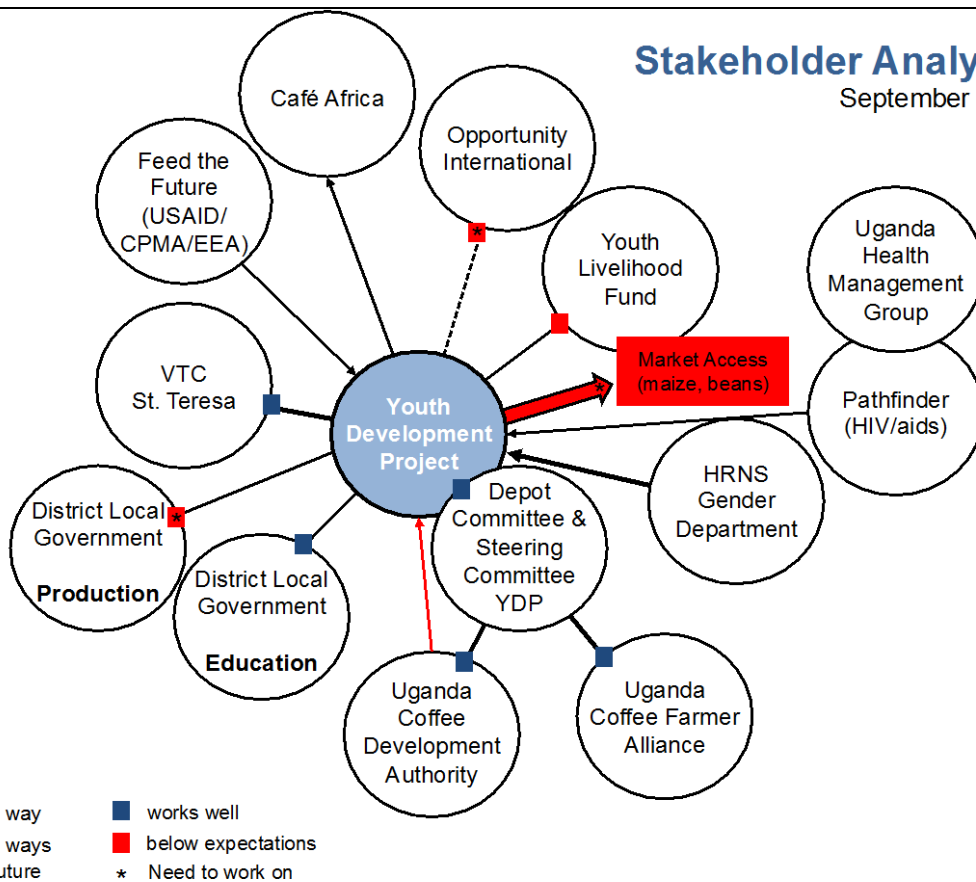


Illustration 5: Stakeholder Analysis September 2014

Internal Actors

To bring about the envisaged changes, the project staff trains and works with young women and men who take over defined responsibilities for activating their peers: YFFS facilitators, change agents, positive deviants and “youth champions”/“advocates”. Their duties are listed in the illustration below. All of them work without pay, except the 16 YFFS facilitators who get modest “stipends” and allowances.

Without any doubt, the facilitators play a key role in setting up and running the YFFS and they are the ones who spend most time on their duties. We also might say that they are the ones that benefit most: They get training in agriculture and YFFS related topics, learn to coordinate groups and to facilitate group processes, receive money for their duties and proceeds from the demo plots. All these together are ingredients and also good prerequisites for taking over a leadership role in a near future.

The YSTC is an entity that consists of members of the DC Board and was introduced during project implementation in order to have clearly identified partners within the DCs for the project staff. It belongs neither to the project structure nor to the internal actors because as representatives of the DC they have certain institutional power. Their key function is to supervise the work of the facilitators. They also have the power to propose the dismissal of YFFS facilitators who do not fulfil their duties.

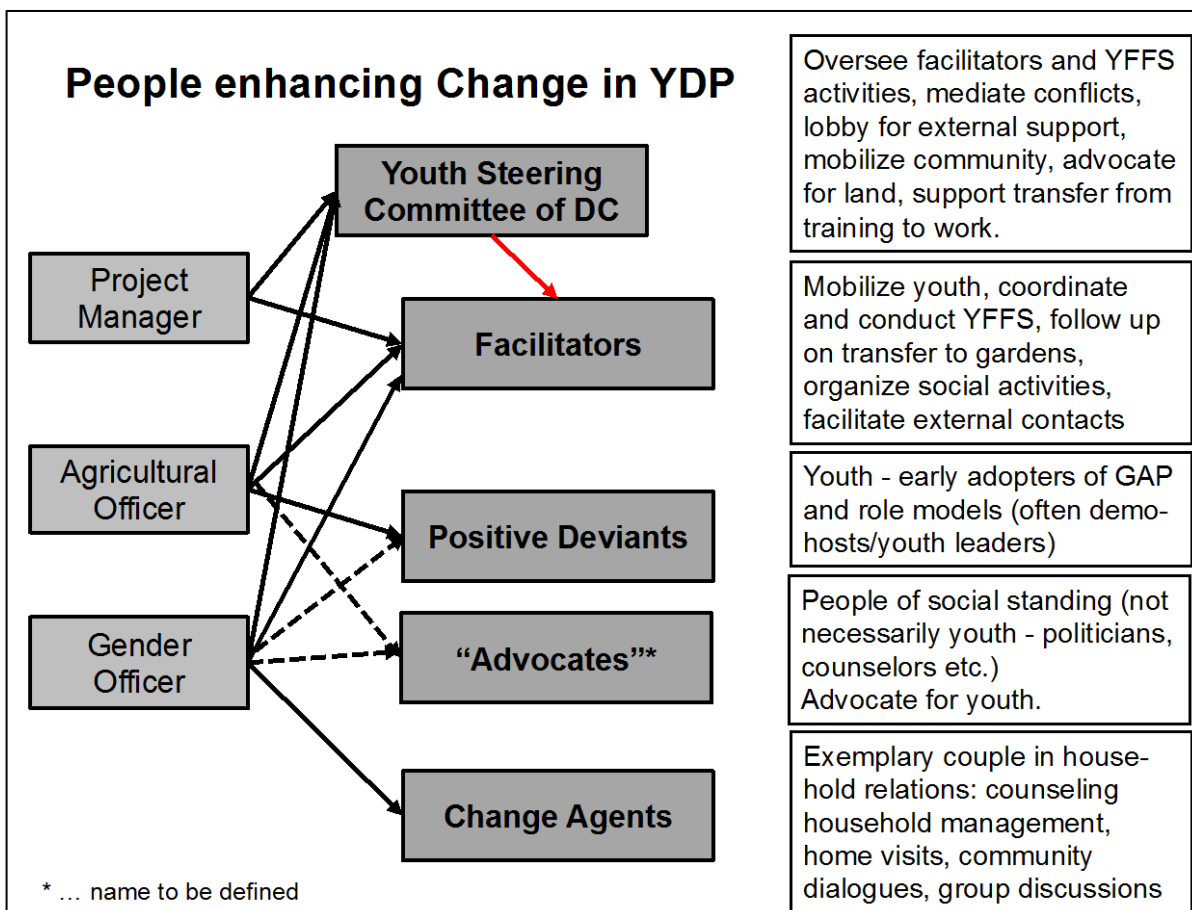


Illustration 6: Actors and their duties

The facilitators and change agents are the key players in the project set-up. They are the main partners of the gender and agricultural advisors since they are trained by them and act as multipliers in an approach that is heavily based on peer-education – “young blood” learns from “young blood”.

Teaching works best when you can draw from a wealth of knowledge. The change agents and facilitators are motivated individuals and couples from the village with limited skills and knowledge

despite of the prior training. Therefore it is crucial that the project officers are experts in their subjects. They must be able to train and coach the multipliers. Moreover, they are the back-up or safety net of their direct partners that is needed at the beginning of such an undertaking. For instance the agricultural officer must be capable to give technical advice on the demo plots and in the gardens of the participants of YFFS in order to ensure satisfactory yields - and success. What would have happened if the participants of YFFS had got low yields on several demo plots despite all the effort made by the young women and men?

2. Vocational Skills Training – Findings and Conclusions

The following findings are the result of an interview with the director of St. Teresa and talks with several graduates of the first batch and one student of the second batch. The visit to St. Teresa was short because the students were on holidays.

According to the director, the YDP had several positive outcomes for St. Teresa:

- The number of students from the project area, who are financed by their parents (i.e. not by the project), has increased.
- Visiting parents buy products from the carpentry shop.
- Students from all trades can take optional IT courses (since the project funded IT equipment for the center).
- The photocopier funded by the project allows the students to get copies of important documents and provides income for the school.

The project trains a number of two times 40 young women and men in different trades. The first batch finished in November 2013. The question why not more than half of the graduates were able to make a successful transition from training to work and to gainful employment was discussed in several occasions.

- a. At St. Teresa, the eight months training is usually complemented with an apprenticeship in a business. This second step is not part of the mandate of YDP and therefore no money is available for food and lodging. Further, St. Theresa and YDP were afraid that a longer stay far from the village would detach them from their communities.
- b. The lack of tools and equipment was mentioned as a second drawback, because the envisaged starter kits were not handed out and the graduates do not have the money for such initial investments. Those who found employment receive salaries that do not allow saving money for future investments. The kits were not handed out, because as long as people do not know what they want to produce, it is difficult to determine which tools they need. Based on negative experiences of St. Theresa, YDP was afraid that some young women and men would sell the tools.
- c. The YSTC that should help the returning graduates to find jobs or to found businesses may lack experience and innovative ideas in this field (they are all coffee farmers!) In this regard they seem to be less effective than expected, and it might be necessary to bring in fresh ideas from outside.
- d. The YFFSs prove that Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) are profitable. Their success increases the attractiveness of farming and decreases the urgency to make a living from something else. It is rather the other way round: Farming provides the financial resources for the required minimal initial investment. It is not surprising that all graduates participate in YFFS and - in doing so - have at least one foot in agriculture.
- e. According to two participants interviewed and one CEO of a DC, the IT Training provided at St. Theresa worked out well in terms of competencies. Effects can be seen at the level of DC administrations even where there are neither computer nor electrical power available. Customer or member data are handled well – on paper. As currently in some parts of the district power lines are installed, the availability of computers is a question of time.
The IT graduates from Miseebe do farming and those from Babumbungu are volunteering at the DC (without pay). The same applies to one of Kalangaalo, whereas the other one is working in a clinic. She is reported to manage the records. In Manyi one IT graduate is temporarily employed

in a Government program registering people for the national identity card. The other one does farming and brick making with the aim of buying a computer, printer and photocopier.

Despite these currently not overwhelming findings it is too early to call the component vocational training a failure. According to the director, the second batch arrived at St. Teresa well informed about what to expect and adapted quickly. Seemingly, they have clearer ideas about what they want to achieve - and maybe will be more determined to take advantage of this opportunity.

Furthermore, the selection of project participants (YFFS and St. Theresa students) was done by DCs. Most probably only youth whose parents have a link to the DC, i.e. are coffee growers, are selected. Potentially, these youth are those with easier access to land and thus maybe less interested in starting up a business. Overall, the selection criteria and process are not clear.

A final remark: The vocational training for 80 young women and men intended to give them a second option to agriculture. Agriculture had been very unpopular among young villagers 18 months ago. To what extent they will make use of this second option is their decision. This has to be respected – especially as the image of professional farming as a gainful activity and good option for a decent livelihood has improved.

Given this situation, the first tracer study that was scheduled for June 2014, following up on the graduates from St. Theresa was not done. YDP knows the whereabouts of all graduates and thus at this early stage a tracer study was deemed unnecessary.⁴

3. Youth Farmer Field Schools – Findings and Conclusions

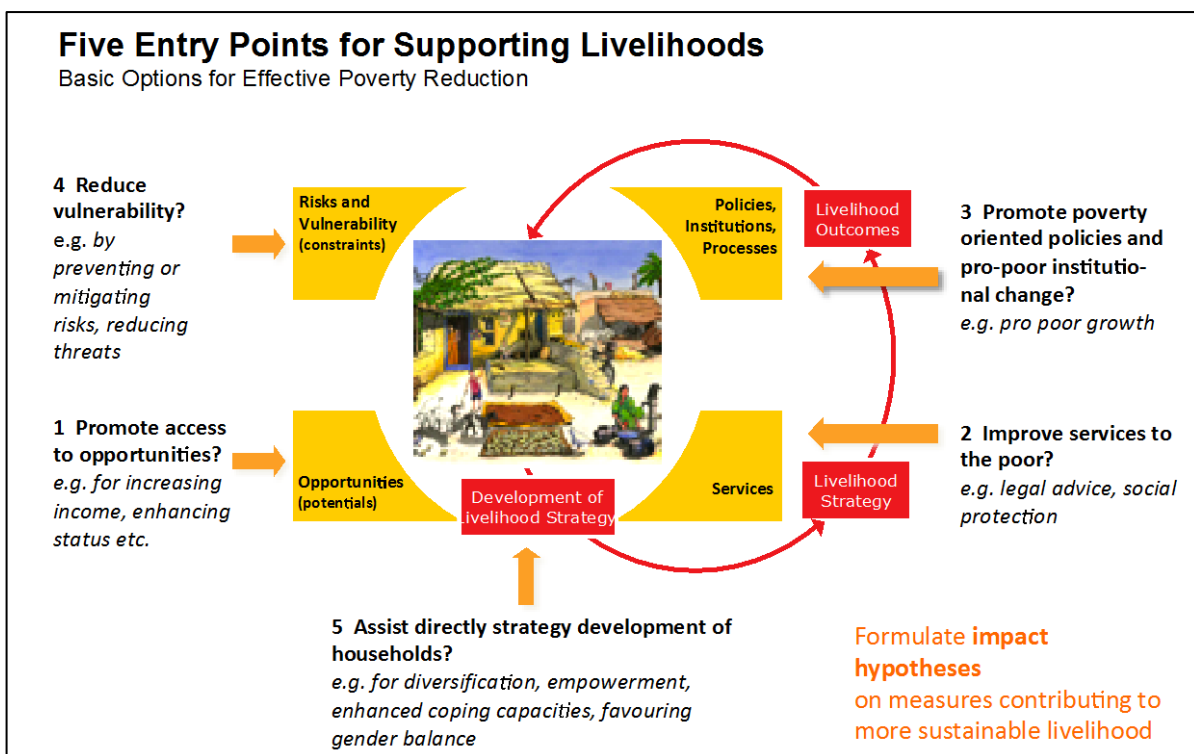


Illustration 7: Livelihood Concept (Högger, Baumgartner)

The findings and conclusions presented in this chapter are the result of FGDs with DC Board members, YFFS facilitators, change agents, positive deviants and members of the YFFS as well as visits to demonstration plots and model gardens in three different DCs. The analysis below was

⁴ see annex 2

done at the end of the project visit in a workshop with project staff and personnel of HRNS and the Jacobs Foundation. It is structured according to the Sustainable Livelihood Concept used at NADEL. In a first step we look at the input and activity side, in a second step we analyse the reported changes.

As stated in chapter 1, the project has become a more complex undertaking than originally thought. This is due to the addition of new activities. In the first visit, the consultant applied the same model used to identify the entry points of the project intervention (see illustration below). The three (out of five) entry points were: Opportunities (1), services (2) and development of livelihood strategy (5). 18 months later, we see that the project uses all entry points, but of course not in the same intensity.⁵

In a workshop with the project staff, the activities were listed and classified according to the entry points. Note that within each entry point the order of the activities listed corresponds with their present relevance.

1. Access to opportunities

- Demo plots as learning venues and means for income generation for youth;
- Facilitation of access to land for cultivation
- Exposure in agricultural shows for accessing market opportunities,
- Linkages to (external) service providers,
- Bulk marketing of produce through DC (currently coffee, in future also maize and beans);
- Establishment of agricultural services like spraying, nurseries;
- Access to vocational training as a means to diversify occupational options.

2. Improvement of services

- YFFS-training sessions, work on demo-plots and coaching in gardens of participants for transfer of skills;
- Drama shows (social activities) used as youth to youth education and enrichment of social life in the community;
- Creation of Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA) and access to external financial sources;
- Organization of visits to agricultural shows for gaining knowledge.

3. Promotion of pro-youth policies

Advocacy for more pro-youth policies by youth at district level.

4. Reduction of vulnerability

- YFFS - training on adaptation to climate fluctuations and protection of watersheds and slopes;
- Promotion of hygiene and safe health practices (eg. HIV/AIDS talks).

5. Development of livelihood strategy

- Implementation of gender household approach (GHA) with focus on joint planning and decisions making;
- Training of change agents for GHA.

The activities at the entry points 1, 2 (mainly YFFS) and 5 (gender household approach) remain the core of the project YDP. Some of the activities or activity lines are discussed further down in this report.

Part of the Sustainable Livelihood concept used at NADEL is the “mandala”. It depicts nine dimensions that are important for understanding the livelihood of people. In the workshop we used the

⁵ see annex 3: Five Entry Points for Supporting Livelihoods

mandala as a tool for analysing the changes that can be perceived so far and to which the project can claim some influence. The result is depicted in the illustration 8.

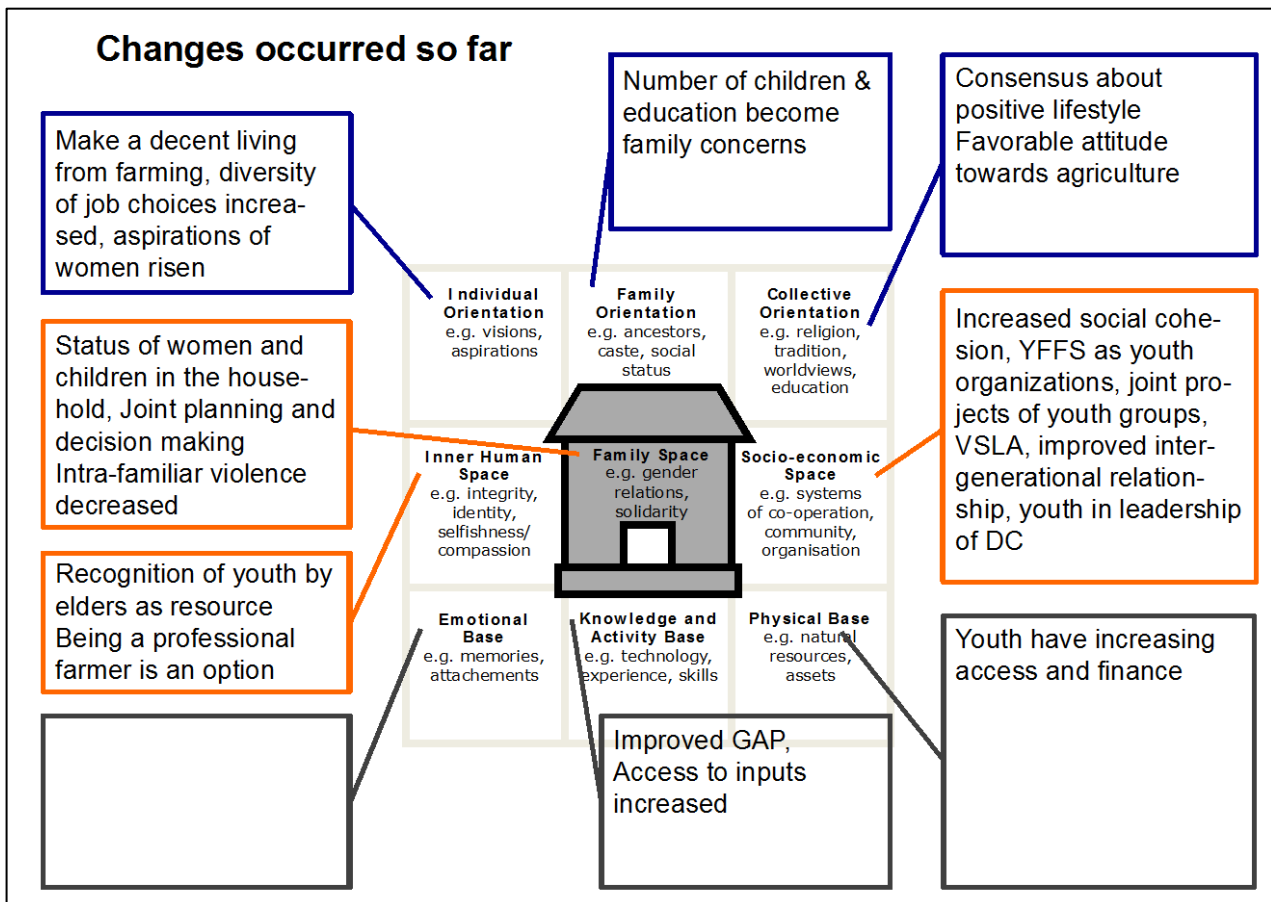


Illustration 8: Changes occurred so far

In this report we do not discuss all changes one by one, but we highlight a handful of the most relevant changes. Connecting changes to activities hopefully will increase the understanding of how the project activities have contributed to the changes perceived at individual, family and community level.

Everybody agrees that the project came in timely and exceeds the expectations by far. For the consultant it is most astonishing how issues that 18 months ago seemed to be hopelessly unresolvable have disappeared or are in the process of vanishing. Three of them are discussed in the section below.

A. Access to land

Lack of access to land was considered to be a major hindering factor for youth to engage in agriculture. Parents feared that their children would sell the land to make fast money and migrate to town. Therefore parents' promise to give or lend land to their children was defined as an entry requirement to the YFFS.

Although still not all young women and men can cultivate the size of land they would wish to cultivate, everybody has the chance to practice in their own garden what they have learned on the demo plots. Most receive land from their parents, others rent and some even bought land. The reasons for this change of perception are on the one hand that parents see how much their children produce, harvest and earn because of improved farming practices and on the other hand that the young people generate revenues for investing them in the acquisition of land. It goes without saying that people buying farmland and planting coffee are not planning to leave the village.

B. Attitudes towards agriculture

According to the elders, youth used to consider farming as an option only for those who were not able to do something else and better.

Obviously, the YFFS have convinced the participants that professional farming is based on sound technical knowledge and skills, which makes a decent living from farming feasible. Young people have learned that in rural communities farming applying GAP is a very good and easy – if not the best and easiest – way to earn good money within a short period of time. All of a sudden, professional farming has become an attractive option.

C. Image of youth

Last year, it was quite sad to listen to the members of the DCs when they talked about their youth. They painted a picture of inept individuals who were not only lazy, but in addition did steal their coffee to enjoy their lives. The idea that youth could become members of the DC and some of them could even serve as board members, was clearly discarded.

Today, board members talk about the youth as their future, who will eventually replace them. They see them as resources and (future) members of producer organizations and of the DC. In the DC of Kalangaalo, the female chairperson of the YFFS has become a recognized member of the DC Board.

What might have contributed to this change of perception?

The elder see...

- regular participation of youth in YFFS
- increased participation of women
- joint work on the demo plots
- higher yield on demo plots
- considerable income from the demo plots
- youth doing sports and games together
- youth performing drama shows

Interestingly, stealing of coffee was not mentioned even a single time, but played a prominent role in the drama that we saw on the second day in the field. The comedy intended to dramatize the dysfunctional family relations of the “past”.

As stated earlier in this report, the YFFS and the GHA are the core intervention strategies of YDP. Although we know that they interact and reinforce each other, in this chapter they are look at one after the other. This cannot replace a proper systematization and documentation of these two core approaches by the project YDP or HRNS.

YFFS – youth organization

The core element and duty of the YFFS is certainly providing agricultural training and practice. The YFFS are more than just temporary, local institutions for non-formal farmer training. Coordinated by a facilitator chosen by the DC, they seemingly have become the driving forces for all kinds of youth activities in the communities with strong effects on the social cohesion.

Several elements contribute to increased cooperation, mutual trust and accountability among the members of the group:

- In the absence of access to external funding, the YFFS encouraged the creation of VSLA. Who puts money into the VSLA has a natural interest to follow up the use of the money, because he/she wants the money back.
- Drama and music are appealing ways of getting known as groups. Moreover, theatre is entertaining and at the same time an effective method for making people and communities aware of issues and starting discussion about how to improve them. Songs and music are excellent means for passing on messages and educational content.
- Although the step from working together and having fun on a demo plot to doing sports and games is not overly big, it is significant.

- The YFFS are also organized youth groups with formal structures, in which democratic procedures can be practiced.
- The YFFS are suitable bodies for complimentary inputs that might be of interest to young people. They might be, but need not be related to agriculture.
- The YFFS sessions are a most suitable space for the change agents to discuss gender issues. The sessions are a natural link between the two project components.

Choice of crops of YFFS

The choice of the three seasonal crops for the demo gardens of the YFFS might be a crucial success factor that has contributed to improving the attitude towards agriculture and the image of the youth.

Adult perspective: On farms in Mityana, maize and beans are very common crops, which secure part of the daily diet. For instance in the case of maize, the YFFS introduced a new cultivation technique that increases yields and holds back the moisture of the soil for a longer period. The fact that young girls and boys do better than their experienced parents most probably was very surprising for the latter.

Youth perspective: Beans, maize and tomato are grown within a few months. The effect of GAP can be seen as the crops grow. Despite a certain fluctuation of the prices selling the produce is not overly complicated. High yields, especially outside the main harvest season, result in high benefits in terms of money. Youth learned very fast that with some effort and adequate technical skills and knowledge, agriculture might be a profitable business. Again and again they stated the importance of a professional approach to agriculture as the basis for a decent rural livelihood.

On some demonstration plots they tried out new crops like green pepper and cabbage. These two crops seem to have fewer acceptance in the market than tomatoes. Some youth reported that they have started growing coffee or plan to do so soon.

Grooming of future leaders

The YFFS facilitators who were selected by the DCs play a very active role in the development of the project activities, coordinating the YFFS meetings, the work on the demo plot and coaching participants in their gardens. In return they were trained and are coached by project advisors. So they are the first ones who get access to new information and technology. The role of facilitators includes activities like organizing groups, chairing meetings, speaking in front of a group and delivering training. These are skills that successful leaders must have. Factoring in that the facilitators get trained AND receive a modest compensation plus allowances for their work, one might say that they are the persons who benefit most.

Gender Household Approach

GHA seems to work as a suitable intervention in the development of livelihood strategies. It focuses on joint planning and decision-making regarding the distribution of workload and resources at household level. The GHA promotes better relation between husband and wife, making her and the children partners of the "head of the family". The FGDs and interviews with change agents showed that this joint planning is not limited to everyday decisions but the families develop ideas and plans for a medium term future regarding agriculture, housing and acquisition of tools for farming and the household. Education of the children is as much a concern as the number of children the couples plan to have.

In the FGD with women only, a remarkable topic was brought up. The joint planning of the use of the income is a big step forward for the partnership, the position of women in the family and family life as a whole. But this does not necessarily mean that men and women are at the same level. Transparency in money matters has overall increased – with consequences for men and women alike. Although now they generally have a say in how the money is used and appreciate this change, a few women stated that their husbands were still dominating the decision about how they spent their own money. Therefore, they would like to have some money that belongs exclusively to them and that they can spend as they like - for instance for helping their parents or family members.

A remarkable change with possible far reaching consequences for the position of women in the household is the fact that some women now have their own coffee garden. In a long-term perspective, this will give them a stable and predictable income and reduces their dependency on their husbands. This change we could attribute to the couple seminars, because the YFFS do not deal with coffee growing.

The puzzling increase of female participation in the YFFS from one fifth to over one third of the participants cannot completely be explained by the effect of the project activities regarding gender, because the two components were started more or less in parallel. It would be interesting to know more about what has triggered this change. In any case it is noteworthy how openly and self-confidently women talked in the FGDs – also about rather private issues like difficulties in their partnership. And they even did it in the presence of their husbands. Have women always been as outspoken as they were in these interviews and discussions with the foreign guest?

Access to financial resources

Access to finance is key to agricultural production. Despite quite some progress, lack of finance remains a bottleneck. Linking youth to micro finance organisations and banks is taking longer than desired. The talks with Opportunity International are on-going, but have not gone very far yet and the flow of money is still something to wait for. Some youth farmer groups who presented their business project through their DC received money from the Livelihood Fund of the Government. It is suspected that this is a one-time initiative, which will not lead to a steady in-flow of money. Interestingly, many YFFS established a VSLA – a self-help organisation for saving and lending. Although they evolved without being planned, the participation in a VSLA might be the best possible start for becoming literate in financial matters: Saving as starting point and backbone of the financial management. The sequence is right: first saving, second borrowing. In Nabumbugu four persons responded to the question what they used the money for: One person established a small piggery, a second used it for planting coffee, the third for paying school fees and the fourth for opening a day care center for children.

The VSLAs are more than just an issue of money. Young people put their scarce money together to make it circulate for the benefit of their peers. Without any doubt this kind of solidarity strengthens social cohesion: contributing to and profiting from a common pot of money makes individual dreams come true.

4. Recommendations for Project Implementation

R1 Ownership

The DCs created specific Steering Committees for overseeing and enhancing youth activities. In the stakeholder analysis we see an overlap of the project with these steering committees. In the remaining time this overlap should augment and the DC through the YSTC should increasingly take care of and manage the links to other stakeholders.

R2 Transition from vocational training to work

Although female graduates seem to manage more successfully the transition from training to the world of work, YDP should support the YSTC/DCs to develop viable business ideas and plans for implementing them. This includes the development of products and services in demand at village level, access to suitable venues for setting up food stalls or workshops as well as access to finance for first modest investments in sewing machines or cooking equipment. Both trades have the advantage that a business can be started with a relatively small investment and they do not depend on the availability of electrical power.

In the case of most male graduates, setting up own businesses at village level is more complicated. Carpentry as well as construction requires quite some investment. Moreover, input products like retention walls or furniture are in most cases also more expensive. A minimal quality is critical already right from the beginning. The first step would be finding jobs or apprenticeships where

graduates can further practice their vocational skills and acquire practical entrepreneurial skills. A second step could be developing concrete business ideas and then coaching them during the set-up of the business and in the first implementation phase.

The availability of finance is crucial, but as we can see already now, part of the initial investment can be earned by farming.

In a bit more than a month's time, the second batch graduates and goes back home. It is urgent to prepare for their return. Maybe graduates of the first and second batch from the same community can be teamed up.

R3 IT and DC management

Seemingly the IT training worked and at least in some parts of the project rural electrification is progressing. But it would be not realistic to expect a stable power supply in the near future. The DC of Kalangaalo is using a smart phone for recording and storing data. Due to the size of the display tablet computers with solar panels for charging the batteries might be a more practical solution. Maybe YDP or HRNS could start experimenting with this technology.

R4 Selection of crops

The decision to plant maize, beans and tomatoes in the YFFS seems to be very appropriate and an important success factor. Within a few months the results in terms of yields and money could be seen and felt in the pocket. The YFFS should stay with these three crops, because two of them are part of the staple food. Of course the project can also encourage and support venturesome young women and men with technical advice who want to try alternative crops. Maybe YFFS could also have some sessions on the demonstration plots of the adult farmer field school, which are coffee gardens mainly, because on the long run coffee growing will remain the economic backbone of the people of Mityana.

R5 Bulk marketing

Tomatoes are highly perishable and therefore need short access channels to the market whereas maize and beans can be stored for delaying the selling until the prices go up after the end of the main harvest. The DCs have a lot of experience with bulk marketing of coffee. Why should they not be able to do the same with maize and beans? Most probably the required investments in infrastructure would pay off soon. Moreover, the DCs could speed up the process of integrating young people into their organisations

R6 Agricultural services

Training in agricultural service jobs has not yet progressed. Two areas of agricultural services are highly promising and should be prioritised for the last year of YPD:

Spraying is a recurrent activity in the coffee garden that needs specialized skills and knowledge as well as specific equipment and chemicals. This means that spraying fulfils all requisites required to offer it to farmers as a service they are ready to pay for.

Nurseries have the potential for becoming a profitable business, because the Ugandan Coffee Authority as well as politicians (in election times) distribute seedlings in great quantities. Ugandan policies allow only the use of certified seedlings. It seems to be relatively easy to obtain the licence for producing such certified seedlings. An advantage of setting up a nursery is that it requires relatively small plots. On the plot with a good cover of trees the investment for setting up a nursery is relatively modest.

R7 – Expertise in agriculture

At the moment YDP and its advisor for agriculture even out the absence of a competent extension service in Mityana. We cannot expect that this situation will improve, because with the appointment of ex-soldiers for this duty the posts are filled with people with little relevant expertise. A way out might be looking for possible connections to agricultural research stations. They might be interest-

ed in on-farm trials and thereby get involved in the area. YDP could initiate this cooperation but for sustainability reason YDP should do it in close cooperation with the DCs. Regardless their age, all farmers could benefit from such a cooperation.

R8 Access to finance

Despite the praiseworthy establishment of the VSLAs, the project should go on pushing and discussing possible cooperation with a number of possible micro-finance institutions. The lending capacity of the VSLAs is very limited regarding the amounts of loans and the duration.

Although it might have speeded up access to finance, the decision of HRNS not to simply handover a fund to a MFI with the mandate to use it for micro-loans is right. The project might share some of the risks by putting money into a guarantee fund of an MFI (actually this was the alternative idea for the use of the initial funds for “starter kits”), but without the banks taking a substantial share of the risk it will never become a sustainable business relation between the MFI and the young farmers.

Besides speeding up the process of establishing agreements with micro-finance institutions, it is important to start trainings in financial literacy, so as to prepare youth for accessing credit at a later stage. The Bank of Uganda provides a tool kit and a list of certified trainers on its webpage: <http://simplifymoney.co.ug/>. If YDP or HRNS do not feel competent in this field, it might be better to look for external expertise. Like in farming also in the field of micro-credits early successes are crucial to build up self-confidence and trust.

5. Lessons Learnt and Issues for the Final Evaluation

1. Life in rural areas of Mityana based on professional agriculture can have a future – also in the eyes of the involved youth.
2. YDP builds upon many years of cooperation between HRNS and the coffee farmers and their DCs that asked for this project. Certainly the trustful relationship between the farmers and HRNS is a success factor. How fast and well could such a youth project develop and progress without rooting in the positive experience of the elder generation?
3. The involvement and the strong ownership of the DCs is a necessary but not necessarily a sufficient condition for the sustained success of the project. Are YFFS and the GHA so successful because the older generation has undergone similar activities and changes before?
4. Technical expertise is indispensable. Facilitators need to be trained and coached well and have to be able to rely on sound technical advice in agricultural matters.
5. Model learning works. This is true in the case of YFFS with the positive deviants as well as in the case of the GHA with the change agents.
6. The positive results of the YFFS have changed the perceptions between the generations and in combination with the GHA also within families. For how long will these changes persist and how far will they go?
7. Seemingly, life in the communities has become more dynamic and young people engage with each other in meaningful activities like drama, music, sports and games.
8. Livelihood options in the villages are broadening. In contrast to the expectations at the beginning of the project, the diversification of income generation is most likely to start with agricultural services like spraying and nurseries and not with non-agricultural trades.
9. Gender inequity has decreased. But this does not mean that equity has been fully achieved or will be achieved by the end of the project. Experience shows that such profound behavioural changes take generations. Nevertheless at the end of the project the question is pertinent: How satisfied will young women and men be with the changes, which have occurred? How do “the most significant changes” look like?
10. Formerly “useless youth” are on the way to becoming respected members of the DCs. How many participants of the YFFS will become coffee producers and members of the DCs and how many will even take over responsibilities in the DC by becoming Board Members?

11. YDP invested quite some money in the training and coaching of the facilitators and change agents. Their constant exposure is a good “training” for taking over leadership duties at community also after the end of the project.
12. Success is attractive. Other organisations want to be part of the success by offering cooperation and support.

As explained in the introduction, this mid-term review was designed as a learning exercise to find out what works, why it works and what does not work. We can say that we have gained a better understanding of these questions. The questions regarding the number of people YDP worked for and how well it worked for them were not looked at and will be part of the final evaluation. In any case we should not forget to say that with 1'600 young women and men involved in YFFS and 80 individuals trained at St. Theresa, the outreach of YDP is far beyond a small experimental project.

Zurich, October 8, 2014