



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

Youth in Extension and Advisory Services: Guatemala

Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) Project

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Acronyms

4-H or 4-S	Extension Youth Development Program
AMER	Municipal Rural Extension Agencies
CADER	Rural Development Learning Centers
CONASAN	National Food Security and Nutrition Council
CONJUVE	Presidential Youth Council
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DICORER	Rural Extension National Coordinating Body
DLEC	Developing Local Extension Capacity
EAS	Extension and Advisory Services
EJR	National Rural Youth Strategy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FUDI	Foundation for Comprehensive Growth
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFRAS	Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
ICTA	Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology
MAGA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Nutrition
MEN	Ministry of Education NGO Nongovernmental Organization
PLANOCC	Food Security Plan for the Western Highlands
PYD	Positive Youth Development
SNER	National Rural Extension System
TCE	Tribal Colleges and Universities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WVG	World Vision Guatemala

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Background and Context

Approximately 88 percent of the world's 1.2 billion youth (ages 15-24 as defined by the UN) live in developing countries. By 2050, the global population of youth is projected to rise to 1.8 billion, with

35 percent of that estimated to live on the African continent. This presents a challenge to many developing countries, given the need to create economic opportunities for this growing segment of the population. According to the World Bank, even if countries had suitable conditions for growth and economic transformation, the job market in developing countries could not absorb the growing number of young people projected to become eligible for jobs. In addition to the youth bulge, meeting the growing global demand for food and nutrition also presents a challenge, with some estimates citing a need to increase food availability by 70-100 percent. At the same time, factors such as an increasingly globalized and connected world, higher global incomes, urbanization and widespread access to digital tools are creating new opportunities in agri-food systems for both youth and other rural actors. Tapping into the potential of youth and creating opportunities for them in agriculture, including in extension and advisory services (EAS), will be key to meeting global food and nutrition needs as well as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Feed the Future's Food Secure 2030 vision.

Governments, bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, private sector agri-food companies and educational institutions have all recognized and emphasized the importance of youth in the global economy, and especially farming and food systems, as a major driver of the economy and contributor to agricultural transformation. However, young people face many barriers within agriculture, such as access to land, finance, education, and adequate skills. Additionally, climate change, rural to urban migration trends, and increasing population pressures on land will make agriculture even more challenging in the future. Agricultural extension and advisory services present a unique opportunity to engage youth as both recipients and providers of these services.

Agricultural extension and advisory services present a unique opportunity to engage youth as both recipients and providers of these services. EAS has an important role to play in youth and leadership development throughout the education system, not just when young people enter the job market. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Feed the Future Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) to target Feed the Future countries to measurably improve extension programs, policies and services by creating locally-tailored, partnership-based solutions and by mobilizing active communities of practice to advocate for scaling proven approaches. The five-year (2016-2021) project is designed to diagnose, test and share best-fit solutions for agricultural extension systems and services across the Feed the Future countries. Led by Digital Green in partnership with Care International, the International Food Policy Research Institute and the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services, DLEC is an action-oriented, evidence-based learning project that generates evidence through diagnostic studies and engagement activities, which in turn are used as a catalyst for mobilizing global and country-level communities of practice to advocate for improved EAS. This report on youth in extension and advisory services in Rwanda is one such diagnostic study.

Purpose and Methodology

The overall objective of this youth in extension diagnostic study is to design an pilot engagement in Guatemala and one or two other Feed the Future countries to support and strengthen the inclusion of youth in extension – both as providers and recipients of extension services – as a mechanism to both improve the economic opportunities and livelihoods of youth and increase the effectiveness of

extension and advisory service systems. In Phase 1, DLEC engaged with USAID country missions that identified engaging youth in agricultural extension as a strategic priority for economic growth and investment. DLEC then identified several countries in which there is buy-in and support from USAID missions to conduct a diagnostic to develop concrete recommendations for a youth-focused engagement. These countries included Guatemala, Niger, and Rwanda.

For Phase 2, the output is this report. DLEC conducted a landscape analysis, employing a local systems approach and utilizing USAID's "5Rs Framework" (Gray et al., 2018) to analyze the *roles* of certain actors that form a network of *relationships* whose interactions depend on *resources* and produce *results* for youth in EAS. The process of transforming resources into results via interactions of system actors is governed by *rules*.

Methodologies for obtaining the information for this report included literature review, key informant interviews, and field and site visits to view programs and talk to stakeholders. Key informants included USAID country partners, government agencies, private sector and civil society that focus on youth in extension. USAID Mission representatives were interviewed to understand Mission priorities for current projects and the Mission country development cooperation strategy (CDCS) as they relate to youth engagement in extension and ongoing or planned programs addressing youth in extension. The report is not meant to give an account of all initiatives in youth and agricultural extension but rather to present a sample of such initiatives, including ones from all the main different types of actors: donor-funded projects, government agencies, educational institutions, international organizations, national and local NGOs, producer organizations and the private sector.

Finally, in Phase 3, DLEC will co-design and launch an engagement with the Guatemala Mission that is customized to the country contexts to meet the Mission's needs and DLEC's strategic objectives.

Introduction

Guatemala has the highest population in Central America, with an estimated 16.5 million people. Of those, 60 percent identify as Mestizos (mixed indigenous and European/Spanish - in local Spanish called Ladino) and 39 percent as pure Maya Indians. Guatemalans speak 23 distinct languages. Women make up 51 percent of the general population and 52 percent of the rural population. Guatemala has the highest fertility rate in Latin America at almost three children per women. This is due in part to high incidences of teen pregnancy and early marriage (30 percent of women marry by age 18) and will continue to skew the population distribution young.

Guatemala is a patriarchal and male-dominated society, characterized by the historical exclusion of indigenous populations in general and women in particular. Gender inequality gaps are present in all sectors and domains, with broad impacts on decision-making at the household and community level, political and social participation and leadership, access to assets and resources, and the distribution of domestic and reproductive work and time use (Landa Ugarte, Salazar, Quintana, & Herrera-Molina, 2018; Youth and Gender Justice Project, 2017).

As defined by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), youth is the period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence. The

youth population in Guatemala (defined as 8-24 years) is 55 percent, of which 55 percent are under 19, and 35 percent are under the age of 14 (CIA, 2019). Guatemala thus has very youthful demographics, with a significant bubble of young people set to enter the labor market every year. Some economists argue that changes in age structure mark the onset of a period in which the proportion of people in potentially productive ages grows steadily relative to the number of people in potentially unproductive (inactive) ages. They call this period the demographic dividend or demographic bonus. Whether valid or not, this is a limited window of opportunity which could be capitalized upon to educate a young demographic group. In contrast, if not acted upon, the demographic bonus could become a drag in future years as a young population age without education or secure jobs.

Guatemala has one of the highest rates of income inequality in the hemisphere. More than half the population lives in poverty, as poverty rates have significantly increased since 2006. The creation of new employment or business opportunities in rural areas is not keeping pace with the country's young population, which results in inadequate educational and job opportunities. Thus youth are vulnerable to the lure of organized crime groups and the push to emigrate legal and illegally to Mexico, the United States, and Canada (Save the Children & USAID, 2018; Schenck, 2011; USAID, 2012a).

The report uses positive youth development (PYD) as the basis for working with youth in extension and advisory services. PYD is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths (Youth.gov, 2019). PYD can be divided into eight key practices, including 1) Physical and psychological safety; 2) Appropriate structure; 3) Supportive relationships; 4) Opportunities to belong; 5) Positive social norms; 6) Support for efficacy and mattering; 7) Opportunities for skill-building; and 8) Integration of family, school, and community efforts (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2018; USAID, 2012b).

Findings

We reviewed the involvement of 51 individuals from 19 different initiatives serving youth via EAS. A given initiative may have several partners at the funding, or community level, which will lead to some replication in this report. Initiatives could be co-considered USAID and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Nutrition (MAGA) programs or projects, as well as donor-funded projects, international organizations, government agencies, international and national NGOs, private companies, producer organizations, and educational organizations (Table 1). The review for each initiative included staff and stakeholder interviews, material review (e.g., websites, program development materials, and reports). Because there was considerable replication as well as variation in how the different initiatives organized themselves, were funded, maintained stakeholder data, and addressed youth in rural areas and agriculture, we provide Table 2 which organizes the initiatives into six mutually-exclusive approach types:

Table 1. Types of Organizations Assessed

Organization type	Number
USAID projects*	5
Other donor or multi-donor projects*	3
Government agencies*	3
Private-sector companies*	2
National NGOs*	2
Producer organizations*	2
Educational institutions	4
International NGOs*	3
Total organizations (non-replicated)	19

*Some replication exists where multiple partners are involved in the initiative

Table 2. Main Approach that the Initiative Used to Address Youth in Agriculture Issues

Approach	Number
Initiative focuses entirely on youth and agriculture	0
Initiative focuses solely on youth but includes sectors outside agriculture	2
Initiative has a Positive Youth Development (PYD) in agriculture component	0
Initiative is primarily focused in agriculture, but youth comprise a large number of the participants	16
Youth in agriculture is a cross-cutting issue	0
No particular focus on youth	1
Total	19

As mentioned above, the findings are organized using USAID’s 5Rs Framework (Gray et al., 2018). The 5Rs represent the *roles* of certain actors that form a network of *relationships* whose interactions depend on *resources* and produce *results* for youth in EAS. The process of transforming resources into results via interactions of system actors is governed by *rules*. Since this helps to set the frame, we include it early in the findings.

Roles

The first “R” examines what roles government ministries and agencies, educational and research institutions, private sector and civil society play in engaging and employing youth in agricultural extension.

The assessment showed that Guatemalan extension efforts were usually organized into at least four major but uncoordinated sectors:

- **Private.** A private extension effort is led by ag-business in its most generic sense. These efforts focus on product-related research, education and extension assistance services to its growers, partners and, in some cases, to small, unaffiliated growers. There is some support to youth via NGOs or cooperatives sponsored by private businesses, but this support contains no articulated youth development strategies or approaches.

- **Public.** A public extension system led by MAGA. This system, which is currently being rebuilt, focuses on providing education services in the areas of rural agriculture, rural development, and rural home economics and health. The MAGA reports that education efforts with youth 13-years and older occur through its initiative *Estrategia para la Juventud Rural 2016-2010* (EJR) which has as one of its goals to restart 4-S/4-H agricultural clubs in rural Guatemala. Also, the EJR initiative reports sporadic coordination with the National Ministry of Education (MEN) and the Presidential National Youth Council (CONJUVE), which was developed by Guatemalan presidential order 114-97 (1997).
- **Higher Education Institutions.** This system is led by the National University of San Carlos and other private education institutions and regional centers. The main thrust of public and private university efforts with youth is to provide university students with educational opportunities via practicums, thesis writing, medical practice clinics, and public health outreach. Interviews with faculty at these institutions revealed that while university students were technically defined as youth (under age 25) and many of the services (e.g. teacher, health and dental practicums) were with children; there was no formal integration of youth development/Positive Youth Development (PYD) in their programs.
- **Nongovernmental Organizations.** NGOs are providing much of the research, evaluation, education, and outreach for rural communities in Guatemala. These organizations provide much of the on-the-ground services to youth and their families via a whole range of projects. While several of the NGOs were familiar with and used PYD in non-agriculture children and youth projects, PYD was not part of their EAS work.

The assessment further suggests that while Guatemala extension works with a large number of youth (under age 25), there is very little actual youth development work happening for ages 13 to 25; and almost no work happening for youth under 13. For example, interviewees did not characterize any of the extension programs reaching youth as “youth development programs;” instead they labeled them as extension programs in agriculture, home economics and rural development programs that happen to reach youth between the ages of 13-25. Youth development (also called positive youth development or PYD) is defined as “an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths” (Youth.gov, 2019).

Some interviewees remembered 4-H Clubs (called 4-S in Guatemala) which served as the primary PYD extension delivery system in Guatemala before 1989 but could not describe their philosophy, methods or any of the core components. In only two instances did the traditional definition of youth development or PYD arise; however, the description came from staff working on USAID extension development projects or had been working with extension programs in the United States. When probed further, some interviewees articulated that many children in rural areas were treated as adults due to their presence in the agricultural labor force. This response is supported by international data on child labor in Guatemala, which states that 6 percent of children 6-14 are in the workforce; of those, 59 percent are in the agricultural sector. Also, children as young as five years old work in coffee fields picking coffee beans and mixing and applying fertilizer (Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 2017).

A newer development is a US Feed the Future grant partnership between Counterpart International, *Sistema Nacional de Extensión Rural* (SNER) and San Carlos National University with the goal of reestablishing a functioning national rural extension system and training Ministry of Agriculture extension agents, community promoters and community members on various agricultural techniques; improving the ability of local communities to increase their agricultural production and improve their livelihoods. The initiatives current work includes the creation and implementation of an 8-month (160 hours) Rural Extension Certificate Program. The certificate training is designed to support extension professionals in the areas of extension strategy, production technology, the environment, socio-economics, and food security and nutrition; however youth development is not currently part of the program. Training is provided by Guatemalan national and US faculty from Universidad de San Carlos, Michigan State University and the University of California, Davis. This initiative also supports SNER to strengthen the Rural Development Learning Centers (CADERs). CADERs are training centers comprised of organized community members that are coordinated by rural agricultural promoters. The rural agricultural promoter is a community member who has demonstrated leadership in guiding rural development and serves as a liaison between the community and the extension agents.

Rules

Another of the five “Rs” asks what are the rules under which the system functions such as national policies and strategies that serve to enable or prevent youth’s inclusion in EAS, and are the key actors able to modify the rules that affect them in a way that make their programs more impactful?

Guatemala’s national extension system has its origins in the 1950s with support from the United States and Europe. In 1985, the CGIAR reported that the “National [extension] Agricultural Research System of Guatemala appears to be well-organized” (Stewart, 1985). This included a robust 4-S Youth Development Program (4-H in the United States) in selected rural regions of Guatemala. These 4-S programs focused on rural youth who had left school and provided training in agriculture and home economics. The extension system changed in 1998 with an international effort to move rural extension efforts from the public sector to private companies (Foundation, 2015; GFRAS, 2012; Manfred Melgar-Padilla, Simona Torretta, Ileana Grandelis, Claudia Alfaro, 2016; Ramiro Ortiz, Ottoniel Rivera, Israel Cifuentes, 2011; Stewart, 1930). Shortly after the 1998 restructuring, the extension system in Guatemala collapsed (Ramiro Ortiz, Ottoniel Rivera, Israel Cifuentes, 2011), leaving in its place at least four distinct (public, private, higher education, and NGO) but uncoordinated extension efforts which are in place currently (see above under roles).

In 2008 the Guatemalan National Congress chartered a Commission within the Ministry of Agriculture to explore the feasibility of reestablishing a public extension system. In 2010, Federal Administrative Rule 338-2010 (2010) developed a new structure for extension by creating a new MAGA department, the Coordinación Regional y Extensión Rural (DICORER). The new schema provided for the creation of 340 municipal-level extension agencies called the Agencias Municipales de Extensión Rural (AMER); however, the effort stalled in 2012 with a change of political parties at the national level. In 2014 the Rule 338-2010 (2010) was federalized and renamed El Sistema Nacional de Extensión Rural, and publicly funded. For the first time since the 1990s, MAGA was able to fund public extension consultants in the areas of rural development, home economics, and agriculture. Youth development was not one of the areas included in the funding (GFRAS, 2012; Ramiro Ortiz, Ottoniel Rivera, Israel Cifuentes, 2011).

In 2014, USAID granted Counterpart International (a nonprofit international development organization), a five-million 3-year Food for Progress award to support the SNER in 93 of the 340 municipalities in Guatemala. These municipalities were prioritized under the Government of Guatemala's Zero Hunger Program to address chronic malnutrition and poverty. All the municipalities are in the highland Departments of Quetzaltenango, Quiché, Totonicapán, San Marcos, and Huehuetenango, all within the U.S. Feed the Future initiative. Concurrently, in 2014 Counterpart International partnered with SNER and San Carlos National University to design a Certificate Program in Rural Extension. A review of the program's curriculum revealed that it covers institutional strategy, extension methodologies, home economics, production technology, the environment, and food security and nutrition. Training in youth development (PYD) is not currently part of that program. The training is carried out by both national and US professors from various collaborating universities, including Michigan State University and the University of California, Davis. USAID's support for SNER also includes strengthening the CADERs. CADERs are training centers comprised of organized community members that are coordinated by Rural Agricultural Promoters (RAPs). The RAPs are local community members who have demonstrated leadership in guiding rural development that can serve as a liaison between local communities and the MAGA extension agents (Manfred Melgar-Padilla, Simona Torretta, Ileana Grandelis, Claudia Alfaro, 2016; USAID, 2012a).

In addition to the issues mentioned above, interviewees reported that the following law and policy issues provide contextual headwind or drag on youth in EAS in Guatemala.

- **Food Safety and Nutrition:** Guatemala's Food Security Plan for the Western Highlands (PLANOCC), which was approved in 2002 and revised in 2005 by the National Food Security and Nutrition Council (CONASAN), places nutrition and food safety as a primary focus of work for the public sector. These efforts are the canvas upon which EAS youth development will be projected over the next few years. One example is that many of the nutrition programs are targeting schools and families with small children.
- **Safety and Wellbeing:** Most community members interviewed in the assessment reported that criminal activity, particularly narco-trafficking groups, gangs, and other organized crime, has risen significantly and represents one of the most severe threats to stability since its 36 plus year armed conflict which ended in 1996. In 2018 the United States Department of State designated Guatemala a "Critical Threat Area" which means that the country is ranked in the top 10 most dangerous countries in the world due to its extreme levels of crime and almost complete impunity for the committing of those crimes (CIA, 2019; OSAC, 2018). Due to a lack of educational and job opportunity, rural youth in Guatemala are particularly vulnerable to the lure of organized crime groups and the push to emigrate legal and illegally to Mexico, the United States, and Canada.
- **Decentralization Efforts:** National and municipal government officials and NGO staff reported cautious optimism regarding government decentralization efforts which are slowly reviving the creation of 340 municipal-level extension agencies called the *Agencias Municipales de Extensión Rural* (AMERs). Administrative Order 14-2002 (2002), General Decentralization Law requires that the national government gradually surrender policymaking and administrative authority to municipal governments. That stated, most interviewees reported that a significant area of concern is that public extension staff are being co-located in municipal buildings, where they may be susceptible to politicization due to the very high levels of corruption and nepotism present in local government.

- **Civil Service Law:** General relations between the administrative government and its employees are governed by the Civil Service Law, decree 1748 of Congress. All interviewees reported that politicization in hiring, nepotism, and corruption in the public extension system was a primary reason for the lack of progress in hiring qualified extension agents. Guatemala scored 27 points out of 100 on the 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International. Also, all interviewees reported that the overuse of short-term consultant contracts, rather than full-time appointments, had created a significant human capital loss in public extension programs. This was due to the instability of the work, the lack of benefits and labor protection and program/contracting delays that caused an environment where consultants had to complete full year work-assignments in as little as two months.

Relationships

The third “R” from the framework looks at the relationships between players and to what extent do they collaborate or overlap their programs.

The assessment surfaced a high level of project person-to-person partnering between extension stakeholders and sectors (i.e., NGOs, higher education, public and private organizations). However, there appears to be little sustainable systemic coordination among entities, which leads to competition or overlap in some regions of the country (i.e., the Guatemalan highlands) while leaving other areas unserved. Public institutions, while improving, still work independently with little to no sustainable coordination. For example, there was little to no interconnection between CONJUVE, MEN, and the extension programs provided by MAGA as related to extension programs that had a focus on youth. That said, coordination does exist between MAGA and private entities like the company Popoyán and agricultural cooperatives such as Fedecocagua which provide extension services to their producers and laborers. In addition, MAGA reported strong support for the Rural Extension Certificate Program supported by the SNER and San Carlos National University partnership.

The area of public agriculture research is led by the Instituto de Ciencias y Tecnología Agrícolas (ICTA) which is part of MAGA. Due to a lack of funding since the late 1990s, the ICTA changed its model from generating agricultural research to distributing research conducted by other entities. Interviews with stakeholders and document reviews also revealed a lack of youth or PYD focus to ICTA’s work. When it comes to university extension research, interviewees reported that their structures were ineffective in infusing extension research within and for local programs. Due to the lack of university-level funding and coordination, most university research is driven by bachelor and master-level university students conducting thesis studies for graduation. The lack of coordinating systems, such as public-research databases, means that in most instances, studies completed by graduating students remain unknown and unused by the community. Furthermore, since this kind of research is driven by student or faculty interests rather than community needs, it remains mostly disconnected from the needs of rural, vulnerable, and indigenous communities.

Two private universities (Marroquin and Rafael Landívar) provide some bachelor’s degrees in agriculture, while the National University of San Carlos has been the primary producer of agricultural degrees and is currently working on a certification program for extension professionals. High school technical programs (e.g., *Perito Agronomo*) also provide a reliable vehicle for entry-level training into extension. It is notable that most extension initiative staff (from all sectors) interviewed

reported attending one or more of these programs. These are supported or continued by many public and private pre-university training programs and institutions (e.g., *certificados, diplomados, tecnicos*). None of the pre-university programs reviewed mentioned PYD or youth development skills in their curriculum.

Resources

The fourth “R” is concerned with what resources such as programs, institutions and budgets exist to support youth in extension programs and what are the capacities to engage youth.

Most funds for public extension in Guatemala come from the national general fund and thus subject to political moods and priorities. Guatemala also has a relatively low level of tax revenues (around 11 percent of GDP) with high levels of corruption, which siphon off available public resources. Government institutions responsible for education (including extension), security, health, nutrition and essential public services do not have the resources to address the challenges posed by increasing crime and violence, the country’s high levels of child malnutrition and other health issues, or to foment the economic development needed to reduce the country’s high levels of poverty. This means that extension for youth in Guatemala is not currently a national priority.

Foreign aid to Guatemala comes mostly from Europe and the United States. According to the US Office of Management and Budget, the US alone appropriated over 120 million dollars in 2018. Guatemala also hosts the highest number of foreign NGOs out of any Central American country with saturation on the Mayan highlands. It is notable that because the assessment of youth in EAS occurred the week following a presidential announcement that the United States would withhold funding to Guatemala, all interviewees reported a high level of anxiety regarding continued financing.

The interviewees identified other complementary organizational efforts that could serve as resources for extension youth development efforts in Guatemala. To be listed below, the program or projects had to: a) be mentioned by two or more of the interviewees, b) have a significant youth component to their work, c) not be profiled in other parts of this report. This list is not exhaustive and should be considered only as a starting point to the effort.

- **Clinton Foundation.** In 2013, the Clinton Foundation committed to funding the expansion of 4-H Youth Development Program in Nicaragua and Guatemala. This program built upon the successful 4-S model in Costa Rica, which aimed at empowering youth to reach their full potential through positive youth development and experience-based learning. Twenty-eight after-school clubs were founded in Guatemala from 2013 to 2014 with some 300-youth involved. As of 2018, only one club remained active.
- **Catholic Relief Services Guatemala (CRS).** CRS’s Integral Childhood & Youth Development projects strive to create opportunities for children and youth, through holistic education and life skills formation that prepare them to earn sustainable livelihoods and to become the next generation of leaders in their communities.
- **U.S. 4-H Land-grant University Projects in Guatemala.** The Universities of Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, and Tennessee reported nascent 4-H Youth Development projects with local Guatemalan NGOs and the National University of San Carlos. While in their early stages, these programs could be assets in the development of a future national system.

- **Indigenous People’s Engagement Strategy (USAID/Guatemala).** The Indigenous Peoples’ Engagement Strategy is designed to dovetail with the overall USAID Guatemala strategy to support partnerships between indigenous entities, government and the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations within civil society; and increase awareness, knowledge, and recognition of indigenous peoples’ rights, culture, history, and knowledge systems; and foment the participation of indigenous women and men in development interventions through USAID, implementing partners, and others. This strategy complements USAID’s overall portfolio of activities which work to increase the self-reliance of indigenous people through inclusion in Guatemala's social, economic, and political systems.
- **MásRiego: Youth in Agriculture Initiative (USAID).** This project develops and implements holistic, business-driven solutions to increase the availability of drip irrigation, conservation agriculture, and improved water management, while addressing social inclusion, capacity, and asset building for all community members, especially women and youth, in Feed the Future zones of Guatemala.
- **World Vision Guatemala (WVG).** World Vision works in over 273 communities across Guatemala. WVG is providing support for community-based groups to create safe environments for children to live, learn, and play. WVG also partners with faith leaders and local municipalities to develop migration prevention plans, supporting individual children and their families via scholarships, skills training, connecting them with trustworthy community networks, and other social services. Of interest to this study was the project called “Puentes.” Puentes is targeted at youth aged 15-24 living in the Western Highlands of Guatemala; experiencing poverty and violence; or lacking access to land, educational, and economic opportunities.
- **Peace Corps Guatemala.** Volunteers in Guatemala work with their communities on projects in health and youth development. During their service in Guatemala, volunteers conduct projects in Spanish and learn to speak local languages, including Ixil, Kaqchikel, K’iche, and Mam.
- **Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral (FUDI).** FUDI works to facilitate education and development to youth, families, and communities in poverty. FUDI supports rural development centers in Utz Samaj, Ag’-on-Jay and Ixoqi’, where it promotes and facilitates program and projects in the areas of youth, family, and rural development.
- **Tribal Colleges and Universities Extension in the United States (TCUs).** There are 32 fully accredited TCUs in the United States with over 358 programs, including apprenticeships, diplomas, certificates, and degrees. TCU extension programs are often the only postsecondary institutions serving indigenous peoples within some of the United States’ most impoverished rural areas. This experience and their expertise in adapting extension to rural indigenous communities could be leveraged to support the creation of culturally-relevant efforts in Guatemala.

Results

The final “R” looks at what has worked thus far and what gaps emerge from existing results that could be addressed by a DLEC engagement (pilot activity) in the country.

Results of youth and agriculture programs and projects in Guatemala are often expressed in terms of outputs such as the number of participants or programs. For example, the SNER reported that in

2014, it established 334 extension offices, hired 900 extension agents, and served 173,777 families. However, we were not able to find results expressed in terms of program outcomes such as numbers of youths who got jobs or started enterprises following training. Furthermore, little to no data were available on program impacts for youth at the community, municipal, or national level. For example, we do not know how rural youth extension programs in Guatemala improved social indicators like youth educational attainment, health, wellbeing, career success, or entrepreneurship.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This assessment finds several assets and gaps that represent opportunities for action in the efforts to redevelop a strong and coordinated EAS system that includes youth as providers and clientele in Guatemala. The following are entry points or assets that could be capitalized upon in order to further the improvement and success of PYD in extension programs:

1. The continued commitment of the government of Guatemala to decentralize extension services.
2. The continued commitment of USAID to support the redevelopment of an EAS in Guatemala.
3. The continued commitment of the government of Guatemala to make extension staff full-time employees rather than contract workers.
4. The continued commitment of USAID to support youth and positive youth development in EAS.
5. The existence of a significant number of competent stakeholders in EAS, including national and international technical experts, educators, and researchers.
6. The existence of 15 universities (one public and 14 private) which could be harnessed as research and training infrastructure for youth extension programs.
7. The Rural Extension Certificate Program, which presents an opportunity for extension youth development staff professionalization.
8. The existence of new potential partners such as State Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities that are part of the Land-grant system in the United States.

Based on those assets listed above, we provide recommendations for USAID Guatemala for supporting and strengthening the inclusion of PYD in extension in Guatemala. Please note that further validation of this assessment and its recommendation should be conducted with Guatemalan stakeholders before full implementation.

Major Recommendation # 1: Help reposition extension as an apolitical delivery mechanism for practical knowledge (extension research, evaluation, and innovation) by strengthening the role of Guatemalan universities in extension youth programs.

Why is this important?

All of the interviewees stated that political forces were impinging on extension research, evaluation, and services in Guatemala. When extension is viewed as a political entity, local communities have less trust in their research and teaching. Depoliticalizing extension in Guatemala will be a significant hurdle which may not be possible to overcome if extension remains wholly located in MAGA.

How could this be done?

One possible solution would be to adopt the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/university partnership frame from the United States. In Guatemala, the MAGA could retain the overall authority of rural extension funding but transfer responsibility via partnership agreements for research, program evaluation, program development and implementation to the National University of San Carlos or other Guatemalan universities. This would have the simultaneous effect of depoliticizing the extension system, complying with the national governments' effort to decentralize (Administrative Order 14-2002), strengthen the universities' research capacity, and provide a vehicle for the professionalization of extension agents in Guatemala. USAID and MAGA could facilitate the development of a pilot or demonstration program in the area of youth development, where extension agents are hired, trained, and deployed to support local efforts like the CADER centers with local youth development research and evaluation efforts, research-based programs, and training extension workers and volunteers. Other steps could include:

- **Strengthening public-private sector partnerships.** USAID Guatemala should continue to work to expand existing public-private partnerships based on more than a decade of substantial alliance-building experience. This effort should include supporting the CADERs which could serve in the role of local youth extension hubs.
- **Strengthen EAS evaluation and meta-evaluation systems.** Information on the results of agriculture projects programs and projects in Guatemala are often expressed in terms of outputs such as the number of participants or programs. Little to no data are available on the actual impacts on youth at the community, municipal, or national level. For example, we do not know how rural youth participation in extension programs affect improved social indicators such as educational attainment, health and wellbeing, career success, or business/farm startup. DLEC could facilitate information exchange, technical support, and training for lead extension stakeholder organizations (e.g., MAGA, Counterpart, Universidad de San Carlos) in the area of result-based and community outcome evaluation.

Primary Actors: MAGA and USDA

Additional Assets: DLEC, Counterpart, National Universities in Guatemala, land-grant universities in the United States (i.e., University of California at Davis, University of Tennessee, University of Illinois, University of Minnesota, University of Missouri)

Major Recommendation # 2: Update Guatemala's National Agricultural Extension Strategy to infuse positive youth development knowledge and practice for extension staff working with youth in extension.

Why is this important?

The PYD approach to engage youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families; recognizes and uses young people's strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people should be infused throughout the agricultural system through the Strategy. This is important because in rural Guatemala, indigenous youth begin work in agriculture around the age of five and compulsory education ends in the sixth grade. This means that extension youth development programs should begin as early as possible in order

to bridge the gap between the end of formal schooling and the youth's ability to gain formal employment and move toward self-sufficiency.

How could this be done?

Because public extension efforts in Guatemala are still nascent, there is a limited window of opportunity to formally add a youth development priority area to the SNER via the National Extension Strategy. In addition, the following steps could be taken to support the effort.

- **Strengthen the existing relationship between the National University of San Carlos and the public extension (MAGA) system.** Most interviewees reported that efforts by the US Feed the Future Grant partnership between Counterpart International, SNER and San Carlos National University to create a Rural Extension Certificate Program in combination with MAGA's efforts to hire qualified full-time extension professionals are critical to the development of a sustainable extension system. These efforts, however, have three specific gaps: 1) the absence of youth development theory and practice in training, 2) the absence of programs for youth under the age of 13, and 3) inclusion of young women. This effort could address the gaps by facilitating the reestablishment of 4-S Clubs or other positive youth development programs targeting girls and youth under the age of 13. New programs should focus on PYD and hands-on pre-agricultural skills such as leadership development, healthy living, science, technology, and math. With assistance from DLEC, sustainable partnerships between Guatemalan programs and United States 4-H programs at individual land-grant universities could be leveraged to provide curriculum, educational materials, staff, and volunteer training.
- **Build a PYD extension system for youth under 13 years of age.** This can be done by capitalizing on existing partnerships to expand the Rural Extension Certificate Program to cover positive youth development based on current 4-H PYD research. 4-H serves in the United States as a model program for the practice of PYD by creating positive learning experiences; positive relationships for/and between youth and adults; positive, safe environments; and opportunities for positive risk-taking. These efforts, however, would need to be inclusive of young women and indigenous populations via culturally-relevant practices. In the late 1800s, extension workers in the Midwest of the United States learned that adults in farming communities did not readily accept new agricultural developments from the university or government. In their efforts to fulfill their land-grant mandate, they turned to young people who were open to new thinking, would experiment with new ideas and share their experiences with the adults in their lives. In this way, 4-H was established as a conduit to introduced new agriculture technology to rural communities in the U.S. The idea of practical and "hands-on" learning came from the desire to connect university education to country life. DLEC could provide a link to USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 4-H National Council and individual state 4-H programs at US Land-grant universities with the intention of leveraging research, research-based curriculum, educational materials, staff, and volunteer training in support of Guatemalan PYD efforts.

Primary Actors: MAGA, USDA, and Counterpart

Additional Assets: DLEC, US National 4-H Council, national universities in Guatemala, Land-grant universities in the United States (i.e., University of California at Davis, University of Tennessee, University of Illinois, University of Minnesota, University of Missouri)

Major Recommendation # 3: Strengthen engagement with marginalized populations such as women and indigenous communities.

Why is this important?

The map of indigenous populations of Guatemala closely aligns with the areas with the country's highest rates of poverty, illiteracy, infant and maternal mortality, and chronic malnutrition (USAID, 2019). Gender inequality gaps are present in all sectors and domains (Landa Ugarte et al., 2018; Youth and Gender Justice Project, 2017). For example, in 2016, only 89 percent of girls who enrolled in primary school graduated from 6th grade, and the net enrollment rate for middle school (7th to 9th grade) was merely 43 percent (USAID Guatemala, 2018; World Bank Group, 2016). Furthermore, in 2017, Maya Families, a Guatemalan NGO, reported that their research showed that only 25 percent of all indigenous girls in rural areas remain in school past the age of 16. Since women and the indigenous population comprise such a large part of the population in Guatemalan rural areas, a sustainable rural economy is not possible without their full participation (The World Group for Indigenous Affairs & (IWGIA), 2019).

How could this be done?

Both USAID and MAGA have designated women and indigenous populations as priorities (Landa Ugarte et al., 2018; USAID, 2019; Youth and Gender Justice Project, 2017). PYD, as an intentional approach to engage youth productively in their communities, lends itself to the following approaches:

- **Strengthening engagement with indigenous young persons.** Engagement with indigenous youth must be strengthened for Guatemala to fulfill true national potential and achieve self-reliance and to mitigate migration to urban centers and North America. Guatemalan indigenous people have a rich history and culture, and in-depth knowledge of their country. Empowering and strengthening indigenous institutions and celebrating and recognizing the rights, history, culture, knowledge, and language of indigenous communities is key to advancing Guatemala's development (Briggs, Krasny, & Stedman, 2019; USAID, 2019). This will mean making any youth development programs culturally-relevant to indigenous populations. This could be supported by creating stronger cross-national linkages between USAID indigenous Peoples' Engagement Efforts, Native American and Tribal Land-grant Colleges in the United States and future Guatemalan youth extension efforts. This experience and their expertise in adapting extension to rural indigenous communities could be leveraged to support the creation of culturally-relevant efforts in Guatemala. DLEC could facilitate online and in-person information and training exchanges between Guatemalan EAS and TCUs in the US in the area of culturally-relevant extension youth development services. The effort would also need to be supported on the ground by working with municipal programs, institutions of higher learning and indigenous leadership to create leadership and service opportunities for young people.

- **Support women and youth-centered leadership development opportunities concurrently.** Many Guatemalan women and children work in agriculture as unpaid family workers and as day laborers. Increasingly, young women are also farmers but face several gender-based barriers, including limited access to property ownership, which makes it more difficult for them to acquire credit (GFRAS, 2012; Hallman, Peracca, Catino, & Ruiz, 2007; Landa Ugarte et al., 2018; Youth and Gender Justice Project, 2017). Biases against women participation as members in farmer groups or cooperatives discourage their presence in decision-making positions within the groups. Gender barriers also restrict their access to inputs, information, and markets. While the barriers to participation for rural women, both politically and economically, cannot be countered merely through training or programming, a targeted initiative using the CADER centers to train local women as certified extension youth development professionals could be coupled with MAGA hiring preferences to restart youth development programs under the age of 13. Because of the history of exclusion, isolation, and lack of experience in dealing with national institutions women could use these youth development positions as an entry point for women into public service, long-term employment or higher education.

Primary Actors: MAGA, USDA, DLEC, and TCUs

Additional Assets: National Universities in Guatemala, NGOs working in the highlands in Guatemala, Municipal Government, The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), UNESCO

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