

Youth Excel: Our Knowledge, Leading Change



Stronger youth-led development through research and learning

The challenge: In today's digitally linked global landscape, many of the world's 1.8 billion young people are addressing the world's complex challenges through direct action, social movements, and networks, initiating dialogue and action to promote social justice. However, many youth still lack pathways to education, economic and civic engagement, access to health and mental health information and services, and opportunities to lead change. Youth who are leading change are often not taken seriously by decision-makers. COVID-19 has exacerbated distrust between youth and institutions, increased polarization and digital divides, multiplied dis- and misinformation, and increased exclusion and structural violence toward girls and women, minorities, and people with disabilities. Youth-led and youth-serving organizations lack resources and capacity to provide impactful services to young people across all sectors; and the development sector lacks sufficient information on what works in positive youth development programs.

Youth Excel will strengthen youth-led, local development by



building capacity of youth-led and youth-serving organizations to conduct quality *implementation research* and offer stronger positive youth development (PYD) programs,



strengthening local development systems, development policy, and development decisions through knowledge and data, intergenerational dialogue for collaborative learning, youth-led advocacy, and partnerships,



strengthening youth-led and youth-serving networks and systems to improve local development outcomes,



synthesizing and disseminating data, knowledge, and evidence to support cross-sectoral, positive youth development.

Youth Excel Consortium

Lead: IREX

ABAAD

Afrika Youth Movement

Ashoka Youth Venture

Root Change

Tech Tribes

The Biz Nation

The Youth Café

Search for Common Ground

UNOY-Peacebuilders

University of Minnesota



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For more information, please contact excelyouth@irex.org

What is Implementation research?

- ✓ *Links research and practice*, by collecting data during implementation and using that data to improve implementation.
- ✓ *Collects context-specific data and evidence* to explore how evidence-based interventions work in different contexts. Uses data to learn how and why implementation is working or not working.
- ✓ Explores dimensions such as *fidelity, feasibility, scale, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability*.
- ✓ Done best as a *collaborative effort involving front-line practitioners* to clarify what is happening and support real-time adaptation.

Illustrative Learning Question and Strengthened PYD Outcomes

 Learning Question	 Domain/ Research topic	 PYD Outcomes
How do we scale health awareness interventions that combat misinformation at local levels?	Intervention characteristics, Context / Cost-effectiveness & sustainability	Youth organizations apply IR as they implement PYD models to scale tested programs, iterating during the IR process to identify factors that increase cost-effectiveness while supporting sustainability.

How can Youth Excel support your strategic goals?

Improved PYD programs for better development outcomes. Develop an implementation research effort to accompany a current or upcoming program or project. Help your program team iteratively learn and adapt efforts for better results, improved contextualization, effectiveness, or scale.

Engage more youth-led and youth-serving organizations who are making a difference on the ground. Help them strengthen their programs through research; channel more funds to local organizations, and build your bench of local partners.

Engage new partners and test new partnership models. Use research, learning, and data to engage development partners, including the private sector and other donors, in new ways. Test and iterate new partnership models that are based on mutuality and shared priorities.

Technical sectors

- ✓ education
- ✓ employment
- ✓ civic engagement
- ✓ peacebuilding
- ✓ reproductive health
- ✓ agriculture
- ✓ technology
- ✓ environment
- ✓ water

Consortium Global Reach

