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PERUVIAN YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

Political and citizen participation of youth is an issue requiring more attention from the public agenda. Citizens aged between 15 and 29 years amount to nearly a quarter of the Peruvian population. However, only a minority participates consistently in political parties, organizations, or associations. Volunteering or activism are frequent forms of unconventional participation in urban youth.

The purpose of this assessment is to identify the ways in which youth can engage in, contribute to and/or benefit from the activities carried out by the USAID/Peru cooperation strategy in the country, under the framework of its development goals, thus improving their understanding of the problems they face, their interests and aspirations. Based on this information, recommendations are made so that youth participation in activities by USAID and its partner organizations becomes visible. The results of this assessment will make it possible to update the USAID/Peru's development strategy.

MAIN FINDINGS



1. Peruvian Youth Socio-Demographic Indicators

- Youth amounts to 23.9% of the entire Peruvian population. It is not a homogeneous population. There are diverse youth groups that coexist in Peru.
- Rural areas show a larger proportion of poverty. There is obvious inequality in terms of education, formal employment and Internet access between rural and urban youth.
- The percentage of youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) increased by eight percentage points between 2019 and 2020 (from 21% to 29%) as a probable result of the pandemic.



2. Interest and Concerns of Youth

- The issues that most concern youth are related to education, employment, and health.
- Democracy and human rights are not a priority for the personal lives of youth. Likewise, corruption is regarded as one of the main problems affecting Peru.



3. Positive and Negative Incentives for Political Participation

- Youth do not have enough incentives for permanent political participation. They take part in public mobilizations on very specific issues and objectives.
- Youth living in urban areas and those who have undertaken higher education show more interest in political participation. In rural areas, political participation of youth in large nationwide mobilizations has been minimal.



4. Citizen Participation

- Youth participation in citizen organizations and activities is minor, but many youth -especially from urban areas- take part in volunteering to support vulnerable groups. After the pandemic began, virtual volunteering seems to have increased significantly.
- For urban youth, virtual interest groups have become a significant form of organization, especially for those who have had greater access to education and show more concern about the country. Social networks have become important communication and convening channels.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS



Incorporating the youth and lifecycle approaches into USAID’s Peru Development Cooperation Strategy, so that the different youth stages are addressed comprehensively.

Ongoing interventions should make youth visible by designing follow-up indicators for the beneficiary population.



Identifying community practices led by youth, in order to incorporate them to the ongoing activities or those to be designed.



When designing interventions, considering providing incentives to encourage youth to participate permanently.



Performing activities specially aimed at youth not in employment, education or training (NEET).



Using social networks to work and interact with youth population.



In all activities with a communicational component, segmenting target audiences according to sex and age, at least.



Performing diagnoses to get to know the youth population more closely in the contexts where the activities are carried out.



Incorporating in ongoing activities topics on the exercise of citizenship and the promotion of the common good.



Encouraging USAID partners to share lessons learned and best practices in relation to working with youth.



Designing long-term interventions for youth under the gender approach, aimed at developing capacities and generating income.



Taking advantage of youth’s computer literacy and reinforcing it through capacity strengthening programs.



Promoting the inclusion of youth as a target population of interventions yet to be designed;



Promoting closer work with local and regional governments to incorporate youth participation.

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See the full report “[Peruvian Youth Participation and Civic Engagement Assessment](#).”