

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN WEST AFRICA AND SAFE AND INCLUSIVE CITIES

"I would like to congratulate the young people, especially from the youth groups. Without them, we would be powerless against COVID-19. They have criss-crossed villages, neighbourhoods, and hamlets to raise awareness and provide support. They have installed hand-washing facilities and distributed face masks. The lives of these young people have completely changed. They are now responsible, able to take good initiatives and to work as a team."

EP, General Secretary of the Préfecture in Bassar, Togo



"The SAIC teams has bridged the gap between government and the youth. People now know what the government is doing, and the government can reach out to communities. For the Youth Fund, without somebody else filling the gap, there is no capacity to reach everyone. SAIC have invited us to these communities where you would feel that it is very difficult to reach. Like if you go deep down into Mathare, I do not think out of my own violations say, "okay I am going to Kiamaiko." But with them on the ground, they invite and we feel even more secure."

Government fund official, Nairobi, Kenya



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND READING INSTRUCTIONS



The 2020 report covers PlanBørnefondens's Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The partnership comprises two programmes, **Youth Empowerment in West Africa (YEWA)** in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo, and **Safe and Inclusive Cities (SAIC)** in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe. In addition, the SPA includes an Urban Research and Documentation Programme, an Innovation track, Popular Engagement in Denmark and Unallocated Funds that are utilised strategically during the year.

The main part of the report addresses progress and learning from the YEWA and SAIC programmes, with shorter sections dedicated to the other initiatives of the SPA as well as an overview of the organisational and strategic developments in PlanBørnefondens in 2020.

YEWA and SAIC represent the original BØRNEfondens and Plan International Denmark programmes that were merged under one SPA from 2019, following the organisational merger. The programmes are united under one overall results frame with four outcomes. However, the theories of change and interventions logics differ for the two programmes out of respect for the partners, the particular contexts and the realities of the young people that helped develop them.

In order to capture the joint contributions towards the overall results frame and the individual progress and learning on the two programmes, we present progress in the following way: For each section, we offer a brief assessment of progress towards the overall outcome, followed by progress towards the corresponding outcome in YEWA and then SAIC. This structure allows us to include the inevitable variation of the two programmes and it follows the same logic as the 2019 report, which enables comparison over time.

In 2020, we completed midline surveys for YEWA and SAIC. The midlines were carried out separately on the two programmes in order to correspond to the respective baselines. Both surveys were carried out by external consultants in close cooperation with PlanBørnefondens's MERL specialists. The midline surveys are of high quality and enable us to report progress at outcome level to a much higher degree than previously. Supported by the midline surveys and our ongoing monitoring, we believe that the achieved results show that our interventions are effective in generating the desired change and that our context-specific, holistic and youth-centered approach is fit for purpose in fragile rural as well as fragile urban contexts.

Key programmatic achievements

- Increased empowerment and safety among young women and men across all country programmes.
- Increased employability and self-reliance and a more sustainable economic situation for young women and men who participated in the programme activities.
- Strengthened organisation of 646 local youth-led groups comprising 22.479 young women and men.
- Increased collaboration between youth-led groups and local authorities thereby promoting the rights of young people and their influence on local planning and governance.
- However, COVID-19 was the greatest test in 2020. Our partners, from national CSOs to informal youth grassroots and community groups, overwhelmingly passed this test by responding immediately and effectively despite finding themselves in a devastating crisis, attesting to the fact that our interventions do indeed contribute to making communities resilient and inclusive.

Key cross-cutting and organisational achievements

- We have continued to grow and consolidate our organisation, including through restructuring our departments and securing a number of substantial grants across our strategic priorities.
- We have further strengthened our partnership and gender transformative approaches at all levels, including through stronger implementation of Plan's global guidance across the federation.
- We have furthered our urban priority by strengthening research and documentation, collaboration with Plan International Knowledge Management team, and establishment of an Urban Hub for the Plan Federation.
- We have considerably strengthened our SRHR, Youth Empowerment and Nexus work in the Sahel Region, including through even stronger collaboration with the Danish MFA.
- Our innovation work is gaining momentum, in particular LUCY, our partnership with Maternity Foundation around safe delivery in Benin.
- We have leveraged funding from the SPA to strengthen and scale our Youth and Social Enterprise work in the MENA region, and our global partnerships with urban grassroots.
- We have engaged thousands of Danish youths around the development agenda through our innovative approaches to popular engagement.
- We have developed comprehensive Remote Financial Monitoring, which has steered us safely across a year of COVID-19 challenges and contributed to future proofing our Financial Monitoring systems.

A. ORGANISATIONAL AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS



The year 2020 cannot be reviewed without mentioning the global pandemic of COVID-19. From day one, Plan International increased the global coordination across our headquarter, regional offices, and local offices around the globe to expand our prevention and mitigation efforts. Furthermore, PlanBørnefonden employees have been seconded to Plan International temporarily to contribute with technical expertise within WASH and SRHR. With the COVID-19 outbreak, an intense need to reprogramme arose and PlanBørnefonden succeeded in reprogramming approx. DKK 16 mio. of existing grants, while securing DKK 11 mio. in new grants for our COVID-19 response. Despite a decrease in child sponsorship funds, PlanBørnefonden managed to increase the total yearly revenue in FY20 with approx. DKK 5 mio., primarily due to increased project revenue, including in particular our strategic partnership with DANIDA, project donations received from private foundations and institutional donors. 80.5% of the total revenue came from private donors, incl. private donations, companies, and foundations, while public grants accounted for 19.5% of the revenue in FY20. Hence, PlanBørnefonden is one of the largest primarily privately funded development and humanitarian organisations in Denmark.

Our global strategic ambition is to transform the lives of 100 million girls through our five-year strategy. 2020 was our global strategy's third year and we have made real, tangible progress across many areas. However, there is still much work needed to advance children's rights and gender equality. Our global headquarter is currently leading a global strategy update with special attention to gender transformation and adolescent girls. Further, there is a great attention to strengthen our humanitarian work and response capacity, localisation, and action for climate justice and resilience.

PlanBørnefonden is strongly involved in updating the global strategy, utilising our size, and strengthened position in Plan. In the governing bodies, PlanBørnefonden's Board Chair, Stine Bosse, is member of the global Program Committee which sets the overall direction for our global program strategy. PlanBørnefonden's CEO, Dorthe Petersen, is one of two representatives of Plan International's National Organisations in the steering committee coordinating the update of the global strategy, while PlanBørnefonden's COO, Anne Smith Petersen, is member of the global group working on Financial Efficiency. Moreover, PlanBørnefonden is represented in a global group for youth and engagement, and a global group for operational efficiency.

In May 2020, Dorthe Petersen took over as CEO at PlanBørnefonden. The two-year integration period after the successful merger between Plan International Denmark and BØRNEfonden came to an end on the first of July 2020, and all milestones have been reached both in the four West African country offices and Copenhagen. Dorthe Petersen implemented a new management structure in September ensuring stronger cross-functional coordination and accelerating digitalisation among several other actions. The Executive Management team now consists of CEO Dorthe Petersen (Communication, Sponsorship and Fundraising), COO Anne Smith Petersen (Program, Policy, Grants Management and HR) and CFO Mikkel Hauschildt (Finance and IT). Moreover, Dorthe Petersen has initiated an organisational change with the ambition to strengthen PlanBørnefonden's fundraising and with an increased focus on political communication. During 2020, the policy team shaped policy asks, and increased awareness around selected key policy issues with specific attention to increase engagement around girls' rights, youth participation and gender equality.

PlanBørnefonden has during 2020 developed a remote financial monitoring tool and methodology to oversee the financial monitoring, identify weaknesses and the need for additional training and support from PlanBørnefonden. This remote financial monitoring tool compensates to a certain extent the field visits that were not possible to execute during COVID-19. The tool has been very useful and shows great potential. PlanBørnefonden will, therefore, continue to use the remote financial monitoring as a supplement to on the ground financial monitoring.

A highlight from 2020, was DANIDA's approval of our application to the thematic call for proposal on *Responding to Humanitarian Needs in a Long-Term Perspective in the Central Sahel* (DKK 39 mio.), where we are integrating responses to meet needs and strengthen resilience of crisis-affected populations in Northern and Eastern Burkina Faso. PlanBørnefonden is among the three National Organisations in Plan with the strongest engagement in the Sahel region. The Policy team has been strongly engaged in the development of Plan International's new global Sahel Strategy where the Danida Strategic Partnership and the new grant in Burkina Faso are very important contributors to the strategy's implementation.

Another key highlight is PlanBørnefonden's global leading role in the development of a federation-wide Urban Hub. PlanBørnefonden, together with Plan Australia have established the Urban Hub, and the Urban Hub Manager is based in Copenhagen. The Urban Hub is strengthening the Federation's ability to work gender transformatively at both the structural and systemic level in urban context, in particularly in informal settlements and slums. The focus is on ensuring the federation builds on its existing urban expertise, through training, capacity building and technical assistance, including developing good practice guidance.

PlanBørnefondens's partnerships with private foundations are following a trend from single donations towards large scale strategic partnerships. Most notably, is the *PlayMatters* grant from the LEGO Foundation where a consortium of Plan International, International Rescue Committee and WarChild together with local partners aim to provide quality education for 800,000 refugee children in Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania. Further strategic partnership talks are ongoing with the LEGO Foundation, Poul Due Jensen Foundation and Novo Nordisk Foundation for new grants and cross-cutting partnerships to create better and sustainable impacts while contributing to SDG 17 on global partnerships. During 2020, PlanBørnefondens's solid experience with innovative public-private partnerships in humanitarian settings and development cooperation increased even further.



B. ACCOUNT FOR PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS

A key aspect of our strategic partnership is to strengthen civil society through building transformative partnerships and striving for gender transformation and youth leadership. In this year's report, we focused on how we work with youth-led groups and organisations, gender and how we together have continued to strive for an open civic space despite the challenges of COVID-19.

Strengthening youth-led groups and capacity building of our CSO-partners

More and more of the youth-led groups we work with consolidate their structure and operation, increase their membership, especially among young women, generate funding from external sources and register as part of civil society (see Outcome 3). This change has strengthened them to become more independent and sustainable as civil society actors in their own right.

In 2020, we welcomed six youth-led CBOs as CSO-partners in Kenya and one youth-led alliance in Zimbabwe. Several are underway in Benin. This is an on-going journey and a key priority across all our eight country programmes. In 2020,

we have strengthened youth groups' capacity in the following: organisational development, group dynamics, life skills and resilience building during the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict management, financial management, data collections, communication and advocacy skills, social accountability and resource mobilisation.

Moreover, we continue to strengthen the capacity of our CSO-partners based on their priorities and in accordance with their annual assessments and individual capacity building plans. Priorities in 2020 included strategic planning, HR, procurement, financial management and accounting (including manuals), M&E (incl. data analysis tools and outcome harvesting), gender-transformative approaches, adaptation to COVID-19, evidence-based advocacy, and the engagement of youth-led groups as civil society actors. We have, as far as COVID-19 permitted, strived for mutual learning between CSO-partners which has been especially strong in Benin. In addition, crosscutting learning has been achieved through online platforms like WhatsApp.

In Togo, one of our CSO-partners have had some challenges related to their financial administration. The case was investigated and a specific capacity building plan for this partner was designed and is under now implementation. The rural CSO landscape in Togo is fragile. We believe that we have turned an unfortunate incident into a positive capacity boost for our CSO-partner and have thus contributed to the overall strengthening of civil society in Togo.

Gender transformation and youth leadership

In Plan, we use a Gender Transformative Approach which contributes to gender equality and inclusion by explicitly tackling the root causes of gender inequality, particularly unequal gender power relations, discriminatory social norms and legislation. In 2020 Plan International deployed the *Gender Marker Tool*, which assesses a project's potential to be gender transformative. The SAIC and YEWA Programmes are both assessed as gender transformative and across the eight countries, the implementing teams strive to realise this potential.

Leadership in youth-led groups has across the YEWA and SAIC programmes been male dominated. However, there have been notable changes in leadership as young women are now interrupting the leadership spaces, such as youth boards, and taking up the mantle in creating change at the community level. This change is attributed to the

continuous efforts of amplifying the participatory processes by young women and challenging retrogressive patriarchy at all levels. Hence, we now see that both young women and men engage in programme implementation and monitoring. Furthermore, young women are taking on leadership roles, even at the group level, where they engage as mobilisers, mentors, facilitators, event organisers and group leaders based on their improved agency and leadership skills. Challenges persist in terms of overcoming barriers for young women to meaningfully participate in all the different group and program processes. However, the CSO-partners are learning to adapt meeting schedules to the needs of young women, especially those who have children, as well as provide babysitting during training as examples hereof.

In terms of women's access to SRHR information, education, work/income generating activities and funding as well as safety feeling in public spaces, we see positive changes and signs of gender empowerment across the programme. Increased access to SRHR information and education has led to positive behavioural change for women *and* men and across generations. This not only implies improvement in terms of protecting women's health. It also strengthens their ability and possibilities to access education and the decent work. An important aspect of the programmes' skills development trainings (entrepreneurship, financial, technical and life skills) is the strong link we see between economic empowerment and improved SRHR. When young women are engaged in decent income generating activities, it allows them to not only improve their economic position, but also their social position and opportunities in life. Nevertheless, clear gender gaps still persist, especially when it comes to economic opportunities.

Civic space and COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has narrowed the civic and operating space for our CSO-partners. There are fewer meetings amongst civic actors, less interaction with duty bearers, and a shift in focus to COVID-19 response. Human rights violations have been reported in the process of implementing 'guidelines' meant to limit the spread of the virus and public participation fora have been limited under the guise of not being able to hold public gatherings. As a result, it has been difficult to pursue advocacy work by the CSO-partners. Nonetheless, we have seen a tremendous flexibility among these partners to adapt and make the most of implementing interventions in the communities despite the occurrence of COVID-19 and restrictions. Examples hereof are from Zimbabwe and Uganda, where CSO-partners have shared responsibility and assisted each other in developing Standard Operating Procedures to ensure that implementation does not put young people at risk of contracting COVID-19.

Under COVID-19, the CSO-partners have supported young people in becoming active in the COVID-19 responses in their local communities and have strengthened their ability to work across the humanitarian-development nexus. Across all eight countries, the CSO-partners, supported by the country offices have documented the impact of COVID-19. An online documentation platform has been created (to be published in 2021) documenting and showcasing the CSO-partners' COVID-19 response. In addition, a COVID-19 impact survey has been carried out across the four countries in the YEWA programme with the purpose of understanding how COVID-19 has impacted the daily life of the communities.

Despite the challenges related to collaboration and mutual learning during COVID-19, the introduction of online communication platforms has enabled us to ensure exchange of best practices across countries, since we can quickly meet at a low cost with more people participating than during the traditional on-the-ground workshops. Furthermore, the youth-led groups have shown great ownership and willingness to support not only their peers and communities related to the prevention of COVID-19, but also to consider the socio-economic and human consequences of restrictions and lockdowns in both rural and urban areas. This development shows their strength as civil society actors even in times of crisis and has enabled them to be at the frontline of a major crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Progress towards reaching development objective and outcomes

Our account for progress towards the four outcomes of the strategic partnership is presented below. For each of outcome, we start by presenting the overall results in line with the summary result framework (see Annex C). Then, under each of the outcomes, we present results achieved, major deviations and challenges and learning for YEWA and SAIC, respectively.

1. RESILIENCE – GROWING UP SAFE AND HEALTHY

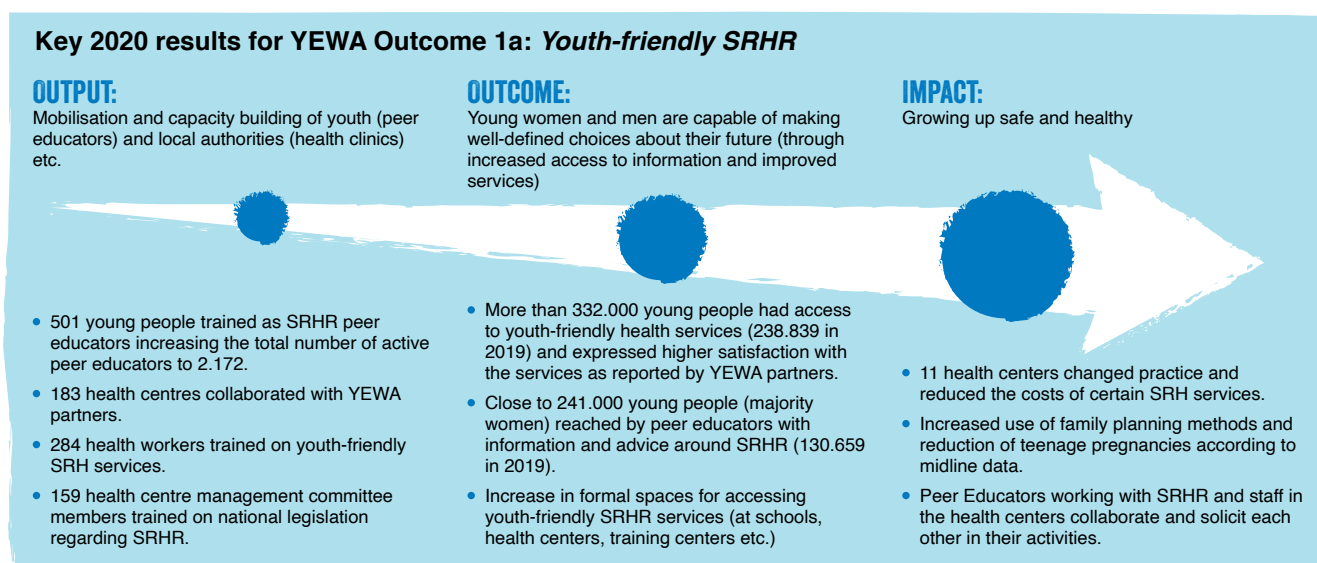
Outcome 1: *Young women and men play an active role in creating safe, inclusive, and stable local environments conducive for healthy youth development and positive transition to adulthood.* In 2020, young women and men contributed to notable achievements in safety and health across the eight countries. YEWA has contributed to ensuring that more than 330,000 young people have access to youth-friendly health services, which is an increase of almost 94,000 from the previous year, cf. Annex C. Furthermore, SAIC has supported over 2,200 young urban community activists who have designed and executed community safety initiatives and established crucial collaboration with local authorities, communities, and police contributing to reducing violence and enhancing social cohesion in these urban areas, cf. Annex C. A common indication of impact across all countries is an observed behavioural change among young women and men, who participate more actively in dialogue, awareness-raising and initiatives to create conducive and youth-friendly local environments. They do so in close collaboration with local authorities, who in turn, are more open towards the contributions of young people.

Youth Empowerment in West Africa – progress towards outcome 1

Progress towards reaching outcome 1a (SRHR)

Young women and men are capable of making well-defined choices about their future is measured annually as the number of young women and men who have access to youth-friendly health services. In 2020, the total number was 332,566 (F: 196,586 M: 135,980) which is a 25% increase compared to 2019 (adjusted for number of health centres which increased during the period), cf. Annex C. Thus, the expected increase of 10% in 2020 has been more than met.

Results achieved in 2020



Behavioural change

Strengthened collaboration between youth groups, peer educators and medical staff continues to have a positive impact in terms of increasing numbers of young people consulting health centres. Likewise, the increased level of SRHR information and education have a behavioural impact in terms of increased use of e.g., contraception/family planning methods which have a significant impact on young women's health and possibilities to access education, jobs etc. Midline data from Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo show a clear reduction in early pregnancies (under 18 years of age) from 12.3% at baseline to 5.8% at midline. Moreover, the applied holistic approach with awareness-raising on SRHR and nonviolent education for both young people, parents, medical staff etc. create spaces of intergenerational dialogue and contribute significantly to the process of changing mentalities by creating more openness around SRHR related issues. The level of impact varies within country/locality, but this crucial change is observed in all countries and most clearly in Benin where the midline results indicate cases of successful gender empowerment underway, as a result of YEWA's actions.

PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO BECOME PREGNANT BEFORE THE AGE OF 18

BENIN	from 14% at baseline to 3% at midline
BURKINA FASO	from 7% at baseline to 7% at midline
TOGO	from 16% at baseline to 7% at midline

Progress towards reaching outcome 1b (Resilience)

Local communities, including young people play an active role in creating safe and inclusive environments for peace and stability is measured annually as the number of CSO-partners actively taking part in national coordination clusters on crisis prevention and management. In 2020, the total number was 8 CSO-partners compared to 11 foreseen which is 75% of the set target. Hence, the set outcome for 2020 was only partly reached, as the three remaining CSO-partners are still in the process of obtaining membership status within the national coordination clusters.

Results achieved in 2020

Key 2020 results for YEWA Outcome 1b: Resilience

OUTPUT:

Mobilisation and capacity building of youth

- 1.668 (457 in 2019) young people AND 465 representatives of local authorities trained on conflict prevention and response to crises.
- 508 young people (419 in 2019) have benefited from training in methods of producing and storing resilient and climate change resistant crops.

OUTCOME:

Local communities, including young people play an active role in creating safe and inclusive environments for peace and stability

- 49 Community Resilience Action Plans (21 in 2019) developed – initiated by the youth groups – on crisis prevention and management.
- 22 community resilience initiatives developed by youth groups focusing on resilient and climate resistant production methods of local crops and its storage (Mali, Burkina Faso and Benin).

IMPACT:

Growing up safe and healthy

- Awareness in climate change related issues have been raised in the communities.
- Agricultural practices adapted to climate change have increasingly been applied by youth groups and individuals.
- Increasing awareness have been observed at all levels in the communities (government, CSOs and youth) on the importance and the benefits of developing Community Resilience Plans.

In 2020, there was a great focus on COVID-19 under this component. However, we also noted an increased engagement by youth-led-groups and authorities to work together locally in the aspects of resilience most pertinent in the specific context. Issues like conflict prevention and mitigation, climate change adaptation, nature conservation, and strengthening of human rights protection mechanisms were included in local action plans that are now under implementation.

Major deviations in terms of reaching outcome and related to the budget

In 2020, there was a deviation on the resilience outcome (see *Progress towards reaching outcome 1b (Resilience)*), but no other major deviations in relation to SRHR or the budget.

Challenges and learning

An important and continued learning is the importance of offering SRHR services in an appropriate way. In most areas of intervention, the community health centres have, thanks to the advocacy of youth groups, reserved specific hours for youth. In Burkina Faso, the youth centres established by YEWA partners in 2020 (one centre directly supported by the programme) produced interesting results. The centres offer access to medical advice and consultation but also a social space with a cafe, Wi-Fi connection, cable TV, which makes it more legitimate, interesting, and discrete to ask for advice and receive treatment.

COVID-19 resulted in a general deterioration of health conditions in the communities. People were afraid of showing up at clinics. This resulted in untreated diseases, late treatment and a higher number of non-medically supported pregnancies and childbirths. For the CSO-partners and youth-led groups, it was difficult or impossible to maintain planned information and awareness raising sessions due to periodically formal assembly bans, or young people were not allowed by their parents to join meetings due to fear of COVID-19. However, alternative ways of working were introduced, e.g. peer education via radio, and training in smaller groups.

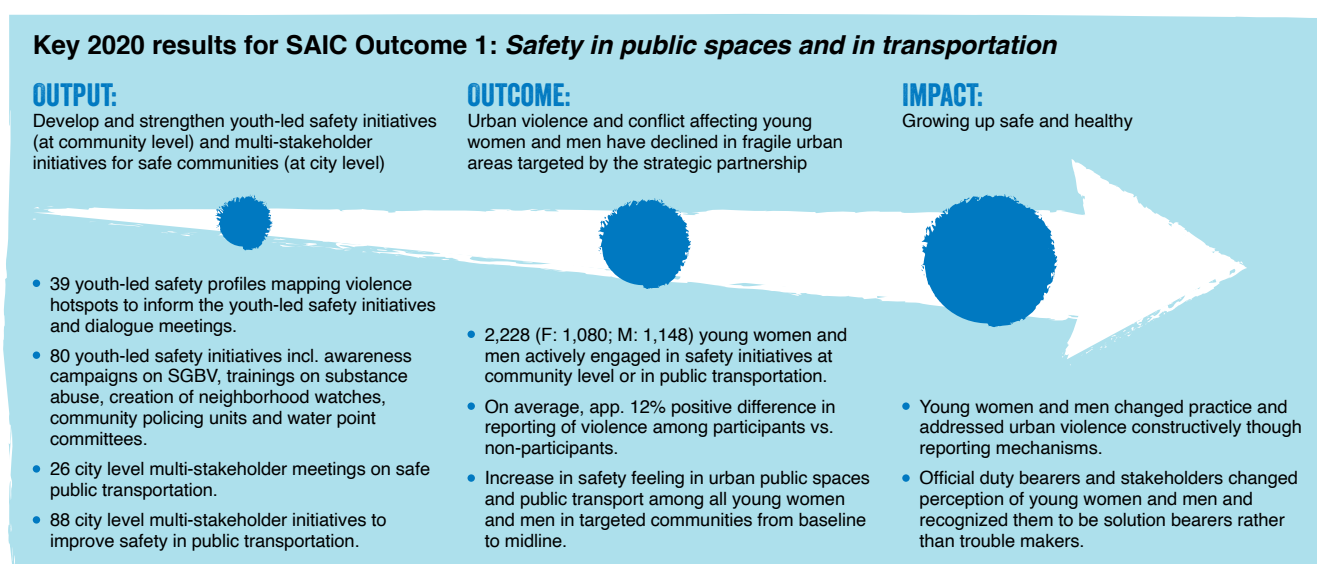
Some planned interventions were thus replaced by increased collaboration with health centres and participation in COVID-19 awareness-raising activities. 1,301 peer educators and CSO-partners (F: 578; M: 723) were trained on COVID-19 and protective measures. Subsequently, 122,973 young men and women participated in COVID-19 awareness sessions (F: 65,777; M: 57,196). In addition, CSO-partners and youth-led groups in the communities provided materials and support to health clinics and schools in the form of hand washing equipment, hand sanitizer, liquid soap, face masks etc. Although we saw deviation in the progress towards the resilience outcome, many of the youth groups were able to use COVID-19 as a way to establish themselves as resilience actors locally and improve their collaboration with local authorities.

Safe and Inclusive Cities – progress towards outcome 1

Progress towards reaching outcome 1: *Urban violence and conflict affecting young women and men have declined in fragile urban areas targeted by the strategic partnership* is measured annually as the number of young women and men actively engaged in safety initiatives at community level or in public transportation. In 2020, the total number was 2,228

(F: 1,080; M: 1,148), which is 120% of the target set at 1,863 young women and men, cf. Annex C. Hence, progress towards reaching this outcome in 2020 has been more than reached.

Results achieved in 2020



Increase in safety feeling in public spaces

Across the four countries young women and men developed safety profiles to map violence hotspots in the urban areas and inform the youth-led safety initiatives and dialogue meetings with community members and local authorities, especially the police. Midline results indicate that the SAIC programme has contributed to improvements in young women and men's safety feeling in public spaces in their communities; from 26% at baseline to 32% at midline across the four countries, cf. Annex C. This is quite significant in the light of an extremely challenging context in all four countries where the COVID-19 pandemic caused increased levels of so-called "lockdown violence" by the police under the guise of enforcing government regulations to contain the pandemic.

SAFETY FEELING IN COMMUNITIES AMONG ALL & AMONG YOUNG WOMEN			
KENYA	from 21% at baseline to 33% at midline & from 19% at baseline to 29% at midline		
ZIMBABWE	from 17% at baseline to 24% at midline & from 16% at baseline to 19% at midline		
UGANDA	from 15% at baseline to 20% at midline & from 13% at baseline to 17% at midline		
ETHIOPIA	from 50% at baseline to 45% at midline & from 49% at baseline to 41% at midline		

While the gender tendency in terms of safety feeling in public spaces across all countries is that young women feel less safe than young men, it is still significant that young women feel safer at the time of midline compared to baseline, particularly in Kenya. Part of the explanation for the increased perception of safety can be ascribed to a notable

behavioural change among young women and men participating in the programme, which is being noted by stakeholders across the countries. They see young people actively engaging in safety initiatives, such as installation of solar lights at violence hotspots, door-to-door awareness campaigns on SGBV, trainings on substance abuse and referrals to rehabilitation services etc., which has contributed to the ongoing change in perceptions of young people as solution bearers rather than troublemakers. While the midline results do not reflect increased safety feeling in Ethiopia among the general youth living in the targeted communities, young SAIC participants used new skills gained through safety trainings to resolve conflicts between youth groups and even helped facilitate dialogue between police and perpetrators of violence. In Zimbabwe, safety initiatives and conflict resolution trainings for water point committees are seen by communities as instrumental in reducing violence and conflict at water points. In all four countries, community policing and neighbourhood watches play important roles in reducing violence and enhancing the feeling of safety in public spaces.

Furthermore, among the interventions contributing to the increase in safety feeling were the campaigns for the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence* which were done in all four countries. In Zimbabwe, a youth-led campaign on how to prevent and report domestic violence and violence in public spaces, which included online video skits and discussions on social media, reached an estimated one million people. Further, one of the partners in Zimbabwe worked with the Department of Social Development and the Victim Friendly Unit (VFU) (the child protection unit of the police) to identify and respond to SGBV cases and strengthen their understanding of the consequences of the COVID-19 lockdown on children and young people. As a result, the number of referrals made by the VFU to the judicial system has increased from 1-2 per month to an average of 15 cases per week.

PARTICIPATORY ACTION IS KEY TO IMPROVING SAFETY

Bizunesh from Ethiopia finds that the Safe and Inclusive Cities programme has created a participatory platform for both the youth and the women in addressing security problems of their neighborhood.

WHY: Bizunesh explains that *“In the past, we often discussed about the safety and security problems of our localities. We also prescribed some of the solutions to the challenges. Nevertheless, we couldn’t implement the solutions.”*

WHAT: *“We are now working with the young people of the locality. Unlike our previous experiences, the current one is not limited to a one-time meeting. Even beyond the discussion, we have prepared community safety mappings”* says Bizunesh.

HOW: After the participants of the programme were equipped with the necessary knowledge from the training, they carried out community safety analysis by which they identified the security challenges and risks along the protective factors. Upon completion of community safety mappings, they developed action plans, and went on to implementing the initiatives in the respective neighborhoods. Bizunesh believes that; *“with the spirit of love and mutual understanding enhanced by the training, we can do a lot!”*



BIZUNESH PARTICIPATED IN SEVERAL SAIC ACTIVITIES INCLUDING NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT WITH THE WOMEN ASSOCIATION OF HER LOCALITY

RESULT: Aimed at establishing the youth-led safety initiatives, the training has contributed a lot in capacitating the youth and creating safe neighborhoods. The youth improved their knowledge of identifying community safety problems and addressing the problems, and started demanding change through a participatory action approach. Tirunesh, who also participated in the training now believes that *“women, in particular, are very safe whenever they go out of their homes. Solving the problems through discussion means a lot to our community.”*

Increase in awareness of violence, and reporting of violence among SAIC participants



In addition, a plausible explanation to the increased safety feeling is the significant increase in young people's knowledge of their rights, forms of violence, risk and protective factors of violence, increased reporting and improved relations with stakeholders.

REPORTING OF VIOLENCE AMONG NON-SAIC PARTICIPANTS & SAIC PARTICIPANTS

KENYA	from 30% at baseline to 38% and 45% at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 36% at baseline to 22% and 47% at midline
UGANDA	from 40% at baseline to 48% and 61% at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 30% at baseline to 18% and 20% at midline

The general increase in safety feeling reflects a wider impact measurement of the consolidated SAIC intervention model which not only includes the above-mentioned safety interventions, but also the youth economic empowerment (outcome 2) and youth governance interventions (outcome 3) where safety feeling closely relates to improved work opportunities, active participation and shared responsibility/social cohesion.

Increase in safety feeling in public transportation

Across the four countries, city-level multistakeholder initiatives have been held to improve safety in public transportation, including training of police officers and creating awareness on the prevention of gender-based violence and sexual harassment in public transportation. Midline results from Kenya and Zimbabwe show that more young women and men in the targeted locations experienced feeling safer in public transportation at midline compared to baseline. In Kenya, the increase in safety feeling in public transportation e.g., busses, public motorbikes, walking to/from work was significant for women where 17% felt safe at midline compared to 10% at baseline.

In all four countries, city level multi-stakeholder meetings have been held on safe public transportation, incl. transport operators, drivers and passengers and their associations, and transportation authorities. In Kenya, Safe Public Transport Ambassadors have directly engaged with a multitude of transport sector stakeholders to implement different initiatives in transport hubs and Matatus (mini-busses). Both stakeholders and young people express that the initiatives have helped address sexual harassment and violence, especially against women and girls. Moreover, the Safety Ambassadors have also observed a reduction in cases of harassment of transport operators by the police, which they attribute to the fact that they are now organised and recognised by traffic police officers on patrol. Previously, the collaboration with the Kenya Traffic Police was slow as the ambassadors feared the police whom they saw as violent and arrogant. [See video](#) the Safe Communities approach in the SAIC Programme in Uganda

Major deviations in terms of reaching outcome and related to the budget

There were no major deviations related to outcome 1 and its budget in 2020.

Challenges and learning

The COVID-19 pandemic caused increased levels of violence across the six cities where SAIC is being implemented. Youth-led documentation processes carried out at the beginning of the pandemic in Uganda, Kenya and Zimbabwe support these findings and have resulted in new initiatives to increase collaboration between young people and police to address issues of mistrust. In addition, all four countries adjusted their strategies to include an explicit focus on SGBV prevention. In Uganda and Zimbabwe, where mobility for Plan and partner staff was restricted, young people were able to continue some of their initiatives as long as they were carried out in collaboration with local leaders and police. Young people thus played an active role in sustaining contact to communities throughout the lockdown, which ensured that affected families and individuals could be reached and that victims of violence received psycho-social support and counselling.

The common contextual challenges affecting safety during COVID-19 in all countries were: spread of misinformation, resistance towards COVID-19 restrictions, growing political instability, and increasing desperation among citizens losing their livelihoods. Each country team has developed strategies to navigate the "new normal" and address conflicts arising out of desperation, such as in Addis Ababa where food support was seen to contribute to the prevention of violent robberies that might have increased with the loss of economic livelihoods. In Zimbabwe, a key learning was to ensure access to information about restrictions to decrease the risk of young people coming into conflict with law enforcement, while also pushing back on policy makers to ensure that response measures are proportionate to the risk of COVID-19 transmission. In Ethiopia, political instability and ethnic tensions in the northern regions affected Addis Ababa as well, with travel restrictions and blocked communication channels (telephone and internet) resulting in slight implementation delays.

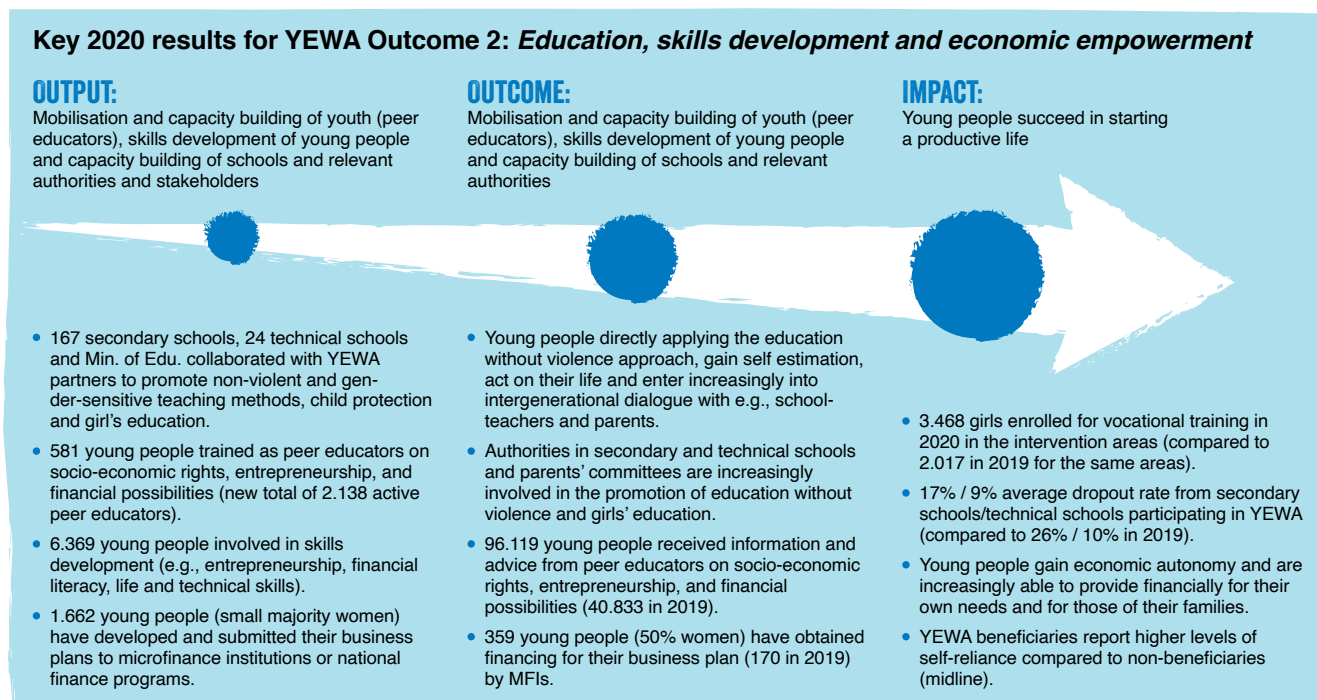
2. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT – STARTING A PRODUCTIVE WORKING LIFE

Outcome 2: *Young women and men are socially empowered and increasingly economically self-reliant* is measured across the two programmes as the number of young women and men involved in skills development (e.g., entrepreneurship training, financial literacy, life and technical skills). In 2020, a total of 8,934 young people (F: 4,364, M: 4,570) were involved in skills development, which is 89% of the set target of 10,074. COVID-19 was a major barrier to achieving the target as periods of lockdown, restricted mobility and limitations on social gatherings affected implementation in both programmes. Nevertheless, both programmes have contributed to a higher degree of self-reliance of young women and men, which is indicated by the fact that access to work and/or other income generating activities were notably higher for programme participants than for the general youth population. While many young people suffered from huge financial shocks making food and cash assistance necessary, the pandemic also brought about new business and innovation. In all eight countries, youth-led groups were supported to adapt to changing markets and combining business opportunities with support to the health response, e.g., by producing masks, sanitizer, soap, etc. Such youth-led initiatives were supported by various government and private sector stakeholders and financial institutions and have opened new doors for collaboration on working conditions for young people.

Youth Empowerment in West Africa – progress towards outcome 2

Progress towards reaching outcome 2: *Young women and men are capable of making well-defined choices about their future, complete an education and become self-reliant* is measured annually as the number of young women and men involved in skills development (e.g. entrepreneurship, financial literacy, life and technical skills). In 2020, the total number was 6,369 (F: 3,000 M: 3,369) which is 79% of the target set at 8,085, cf. Annex C. This deviation is mostly due to COVID-19 restrictions. The planned trainings were to some extent replaced by awareness trainings on COVID-19 and protection measures.

Results achieved in 2020



Results for formal education and vocational training: access to youth-friendly education

The programme's holistic approach towards promotion of nonviolent education – and the importance of education in general, not least for girls – implying training of both parents, instructors, apprentices, and students – show very interesting results (cf. diagram above). The collected testimonies from our CSO-partners and youth groups point out that it is essential to provide a comprehensive alternative to the traditional, authoritarian education which has dominated the educational system and the parents' upbringing.

Income generating activities: from successful saving groups to MFI funding

The programme's strategy of training and strengthening youth's business skills in order for them to obtain financial support from their own savings groups, an Micro Finance Institution (MFI) or national youth employment programmes gave impressive results in 2020. The number of young people who received funding for their business project from an MFI or a national financing programme doubled since 2019 and more than doubled for young women in Mali, Benin, and Burkina Faso.

Creation of saving groups within the youth groups is a first step to obtaining external funding and strengthening entrepreneurial behaviour allowing young people to become independent and to ensure resources for their group. Interestingly, the feedback from beneficiaries illustrates that even very small amounts and relatively short training produce tangible results.

"YEWA has allowed us to organise ourselves. Initially, I had no idea about savings. But the facilitator told us about the advantages of saving groups. This motivated us to create one. After a few months of saving, I benefited from a first credit of 50,000 F [app. 85 €] which allowed me to raise sheep. After repaying, I received a second credit of 120,000 F to store cereals. At present, although I am an apprentice, I manage to meet most of my needs without having to turn to my parents. The programme has made me aware of my economic empowerment, and I invite other young people to follow in my footsteps."

Edwige, apprentice seamstress, 20 years, Togo

Generally, access to MFI credit is difficult for young inexperienced people. Some of the CSO-partners have strengthened the collaboration with MFIs and have for instance arranged local meetings with the potential youth entrepreneurs. Most of them are active within the agricultural sector and in some areas locally organised mini value chain workshops have successfully connected young entrepreneurs with local/regional transformers or purchasers of agricultural products. Combined with training in certified production, the young entrepreneurs have considerably strengthened the possibility of improving, ensuring and stabilising their business.

[See video](#) on the YEWA approach in Burkina Faso

Empowered youth entrepreneurs

The entrepreneurial training and awareness-raising on social and economic rights significantly affect the self-estimation of young people and their trust in the future. Furthermore, in a context where reciprocal family support is very important, becoming financially self-reliant often enables young people to take care of other family members' needs and thus strengthen their position within the community. Midline results show that 58% of YEWA participants have access to work and/or other income generating activities, while the number for non-participants is 53%. A significant increase is especially evident among female participants.

ACCESS TO WORK AND/OR OTHER INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES AMONG NON-YEWA PARTICIPANTS AND YEWA PARTICIPANTS

WOMEN	53% vs. 65% at midline
MEN	47% vs. 52% at midline

YOUTH COOPERATIVES PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE GROUNDNUT PRODUCTION IN COLLABORATION WITH AGRI-FOOD COMPANY

WHY: Despite advantageous climate, soil and vegetation in the Ziro region in Burkina Faso, young people quit working in agriculture due to limited sustainable business opportunities in this field. Young people in the province have been trained in agricultural entrepreneurship and new production techniques, but access to a secure and sustainable market is still lacking.

WHAT: The youth cooperative received agro-entrepreneurship training and subsequently the CSO partner established contact with a national agribusiness company expressing the need for 500 tonnes of aflatoxin-free peanuts by 2023 in order to produce food supplements for malnourished children.

HOW: The programme facilitated a partnership agreement (2020-2023) between young producers and the private company which ensures training and technical support to youth cooperatives for production, harvesting and sales of their production. 12 youth cooperatives benefited from credits worth 2,400,000 FCFA [3650 €] for the purchase of seeds and inputs. Four farmer field schools to produce aflatoxin free groundnut seed were established.



RESULT: 50 young people (F: 22, M: 28) have been trained in different aspects of sustainable, aflatoxin free, groundnuts production. This training was replicated in the youth cooperatives for the benefit of all members. 63 tonnes of shelled peanuts produced have been delivered to INNOFASO. 5.7 tonnes of basic seeds will be sold to cooperatives for the next production. The partnership has enabled the young people to have a secure market for their production, thus providing them with a better and more sustainable future in agricultural business.

Youth seizes opportunities opened by COVID-19

In all 4 countries and particularly in Togo, the CSO-partners and their local partners seized the opportunity offered by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of new business activities for youth. Thus, within the programme, 352 young people (256 young women) were trained in entrepreneurial techniques related to COVID-19 (production of face masks, liquid soap, etc.)

"The Mayor's Office asked our youth group for help when they began taking measures against COVID-19. We made 500 masks on demand, which they bought. We also sold them 100 litres of liquid soap, we helped them to fill the installed handwashing devices with water and oversaw handwashing and mask usage among those coming to the market."

Kossi, 23 years, Wahala, Togo. Source: COVID-19 impact survey

Major deviations in terms of reaching outcome and related to the budget

In 2020, there was a deviation related to outcome 2 (see *Progress towards outcome 2*), but no major budget deviations.

Challenges and learning



To improve access to MFI funding and successful submission of business plans, the CSOs in Benin and Burkina Faso organised meetings between potential youth entrepreneurs and local MFIs. This contributed to an increase in successfully submitted business plans. While it was also learned that using successful local entrepreneurs as councillors for young unexperienced entrepreneurs can play an important role in terms of providing encouragement and adapted technical support.

Advice from a young female entrepreneur

“With regard to young people and girls, I challenge them to be entrepreneurial despite the various and multiple obstacles in order to become financially stable and independent of men. An economically independent woman is spared from gender-based violence and is respected by her husband and society.”

Justine, owner of hairdresser shop, 29 years, Burkina Faso

To enable sustainable production, it is important to support the formalisation of producer groups and certification of production. In Burkina Faso, the set-up of “help desks” composed by technical staff from government decentralised structure (Ministry of Youth), CSO-partners, peer educators, and representants from local MFI was a successful way to assist young people in finding appropriate ways to finance their project.

A persistent challenge is that low literacy skills in rural areas, particularly for young women, makes it difficult for upcoming youth entrepreneurs to develop business plans that live up to the formal requirements of the MFIs.

In relation to COVID-19, the countries have experienced closure of schools. Alternatives, such as online teaching or television or radio transmission constituted a considerable challenge particularly for young girls and men in rural areas without access to necessary devices. In addition, restrictions on movement, partly closure of public markets, and land borders had a considerable impact on economic activities. Product flow was impacted resulting in difficulties for reimbursement of loans in informal savings groups and formal MFIs.

YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN EMERGENCY (YEEIE)

In 2020, approx. DKK 1.2 mio. YEWA funds allocated for 2019 (Burkina Faso) have supported 200 young people (IDP and host community) in the Centre North region of Burkina Faso.



Results achieved:

- 200 young people trained in entrepreneurial leadership.
- 130 young beneficiaries (F: 98, M: 32) of financial support for income generating activities.
- 33 young people placed in apprenticeships and innovative trades.
- 41 people (local and customary authorities, youth, etc.) trained in conflict prevention and management.

“We left everything. When we arrived in Kaya we were greeted by my husband’s uncle. It was difficult for him to take care of us. We enlisted at the local authorities to at least have food. But we never saw our names on the food distribution lists. One day, we were summoned by an association, ATAD. They told us that thanks to Plan, we could get support to carry out an activity of our choice. Instead of being selected to receive food, we were selected for training. So, I was trained in entrepreneurship for 5 days and I received 100,000 CFA francs (appr. 150 €) to carry out an income-generating activity. I decided to do itinerant trade in loincloths and shoes. Every morning I leave the house at 7 am to survey the city in search of clients. Sometimes I earn 5,000 francs a day in profit because I walk long distances looking for clients. I am happy because I can provide for my family. My husband works as a welder in a workshop here in town. Before we didn’t have enough to eat. We had to beg sometimes, now we can buy food and take care of ourselves. It’s a satisfaction for us.”

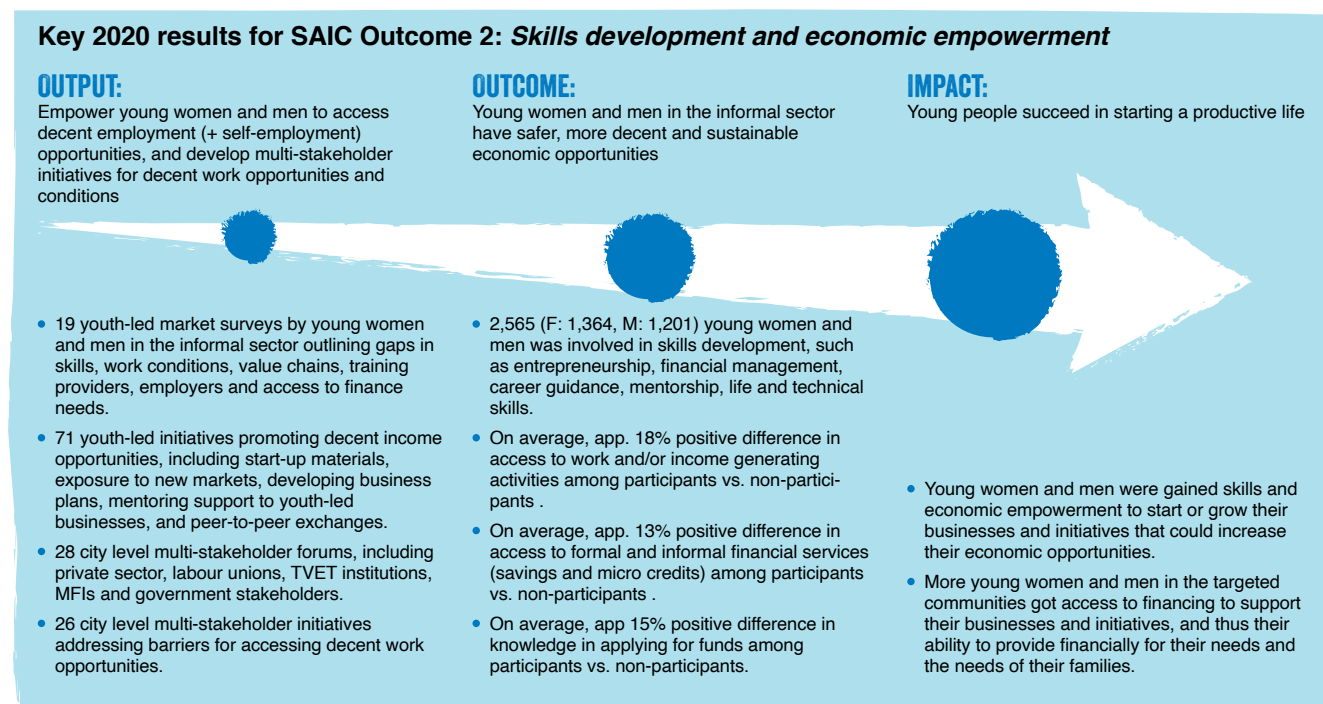
Fati, 31 years old, married, 3 children

Safe and Inclusive Cities – progress towards outcome 2

Progress towards reaching outcome 2: *Young women and men in the informal sector have safer, more decent and sustainable economic opportunities* is measured annually as the number of young women and men involved in skills development, such as entrepreneurship, financial management, career guidance, mentorship, life and technical skills.

In 2020, the total number was 2,565 (F: 1,364, M: 1,201), which is 129% of the target set at 1,989 young women and men, cf. Annex C.

Results achieved in 2020



Increased access to work and income generating activities

Midline results show positive improvements in the economic opportunities for young women and men in the target communities, particularly for those who participated in the programme activities, which indicates a strong contribution from the skills development and decent work interventions under the SAIC programme.

ACCESS TO WORK AMONG NON-SAIC PARTICIPANTS & SAIC PARTICIPANTS				
KENYA	from 38%	at baseline to 33%	and 55%	at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 20%	at baseline to 22%	and 34%	at midline
UGANDA	from 40%	at baseline to 49%	and 69%	at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 20%	at baseline to 24%*	at midline among all young women and men	

While the midline results show a gender gap in terms of access to income opportunities, where more young men compared to women have access to work and/or income generating activities, the increase is noteworthy for both young women and men.

In 2020, youth-led groups were supported in all four countries to start or grow their businesses and initiatives that could increase their economic opportunities. For instance, the team in Zimbabwe tested a community skills transfer model that uses knowledge from market surveys and market chain analyses to connect youth-led businesses with relevant local craftsmen and businesses for mentorship. A local partner in Zimbabwe, also provided Start Your Business trainings, assisting 60 young people to expand their enterprises and linking them to different stakeholders

*In the Ethiopian midline data, the validation exercise showed an important limitation of the representativeness of the SAIC participants in the sample due to an imprecise formulation of the screener question to identify participation in the programme where only Plan International was mentioned as implementing partner. This might have caused a relatively low sample of the SAIC participants group, and thus difficulties in comparing this group to non-participants. Thus, only significant differences between SAIC participants and non-participants is considered relevant to present for the Ethiopian sample, as small and insignificant differences might not be representative for the actual trend.

and opportunities. A survey carried out after the training indicated that of the 60 young people, some have increased their income by over 50% while the majority increased their income by 25%. Furthermore, for their business idea on solar supplies, one of the youth-led groups won an award of EUR 12,000 and a trip to Uganda to receive mentorship from the International Cooperative Entrepreneurship Alliance. They are now employing eight young people in Epworth, Zimbabwe.



More youth get access to financial services

Across the four countries, business registration is mandatory for youth-led groups that want to apply for financial services, such as government funds or financing from banks and MFIs. Improving the knowledge of young people about procedures for applying for funds and supporting youth-led groups to register their businesses and obtain necessary licenses have therefore continued to be big themes in 2020. Combined, these efforts have contributed to the increase in access to financing, which were evident from the midline results in all of the SAIC countries.

KNOWLEDGE ON APPLYING FOR FUNDS AMONG NON-SAIC PARTICIPANTS & SAIC PARTICIPANTS

KENYA	from 26% at baseline to 27% and 44% at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 18% at baseline to 15% and 32% at midline
UGANDA	from 31% at baseline to 24% and 37% at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 21% at baseline to 26% and 40% at midline

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES AMONG NON-SAIC PARTICIPANTS & SAIC PARTICIPANTS

KENYA	from 31% at baseline to 46% and 61% at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 17% at baseline to 16% and 23% at midline
UGANDA	from 28% at baseline to 14% and 32% at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 61% at baseline to 65%* at midline <i>among all young women and men</i>

Major deviations in terms of reaching outcome and related to the budget

There were no major deviations related to outcome 2 and its budget in 2020.

Challenges and learning

Long periods of COVID-19 lockdowns and restricted mobility have had a big impact on economic activity in all four countries, including on youth-led businesses. In Zimbabwe, an assessment conducted under SAIC showed that 67% of the informal youth-led groups had diverted business capital in order to buy food. As a result, young people's engagement in programme activities dropped as they were looking for means of survival. Restrictions on mobility and social gatherings have nurtured creative solutions to enable continued economic activity. In Zimbabwe, at least half of the youth-led businesses embraced digital marketing in the wake of COVID-19. For instance, one youth-led group opened a Facebook shop where customers could place orders. This has helped them address the challenge of securing a physical market space and has increased their market share by 40%.

However, in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, high inflation rates and increasing market prices have had further impact, both on the cost of project implementation and on the financial resilience of the youth-led businesses. In Kampala, young people are (re)turning to theft and commercial sex work for survival. As such, there is an emerging accountability issue around access to financial services for the most vulnerable youth. However, stakeholder engagements and social accountability work was difficult due to COVID-19 and the tense pre-election period in Uganda in the latter part of 2020, especially given the anticipated shift in officials to other offices.

3. EXERCISING CITIZENSHIP – YOUNG AGENTS OF CHANGE

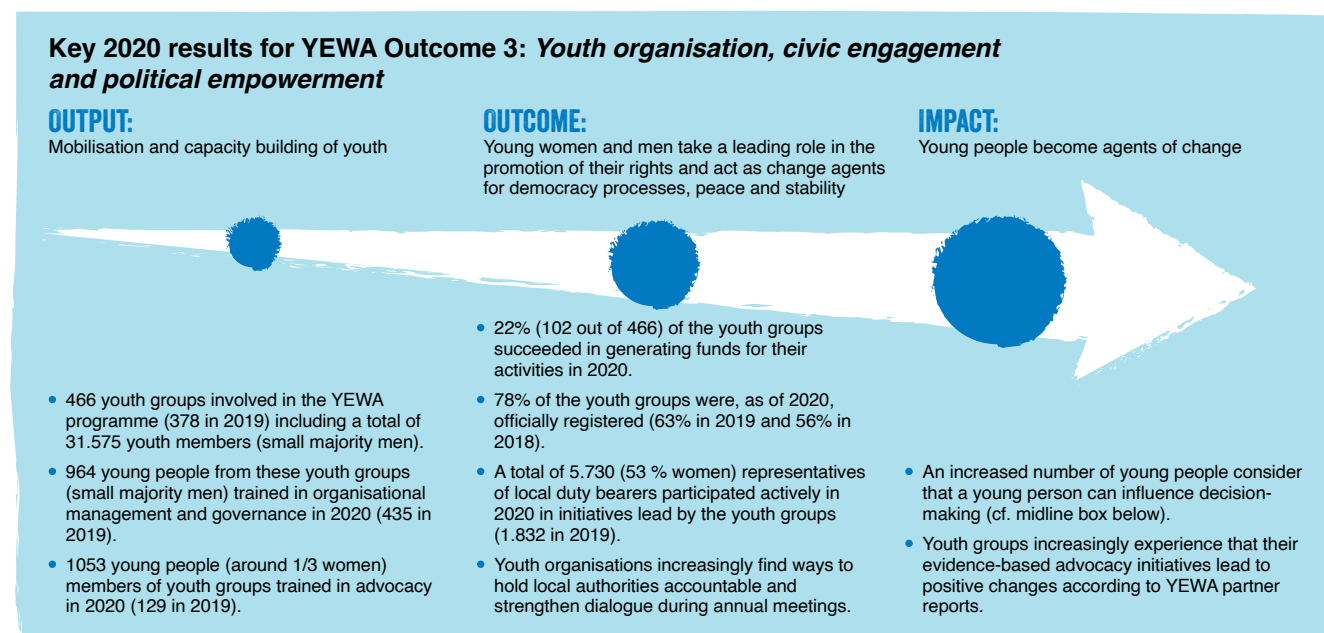
Outcome 3: *Strong youth-led CSOs promote the rights of young people and influence local planning and governance* has been measured jointly as *the percentage of young women and men who think local decision-making is inclusive and responsive in relation to advocacy initiatives for increased access to youth-friendly services and decent employment* through the midline processes in the eight countries.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the youth-led groups have in 2020 advocated for their rights to and ensured improved services related to safer and better roads, operating spaces and land for them to grow their businesses, as well as youth-responsive health services and youth-friendly recreational facilities and spaces. Amidst these difficulties, the responses from relevant stakeholders and duty-bearers have mostly been positive to the young people's continued engagements. Nonetheless, the youth-led groups have persisted to engage their urban and rural communities and local authorities through evidence-based advocacy initiatives as young agents of change in 2020.

Youth Empowerment in West Africa – progress towards outcome 3

The young women and men from local youth groups take a leading role in the promotion of their rights and act as change agents for democracy processes, peace and stability is measured annually as the percentage of youth groups who have generated funds through membership fees, income generating activities, and local fundraising to implement activities to mobilise peers. In 2020, 102 out of 466 youth groups (equivalent to 22%), succeeded in generating these funds, cf. Annex C. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, this was an increase compared to 2019, but smaller than the target, which was set to 237, thus 43% of the expectation was reached.

Results achieved in 2020



Youth female leadership

Though the specific indicator for outcome 3 is only fully reached in Benin (where 59 groups generated funds), considerable positive changes have been reported from all four countries, including increase in paid membership fees, and for Benin and Togo an increased youth female leadership. In Benin 35 young women were elected as presidents or vice-presidents and 52 elected as accountants within their 90 youth groups. In Togo, 69% of the members in the youth-led groups are women and half of the 43 groups are led by young women.

Apart from membership fees and income generating activities, several youth-led groups obtained funding from external sources, e.g., in Burkina Faso where a local young women's group, obtained funding from the French NGO Terre des hommes (approx. 2300 €). While in Benin, a local network of youth associations (covering eight umbrella associations and 60 village youth groups) elaborated a project addressing early pregnancies and received funding, 1050 € from the

Ministry of Youth in Benin. Early in the process, the network, coached by the CSO-partner got involved in activities related to youth issues with local, regional and national authorities, and was selected as the only youth organisation at the department level to get financing from the Ministry. Currently the network is active in obtaining accreditation within the Ministry of Youth, which can make it eligible for funding for its annual action plans.

Increased trust and belief in local authorities

Tendencies of increased engagement in regional and national apex organisations and similar forms of collaboration is also seen with other youth groups, particularly in Benin and Togo. In general, youths' participation in community life has increased through reparation of rural roads (vital for maintaining income generating activities), strengthened collaboration with municipalities and private sector e.g., obtaining land to grow vegetables or support from private sector to reconstruct a dike to control water. We thus see a reinforced reciprocal collaboration between the youth groups and the local authorities, and not only municipal councils (cf. case under outcome 4). This is also reflected in the YEWA midline where 96% of the youth involved in the programme now believe that local decision-making can be influenced by advocacy initiatives to improve the situation and opportunities of young people.

NON-YEWA PARTICIPANTS & YEWA PARTICIPANTS WHO THINK LOCAL DECISION-MAKING CAN BE INFLUENCED BY ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

BENIN	71% vs 98% at midline
TOGO	81% vs 99% at midline
BURKINA FASO	69% vs 95% at midline
MALI	74% vs 92% at midline

"I would like to congratulate the young people, especially from the youth groups. Without them, we would be powerless against the COVID-19 pandemic. They have criss-crossed villages and neighbourhoods as well as hamlets to raise awareness and provide support through the installation of rudimentary hand-washing facilities and the distribution of face masks. Through these different actions, the lives of these young people have completely changed. They are now responsible, able to take good initiatives and to work as a team."

EP, General Secretary of the Préfecture in Bassar, Togo

Major deviations in terms of reaching outcome and related to the budget

In 2020, there was a deviation related to outcome 3 (see *Progress towards outcome 3*), but no major budget deviations.

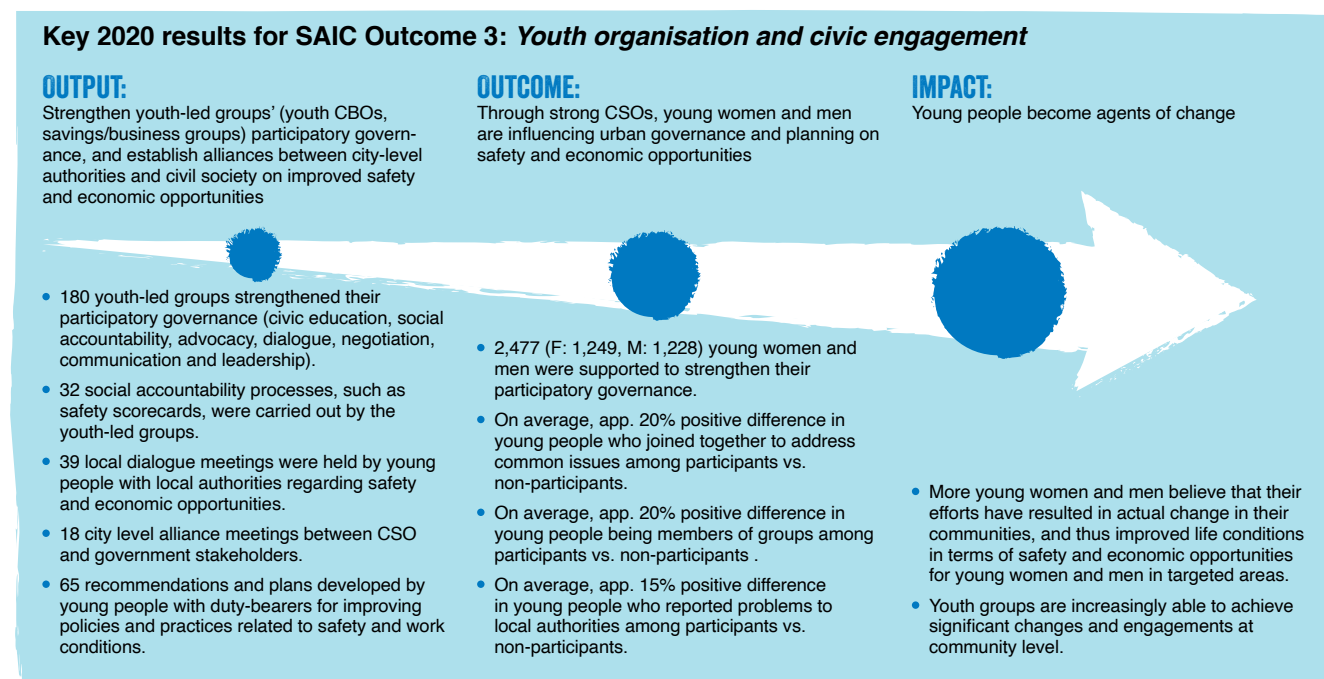
Challenges and learning

The youth organisations' financial and organisational capacities in the four countries are not very strong. In some areas, particularly in Mali and Burkina, it is a challenge for youth groups and organisations to get hold of the necessary papers in order to obtain a recognised legal status due to complicated administrative procedures, frequent strikes among public servants etc. This combined with the general poverty level of the populations makes it a challenging context for CSOs to collect membership fees, plan regular activities and obtain formal status. However, despite these hurdles, the youth groups have successfully contributed to changes in their communities and their importance within the communities is growing.

Safe and Inclusive Cities – progress towards outcome 3

Progress towards reaching outcome 3: *Through strong CSOs, young women and men are influencing urban governance and planning on safety and economic opportunities* is measured annually as the number of young women and men who have been supported to strengthen their participatory governance. In 2020, the total number was 2,477 (F: 1,249, M: 1,228), which is a 160% out of a target set at 1,550 young people in 2020, cf. Annex C. Hence, progress towards reaching this outcome in 2020 was superseded.

Results achieved in 2020



Strengthened youth organisation and collective action

Among participants of the SAIC programme, a significant increase in young people who joined together to address common issues was found.

NON-SAIC PARTICIPANTS & SAIC PARTICIPANTS JOINING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS A PROBLEM				
KENYA	from 19%	at baseline to 24%	and 52%	at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 10%	at baseline to 10%	and 32%	at midline
UGANDA	from 18%	at baseline to 18%	and 30%	at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 11%	at baseline to 13%	and 29%	at midline

Furthermore, a significant increase in young people actively engaging authorities to address community issues has occurred since the SAIC country programmes began in 2018, particularly among participants of the SAIC programme. In Kenya, the increase has been from 10% at baseline to 21% at midline of young people (SAIC participants) who expressed to have engaged with local authorities to address community issues, while in Uganda, the increase was from 17% to 39%, and for Zimbabwe, the increase was from 14% to 29%.

The registration of youth groups has been a particular issue that the young people have engaged with the authorities to address in 2020. By engaging Zimbabwe Youth Council, young people have worked to ease and enable registration of youth groups as well as jointly advocate for youth-friendly online registration of their businesses, which has been granted by the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Arts and Recreation in Zimbabwe. Across all four countries, significant increases are observed from baseline to midline in young women and men organised in groups.

GROUP MEMBERSHIP AMONG NON-SAIC PARTICIPANTS & SAIC PARTICIPANTS

KENYA	from 37% at baseline to 53% and 76% at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 19% at baseline to 25% and 53% at midline
UGANDA	from 29% at baseline to 44% and 87% at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 13% at baseline to 16% and 60% at midline

In both Kenya and Uganda, the relevant authorities have supported the registration of youth-led groups, which has led to an increase in the number of groups knowing and applying for youth funds from different government sources (see outcome 2 for further details). Such efforts have not only supported the youth-led groups but has also sustained their efforts beyond these country programmes.

Increased engagement between young people and local authorities

As a measure of active citizenship, the proportion of both young women and young men who reported a problem to their respective local authorities has significantly increased from the baseline to the midline among SAIC participants.

NON-SAIC PARTICIPANTS & SAIC PARTICIPANTS WHO REPORTED A PROBLEM TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

KENYA	from 10% at baseline to 7% and 21% at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 14% at baseline to 17% and 29% at midline
UGANDA	from 17% at baseline to 27% and 39% at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 11% at baseline to 11% and 26% at midline

These young people also believe that local authorities are much more responsive to their reported problems compared to baseline. In Uganda and Zimbabwe, the increase was larger for young women compared to young men; from 24% to 34%, and 9% to 15%, respectively, of the young women expressed that the local authorities were responsive to their reported problems. Some of these young women in Zimbabwe and Uganda have also participated in budget planning at different levels to advocate for youth-friendly services like safe access to urban spaces for their businesses and recreation. As a result of youth-led social accountability processes and local dialogue meetings, urban areas in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe have received improved services like speed bumps, streetlights, waste management, operating spaces for youth-led businesses, sports facilities, drug control and prevention for young people.

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO THINK ACTUAL CHANGE RESULTED FROM THEIR ADVOCACY WORK

KENYA	from 14% at baseline to 32% at midline
ZIMBABWE	from 9% at baseline to 14% at midline
UGANDA	from 18% at baseline to 24% at midline
ETHIOPIA	from 16% at baseline to 24% at midline

Youth reaches Danish media

Through the Communication for Development (C4D) component, youth groups from all four countries have as part of their governance work, produced case stories on issues and solutions in their communities. The C4D groups have received training in mobile journalism by the world leading mobile journalist Yusuf Omar, which has been a very effective method during COVID-19. Hence, the youth could report and share footage on how the crisis affected youth residing in urban slums. Stories produced by youth groups in Kenya and Uganda made headlines in Danish media several times – [DR Horisont](#), [Kristeligt Dagblad](#), [Politiken](#) and [DR TV Avisen](#).

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE KEY AGENTS OF CHANGE

Tatiana from Zimbabwe, and her fellow young people have become active members of their civil society and vibrantly advocate for issues affecting their wellbeing and urban areas.

WHY: Before young people have not always been respected in their urban community and were just thought to be all about idleness and drugs.

WHAT: The participatory governance training has equipped them with skills to organise as groups and develop confidence to speak for others. Tatiana now considers herself a good public speaker and advocate for young people and their goals.

HOW: *“Now we are being considered as a stakeholder in our community, Mbare. If the local authorities want to do some initiatives in our community and its facilities, they now consult the youth leadership for ideas and buy-in,”* says Tatiana. As a result, these youth leaders now have more respect from the community, as they are part of the voice representing their community and its interests and wishes.



TATIANA (IN THE MIDDLE) IS THE VICE CHAIRPERSON OF SKATE ZIMBABWE, A YOUTH-LED GROUP ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHTS OF YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THEIR COMMUNITY

RESULT: Tatiana says, *“I have been empowered as a young woman as I now know my rights and can defend as well as protect myself in case of harassment. So I am safer and relatively free to express myself.”* At community level, the young people are more productive and hopeful of their future, which has lessened crime and violence in their community, and they are united to achieve a common purpose to make Mbare, their urban community a better place for young people.

Major deviations towards reaching the outcome and related to the budget

Overall, there are no major deviations towards reaching this outcome nor related to its budget in 2020. However, there have been fewer local and city level meetings with authorities and government stakeholders across the four countries. This deviation is mainly due to the COVID-19 related restrictions prohibiting larger gatherings and meetings as well as keeping both local and city-level authorities occupied with matters related to preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Challenges and learning

The importance of having good working relationships with both local and city-level authorities has been very clear during COVID-19, both in terms of keep working and support the prevention of COVID-19. In Addis Ababa, it has been a challenge for hard-to-reach young people, such as drug abusers, to participate in governance processes as their primary concern and struggle has been to keep their business or income generating activities going during the pandemic. Such a challenge has been felt across the four countries; however, a key learning to ensure continued youth-led engagement and action has been mentorship of and among the youth groups, even online during lockdown.

Under the pandemic, the young people have learned to use online platforms to plan and execute their interventions as well as engage with duty-bearers. As part of these social accountability processes, also online, the young people have learned the importance of getting the duty-bearers to give written commitments to their recommendations and advocacy asks to enable continuous follow up and accountability in terms of making these commitments a reality.

4. CITY, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL ADVOCACY – EXPANDING YOUTH’S INFLUENCE

Outcome 4: *Civil society effectively generate and use knowledge to hold duty bearers to account and ensure evidence-based responses to issues affecting young women and men.* Across the YEWA and SAIC programmes, the assumption is that stronger evidence, data, and documentation, produced collaboratively between young people themselves, CSOs and research institutions strengthens the voice and influence of young people and consequently the dialogue and relationship with authorities and duty bearers.

Youth Empowerment in West Africa – progress towards outcome 4

Partner organisations, relevant CSOs and youth jointly carry out advocacy towards duty-bearers and the private sector for implementation of youth-friendly international conventions and standards as well as national policies and programmes is measured annually as evidence of change in commune and regional budgets on young people’s safety, market skills, learning opportunities and SRHR. 5 municipalities and regions financed actions promoting youth rights, which is one-third of the target set. Hence, the outcome for 2020 has only been partly reached.

Results achieved in 2020

- 87 staff (F: 24, M: 63) from CSO were trained in evidence-based advocacy
- 28 advocacy initiatives at local level were initiated by CSO-partner organisations together with the youth groups on youth socio-economic rights and youth SRHR
- 2 advocacy initiatives at national level were initiated by CSO-partner organisations in Benin on youth SRHR

Strengthened collaboration between youth-led groups and local authorities can be observed in all four countries. In several municipalities in Burkina Faso, youth groups have obtained observer seats in the municipal council, and advocacy groups have been organised in each of the municipalities in the intervention zones. In Benin, we also see examples of youth groups engaging in accountability sessions for public budgets, e.g. in relation to local health centres, while youth groups in both Mali, Burkina Faso and Benin have obtained municipal funding for new “youth houses” or for rehabilitation of existing spaces.

An important change is the strengthened youth organisation from village level to municipal level in Benin in particular, and the participation in regional, thematic CSO networks, where the YEWA partners in collaboration with other CSOs and local youth-led groups have joined a regional CSO network and collaborated around common advocacy activities regarding the application of SHRH related legal texts. In Togo, a similar process takes place and 43 youth groups have created a network on municipal level and further to prefectural level in order to speak with one voice and strengthen their advocacy activities. In Burkina Faso, the youth groups have gained support from local authorities in the advocacy activities towards regional authorities.

The evidence-based advocacy initiatives from youth groups in rural areas still have to be developed further to reach the national level policies and legislation. However, strengthened organisation on a local level and growing participation in regional networks are steps towards this overall goal. During 2020, CSOs and the local youth-led groups have been very active at a local level and obtained important results either related to their role as civil society actors, promoting local political accountability and ensuring the increased importance of youth voices in the local community, or in relation to increased respect of their socio- economic rights or SRHR.

Major deviations in terms of reaching outcome and related to the budget

There were no major budget deviations related to outcome 4, but there were deviations in terms of reaching set outcome target. Due to COVID-19 municipalities and regions have had a lot of unexpected expenses and have thus lacked resources to support youth initiatives.

Challenges and learning

A major challenge for the members of youth groups in rural areas is that the costs for transportation to the neighbouring towns/cities where advocacy actions take place are not affordable, due to their very low income. Often, they need support for transportation costs e.g., by an umbrella structure/international NGO.

ADVOCACY TO PROTECT MINORS FROM ENTERING PLACES THAT SERVE ALCOHOL

WHY: In Benin, an existing decree prohibits minors to enter bars, hotels, night clubs etc. where alcohol is served, but the decree was neither enforced by the police nor respected by concerned spaces. This frequently resulted in violation of girls' SRHR and missing respect of their physical integrity.

WHAT: Two CSO-partners, in collaboration with five youth groups, a local NGO and two youth umbrella network organisations, jointly organised and carried out collection of evidence/data. Based on this, an advocacy campaign was planned and carried out. The campaign ran for 1-2 weeks with joint advocacy activities in the region and addressed two levels: 1) public authorities i.e. the prefecture (prefet and the police); and 2) private sector actors i.e. restaurants, bars, hotels, etc.

HOW: Awareness raising activities were carried out targeting local authorities and private sector actors, and advocacy meetings were held with relevant departmental authorities, such the prefet and representatives from the ministries of Youth and Tourism as well as the National Police. During the primary advocacy week, the majority of the bars and hotels posted the ban. The prefet gave instructions to the republican police to follow-up and to reprimand. The campaign is still running.



RESULT: During their own control visits in the different locations, the involved youth groups have noticed that the decree was respected. The action will be evaluated in 2021.

Safe and Inclusive Cities – progress towards outcome 4

Progress towards reaching outcome 4 is measured by the number of research and documentation processes completed, and the quality and application of research and documentation. In 2020, the focus was to carry out four midline studies as follow-up studies to the baseline studies from 2018 which would thus generate valid and comparable community-level data on outcome indicators as well as a wide range of additional knowledge related to the thematic areas of the programme theory of change. Our expectations have been met in 2020.

Results achieved in 2020

- A comprehensive Urban Midline Survey, including 4,994 survey interviews with young women and men, 69 focus groups discussions and 131 key informant interviews were successfully completed across the four SAIC countries.
- One academic article on the Human Rights and Urban Violence in Nairobi, Kenya (with Aalborg University).
- Strengthened research collaboration with Global Hub on specific research questions, including a comprehensive study of Sexual Harassment and Gender-based Violence in public transportation in Lima, Peru.
- Learning and methodology development on practical aspects of carrying out data collecting during COVID-19, and the related implications and measures to be taken in future data collection processes.
- Youth- and Partner-led documentation of police brutality and gender-based violence during COVID-19 in Zimbabwe, Uganda and Kenya, which has been included and referenced in several Danish National Media (including Politiken).

The urban midline survey brought together empiric evidence gathered through scientifically valid research methodologies with youth-led participatory action research. This significantly contributed to refining the methodology of best practice impact assessments of urban violence prevention and youth governance programming in fragile urban settings, which is a key part of the SAIC research and documentation programme and highlights a gap in this field.

The studies represented longitudinal studies comparing midline outcome estimates with the baseline values to evaluate change over time. Moreover, a difference-in-difference design assesses the effectiveness of the programme by evaluating effects on direct programme participants and non-participants (young people and community members indirectly exposed to the programme). Effects caused by contextual factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic were controlled for in the results analysis, and we thus got a better understanding of the contribution of the programme interventions to the effects rather than other non-related factors affecting violence, decent work opportunities and civic participation.

Strengthened research collaboration with Plan Int. Global Hub

We have initiated an urban research collaboration with Plan Int. Global Hub research team aimed at producing and disseminating high-quality urban research products. The initiative will initially produce three core research reports as part of an Urban Youth Research Series. The series will explore issues related to urban violence, youth civic engagement, social cohesion, resilience, mobility, economic opportunities and gendered experiences in the urban space. The primary audience include colleagues across Plan Int., partner organisations, authorities and policymakers working to improve safety in informal urban settlements.

Strengthened participatory action research processes

Working with young women and men in a participatory process is essential to the implementation of all programme activities. This is done by bringing together action and reflection, and theory and practice in the pursuit of evidence-based practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to communities; and participatory action research (PAR), where young women and men are the community researchers. Involving and consulting youth in research, study design and advocacy is crucial for quality outcomes, accountability and impact. However, it is often difficult to involve young people in defining research questions and shaping research processes, especially for large scale surveys. Furthermore, the work of community researchers is not always recognised as research, which present barriers to sharing knowledge globally and within academia.

Therefore, we continuously support the young community researchers across all countries in having their ways of working moved/linked to the research agenda through recognising it as PAR as a way of strengthening the validity of the data generated. To do so, Plan and partners support the community researchers in developing ethical protocols of the PAR processes they lead, as well as general support throughout the process in carrying out their advocacy work through PAR approaches. Specifically, we initiated a PAR process to document COVID-19 related socio-economic effects on adolescent girls and young people in informal settlements in Kenya with the aim of informing and providing recommendations on what strategies and interventions should be put in place to address the effects of the pandemic now and in the future.

Major deviations towards reaching the outcome and related to the budget

Overall, there were no major deviations towards reaching this outcome nor related to the budgets in 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused delays in finalising the midline data collection in all countries. In Kenya, data collection was initiated before the pandemic hit and was then paused for about six months due to the severe situation, before the data collection could finally be resumed and redone. The delays in the data collection meant that report writing was finalised in early 2021, and thus the findings did not adequately shape the phase of developing implementation plans for 2021 which started late 2020. Going forward, it is important to ensure a validation process taking place in good time before the processes of developing the implementation plans for the coming programme period as to ensure an efficient use of the results generated on change in outcome indicators over time.

Challenges and learning

A number of challenges related to data collection during COVID-19 were met by the research teams. The challenges included curfews and limited working days which meant major logistic challenges to implementing data collection on time. Other challenges included that data collectors often met reservations from respondents because of the potential risk of being exposed to COVID-19 – despite the fact that all data collectors were wearing masks and kept their distance. Difficulties in reaching local stakeholders for key informant interviews, since they were not “accessible” in their offices as all were working from home. The dynamic nature of the Focus Group Discussions were compromised since all were wearing masks and had to keep 1,5 m distance. This affected the flow of discussions, especially for sensitive topics, since people had to speak loudly, and facial expressions were covered by masks. All the different challenges caused some limitation to the overall data quality.

C. STRATEGIC USE OF UNALLOCATED FUNDS



In 2020, we again prioritised using unallocated funds to leverage resources from the UN (in Burkina Faso) and the EU (in Egypt and Jordan), thereby directing more resources and efforts towards our strategic priority around gender equality, SRHR, civil society strengthening and youth social and economic empowerment.

In Burkina Faso, we have utilised unallocated funding for a larger UNFPA funded SRHR project promoting the empowerment of women, adolescents and vulnerable youth. The project is in its third year of implementation. Plan Burkina Faso is in charge of implementation in the communes of Gaoua, Banfora and Manga and focuses on access to family planning for vulnerable youth, youth empowerment and community-based engagement against child marriage and FGM. The project overlaps thematically and geographically with the YEWA programme.

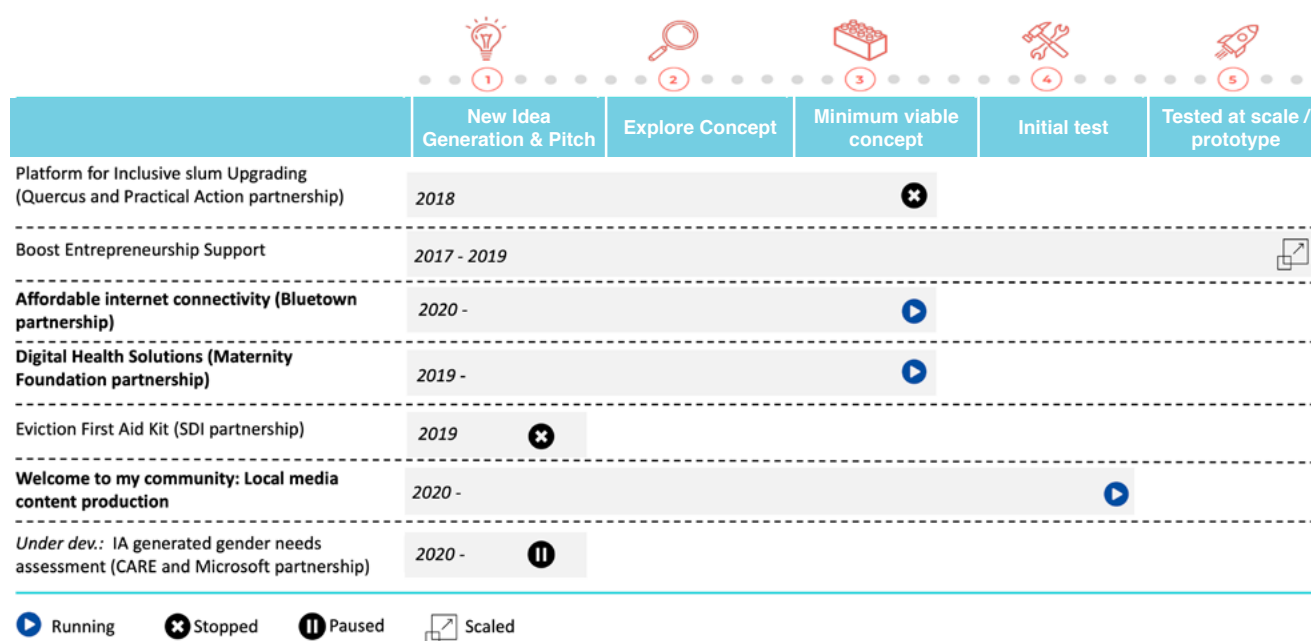
Both EU-funded projects aim at enhancing women- and youth-led CSOs' contribution to development and governance processes by establishing and strengthening social enterprises, thereby strengthening local civil society despite shrinking civic space in both countries. The two projects are part of a larger PlanBørneFonden scale-up in the MENA region, which is also funded through the Novo Nordic Foundation. Combining civil society strengthening and youth economic empowerment within a social enterprise model is one of our key delivery models in the region.

In 2020, we launched two new initiatives contributing to our strategic partnership priority to strengthen youth-led and youth-inclusive civil society in fragile urban areas. Firstly, together with Plan El Salvador, we developed an explorative initiative aimed at empowering young women and men's own organisations in fragile urban areas to influence development processes contributing to making their communities safe and inclusive. The initiative seeks to find novel and flexible approaches to strengthening the collective action of young people for the promotion of peace and prevention of urban violence with a clear emphasis on gender equity. Plan has partnered directly with three youth organisations and has included a comprehensive documentation and learning track, as the initiative has been selected as an 'Urban Pathway' informing the establishment of our Urban Hub for the entire Plan Federation.

Secondly, we have entered a partnership with SlumDwellers International (SDI), aimed at strengthening their youth engagement and their administrative, organisational and financial management capacity. The SAIC programme partners with SDI's national affiliates in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Uganda. The local partnerships add tremendous value to the three SAIC country programmes and the SDI affiliates and has potential scalability across the SDI federation, which is active at grassroots level in the most fragile urban areas in more than 30 countries. SDI's institutional capacity to systematically include young people in governance and decision-making is a known weakness. Our support to SDI to strengthen this part of their organisation potentially benefits millions of young people. Secondly, SDI has a recognised weakness regarding their financial management capacity and systems, which has jeopardized their relationship with core donors, including SIDA and the Ford Foundation. Supporting SDI improve in this field as a critical friend rather than a conventional donor, has contributed to SDI turning around their organisation and keeping their core donors. In this way, our support has significantly contributed to strengthening civil society beyond our immediate programmatic reach.

In 2020, we saw a more focused approach with the innovation funds utilised for pursuing a few specific initiatives. The overview below presents the overall status of the different innovation initiatives pursued by PlanBørnefonden followed by an update on each of the *on-going* initiatives:

Status for our Innovation Initiatives



Affordable internet connectivity in Ghana

The partnership with BLUETOWN aims to give reliable and low-cost access to the internet as well as free access to relevant digital content on a free local cloud.

Progress: 2020 saw the exploration of the concept and preparation for actual testing in Ghana incl. identification of local partners and development of a full initial test. The design and planning of the test incl. the necessary partnership agreements took longer than expected. Actual activities on the ground have only started in 2021.

Digital health solutions (LUCY)

A digital solution for pregnant women and mothers to improve access to information on maternal and new-born health, SRHR and other relevant health and pregnancy related topics. The information is delivered through digital channels/ platform that can reach the target group in both urban, rural, and emergency contexts, as well as by women with feature phone and smartphones. The innovation is developed in partnership with the Danish NGO, Maternity Foundation, and is tested and piloted in Benin through Plan International's country office and with the inclusion of relevant national stakeholders.

Progress: A) *Low-tech solution* piloted with Interactive Voice Response (IVR) messages containing relevant health information sent twice a week to 300 pregnant women and parents with children up to one year of age. The subsequent follow-up with the target group show that content of messages was perceived as relevant, easy to understand and access. Scale-up underway to 3,000 users with more languages added.

B) *High-tech solution* in development in partnership with student groups from Africa Design School incl. development of prototypes for smartphones with focus on visual communication. Currently, UX research is being carried out to better understand user needs, constraints and user profiles.

Welcome to my community: Local media content production

The initiative will enable local youth to become mobile journalists (MoJos) who will produce paid video content for new and existing sponsors. This will not only equip youth with media skills and business opportunities, but also provide Plan's National Organisations with easier access to quality video content without the travel related expenses.

Progress: All of Plan's 21 NOs have committed funds to the initiatives, and the MoJo consultant Hashtag our Stories and youth from Uganda and Zimbabwe have finalized the first trainings and videos in the series.

AI generated rapid gender analysis (under development)

The initiative aims at exploring, building and testing AI technology for the production of rapid gender analysis in crisis settings. Identifying and analysing key issues contributing to gender inequalities and identifying needs of individuals and communities hit by an emergency in a timely manner, is critical from a programmatic, advocacy and leadership perspective. Thus, the initiative aims at training an AI to collect data from social media and news sites in a crisis/disaster context to find patterns and provide insights into gender needs.

Progress: 2020 saw the exploration of potential partnership on this with CARE and Microsoft to ensure technical feasibility and content quality. For the time being, the initiative is paused as discussions with CARE have not yet led to an agreement in terms of whether to pursue this together.

E. POPULAR ENGAGEMENT 2020



PlanBørnefondens engages Danish youth (aged 14-25) in issues and solutions in some of the most marginalised communities in West- and East Africa, in the SDGs and in the power young people have when joining forces to change the world. We target youth from different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds to reach a wide audience. Our secondary target group is our 50,000 sponsors and the Danish population in general.

In March 2020, we had a major production trip planned to Uganda together with three young influencers from so-called ghetto communities in Denmark. They were supposed to visit slum communities in Kampala and a refugee camp in the northern part of the country to experience how youth are fighting for better living conditions with the support from PlanBørnefondens. A camera crew planned to document the trip, learnings and would produce a TV series for Danish youth. However, due to COVID-19, the trip was cancelled a few days before departure. Instead, we chose to develop a campaign with the title [#GirlsGetEqual](#) that focuses on the power and potential girls and young women have when accessing the same opportunities as boys and men. The campaign was designed for Instagram with photos and videos and was inspired by the music industry. Moreover, the campaign was filmed by Vida Media who has produced music videos for some of the most popular artists in Denmark. The campaign consists of messages on why it is important to fight for gender equality and includes content from PlanBørnefondens's projects in East and West Africa. In addition, around 30 young female influencers from different social economic backgrounds and cities in Denmark showcased skills such as graffiti, boxing, chess, street football, knitting and boxing. All participants volunteered to join, post and share PlanBørnefondens's content on social media resulting in a total reach of around 300,000 people. The campaign is accompanied by a t-shirt, press coverage and a [landing page](#) with info about the participants and statistics on SDG5. During the production, several of the influencers agreed to become ambassadors' for PlanBørnefondens and help engage other young people in the SDGs. Moreover, we [designed six tangible recommendations](#) on our website on how young people can become involved in our work and support the youth in East- and West Africa. This has led to new partnerships with schools and youth who want to support our work, and an increase in youth engagement in our development work.

We also marked the International Day of the Girl Child with a large event at Nærum Gymnasium together with the Crown Princess and young women who participated online from Ethiopia and Uganda. The event was streamed on our [Facebook page with 50.000 followers](#).

Moreover, we have co-produced a popular TV Series on TV2 called '[I pigernes skjulte verden](#),' about the issues girls face around the world. The host of the series is Sara Frost, a former radio host on P3, who visited Nepal, Honduras, Kenya, and Denmark to talk to girls experiencing discrimination due to their age and gender. The series is produced by Impact TV and was number one on TV2's streaming channel when it was released.

Finally, we have produced two educational courses together with the learning platform, Clio, directed at students aged 14 to 20 years old. One course focuses on [gender discrimination in East Africa](#), while the other is about how [COVID-19 affects youth all over the world](#). The educational courses include case stories produced by PlanBørnefondens with youth from all continents, videos, podcasts, and practical exercises to engage students on how they can contribute to the SDGs. As an extra feature, we encourage students to contact PlanBørnefondens and we are always available when they request an interview or if they have a fundraising idea that requires feedback. We also relaunched our [educational material from Bangladesh](#) that was produced as part of Børnenes U-landskalender 2019 on Clio's platform in order for more children to benefit from the material.

F. FOLLOW UP ON REVIEWS, FINANCIAL MONITORING & ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS



Follow-up from financial monitoring

The four West African programme countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Togo and Benin) received a financial monitoring visit from the regional unit in early 2020. All 8 programme countries (thus including Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia) were monitored remotely for the remaining part of 2020 due to the COVID-19 travel ban. As previously mentioned, PlanBørnefondene has during 2020 developed a remote financial monitoring tool and methodology to oversee financial monitoring, identify weaknesses and the need for additional training and support from PlanBørnefondene, cf. *Organisational and strategic developments*. The tool shows great potential and covers spot checks and captures capacity assessments and follows up on findings from previous visits and audits.

The support to the CSO-partners in financial management of the programme is strengthened through capacity building and close monitoring. Plan country offices have arranged various workshops with the partners within the field of financial management. PlanBørnefondene has a designated finance staff in West Africa who monitors the programmes and CSO-partners on a regular basis. For both programmes (West and East), PlanBørnefondene has designated Programme Managers who work closely with the Grant Controller team regarding any financial issues they might detect.

Follow-up from Annual Strategic Consultations (technical and management)

The annual consultations were delayed until February 2021 due to COVID-19 related issues. Therefore, follow-up from the consultations is still in process. However, two points are worth noting here:

- 1) We have submitted the outstanding follow-up reports for our three current C-cases, of which we now considered two closed with a satisfactory result. The third and final case (in Liberia) is still ongoing, and we unfortunately do not foresee this case closed in the immediate future, given the weak justice system in Liberia.
- 2) We continue to invest considerable financial and human resources into systems development, enabling us to continue to live up to, and eventually exceed, IATI requirements.

Follow-up on review recommendations

The 2019 review identified 13 recommendations. All 13 are now completed, however, recommendation five concerning PlanBørnefondene's approach to Youth Programming is still in a draft state. We have deliberately kept the process open in order for it to be adaptable to a larger Plan International youth programming guidance process. PlanBørnefondene takes a leading role in this process, which is anchored in Plan International's Youth Engagement, Movements and Campaigns Team, positioned in the West Africa region and which has PlanBørnefondene's Programme Director, Anne Smith Petersen in the Steering Committee.

Annex A Follow up on review recommendations

Update on 2019 MFA Review recommendations, PlanBørnefonden, February 10, 2021, Morten Lynge				
Recommendation	Deadline	Re-spon-sible	PB response (response in <i>Italics</i> are updates since final review report)	Status and response from PB June 2020
#1 <i>It is recommended that PB aim for comprehensive programme direction by broadening coverage of its Programme Strategy 2020-23 to capture full picture of sponsorship and grant-funded engagements.</i>	September 2019	PB	Partially agree. Programme strategy already covers all grants. Sponsorship funds are included in the country strategies.	Completed.
#2 <i>It is recommended that PB focus in its dialogue with Country Office not primarily on mechanics of SP fund management and reporting but a more strategic view of PII comparative advantage, clearer organisational profile and stronger programme impact.</i>	November-June Dec 2020	PB	Agree. <i>This process has been integrated in our FY2020 planning and will be implemented throughout our financial year.</i>	Deadline has been postponed to December 2020 due to corona outbreak. Completed
#3 <i>It is recommended that PB integrate SP in its communication of engagements funded by sponsorship and other grants in a PB Annual Report as well as on quality platforms for digital campaigns and high-end public diplomacy events.</i>	November 2019	PB	Agree. Publication of PB Annual Report is scheduled immediately after approval of PB's first financial statement. Content will be shared digitally on PB web and SoMe, in newsletters and Sponsor magazine.	Completed. Annual reports can be found here: https://planbørnefonden.dk/aarsrapporter-2019/
#4 <i>It is recommended that the SP Mid-Term Review in 2020 is tasked to capture lessons learned on integrating 'the best of both organisations, including people, relationships, programme approaches and support processes and systems' in order to identify priorities for a more coherent and focused SP and results framework beyond 2022.</i>	February Dec 2020	PB	Agree. However, whereas we do anticipate stronger programmatic integration and a coherent approach to youth programming (which is also evident in our programme strategy) this does not necessarily imply that we will develop one integrated programme from 2022	The mid-term reviews have been delayed due to COVID-19. We are expecting to complete by december 2020, provided that the situation does not deteriorate. Completed
#5 <i>It is recommended that PB refine its youth programming to fit state-of-the-art standards by specifying (i) Age, (ii) Social status, (iii) Engagements WITH and FOR youth, and (iv) Measurement of documentable gender transformation.</i>	February-June Dec 2020	PB/CO	Agree. We believe that our youth programming already by and large fit state-of-the-art standards, but we will assess our terminology and refine our approaches to ensure complete clarity in this, including in our communication. <i>This process has been integrated in our FY2020 planning and will be implemented throughout our financial year.</i>	In process. However, the deadline has been postponed to December 2020 due to COVID-19, which has made it impossible to carry out adequate youth, partner, and country office consultations. Completed in draft form, which will feed into Plan Federation wide youth programming process hosted by a newly established 'Youth Hub' located in the West Africa regional office.
#6 <i>It is recommended that PB accelerate partner promotion of youth-led advocacy, participation and influence to complement strategic service delivery in specific localities.</i>	February June 2020	PB/CO	Partially agree. We believe that this is already an integral aspect of our programming (and evident in the ToCs), and that the timing of these efforts to fit community programming and evidence is essential, therefore, a specific Feb 2020 deadline seems unhelpful. Rather, we will propose to clarify the links from community interventions and documentation to specific youth-led advocacy initiatives (including detailed timelines for these) as a part of the ToC revision due for the annual consultations with the MFA in Oct 2019.	Completed. As mentioned, we believe that this is already an integral part of our programmes, however, the sequencing made it difficult for the review team to assess results in this field in early 2019. The annual report for 2019 gives a clearer impression of our joint efforts in this field. As this is a longer process, where 2019 has focused on building the organisation and capacity around advocacy from community to national level, we anticipate the annual report for 2020 to show stronger results again.

#7 <i>It is recommended that PB increase transparency and public accountability by making minutes of Board meetings publicly available on the web.</i>	September Oct 2019	PB	This is a decision that rests with the National Board of PlanBornefonden. <i>Recommendation to be discussed on October Board Meeting.</i>	Completed. Minutes from Board meetings will not be published, but quarterly reports from the Board are available here: https://planbornefonden.dk/kvartalsrapport/
#8 <i>It is recommended that the PB Board consider filling one seat of the Board with an elected staff representative.</i>	November 2019	Board/ PB	This is a decision that rests with the National Board of PlanBornefonden	Completed. An elected staff representative is now on the Board. https://planbornefonden.dk/bestyrelse/
#9 <i>It is recommended that an exit strategy for RYSU to ensure sustainability and PII systems compliance be completed by October 2019 to guide the phased handover of RYSU tasks to the four CO's during 2020-21 with full exit latest six month before end of YEWA project period.</i>	October 2019 Dec 2020	PB/ CO	Partly agree. We will carry out a review of RYSU's role also taking cost effectiveness into account. Several other multi-country programmes have the same setup as RYSU and function well this way – Having a separate coordinating structure does not necessarily mean duplication: RYSU's role should take into account tasks, roles and existing expertise of CO's and the added value and specific tasks of the structure should be well defined and communicated. This process is underway and ongoing.	In process. Where have decided to carry out an internal evaluation and assessment of the RYSU function with a view to exit some part and and carry over the best elements to a subsequent programme period. Completed. RYSU structure to be phased out ahead of new SPA and responsibilities divided between Country Offices, Regional Office and PB in Copenhagen
#10 <i>It is recommended that PB revise guidelines and manual for grants administration to include monitoring roles and responsibilities between PB, PII and COs, including procedures and awareness training on the risk of fraud in relation to the SP.</i>	November 2019	PB/ PII	Agree. The process is underway. <i>The Manual is in near-final state and will be presented in November 2019.</i>	Completed. A Grants Management Manual was launched in November 2019. (The Manual is up for revision in 2021. This revision will include an annex outlining the linkage between PlanBornefondens' grants management procedures and the Plan Federation's policies, procedures and preventive measures (including extensive Counter Fraud Training, which country offices and national organisations, including PB have participated in)
#11 <i>It is recommended that PB liaise with PII to tender for a new audit company to conduct external audit covering FY 2019/20 and that the auditor's opinion include a confirmation of compliance with MFA guidelines.</i>	September 2019	PB	Partly agree. As a member of Plan International we will follow Plan International's tender procedure for election of a new auditor, when this is decided by members assembly	Completed. Regarding tendering for a new audit company, the issue has been raised with Plan International. We disagree on the need for including a confirmation of compliance with MFA guidelines in the auditor's opinion. New audit company tender has been agreed for the global organisation and will take place in 2022.
#12 <i>It is recommended that PB align its administrative practice to what is prescribed in the administrative guidelines, including documentation for FAK-activities and regulation of administrative costs.</i>	September 2019	PB	Disagree. PB wants to be aligned with the administrative guidelines and has the opinion that PB regulation of administrative costs are aligned to what is prescribed in the SP administrative guidelines. Partner administration costs directly linked to the implementation the SP are eligible costs. PB have for several years implemented CISU grants and Danida single grants and according to the administrative guidelines local administration/partner administrative costs incurred due to project activities (e.g. rent, insurance, phone, internet, investments etc.) are eligible project activity cost. Whereas, the general administration of 7% covers office costs of the Danish organisation. <i>We believe that the matter of the 7 % admin costs has now been resolved.</i>	Completed.
#13 <i>It is recommended that PB (i) Intensify its dialogue with COs on the level of funding to be transferred to local partners and set annual targets for each local partner in line with partner capacity; and (ii) Include in its Annual Report information on the trend of funding transferred to the local partners.</i>	November December 2019	PB	Agree. We agree to the importance of ensuring that as much of the funding as possible reaches the local partners while balancing that, at the same time, we need to ensure that we allocate sufficient resources to strengthen the capacity of partners to manage funds and deliver quality programmatic work. The recommended targets will be set as a part of the 2020 planning process and will be included in our reporting for the same year.	Completed.

Annex B List of CSO-partners



Benin

Femmes Actrices de Développement Communautaire (FADeC-ONG)
GBEWA (translated Enfin le bonheur) ONG

Burkina Faso

Association pour le Développement et l'Intégration de la Jeunesse Rurale (ADIJR)
Association Sang-Taaba des Femmes du Burkina (ASTFB)
Association Promo Monde Rural (APMR)
Jonction des Actions pour Faire Avancer l'Afrique (JAFAA)

Mali

Equipe de Recherche et d'Appui pour le développement (ERAD)
Bureau National Catholique de l'Enfance (BNCE)
Association Jeunesse Action Mali (AJA-Mali)
Association de Soutien au développement des Activités de Population (ASDAP)

Togo

Jourdain Vie et Santé (JVS)
Construire Ensemble (CE)

Ethiopia

Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)
Ethiopian Centre for Development (ECD)

Kenya

Akiba Mashinani Trust, SDI Kenya, Slum-Dwellers International's affiliation
Urai Trust
Undugu Family (NEW in 2020)
Kibera Joy Initiative (NEW in 2020)
Maria Rossane Community Centre (NEW in 2020)
Generation Shapers (NEW in 2020)
United Destiny Shapers (NEW in 2020)
Talanta Africa (NEW in 2020)

Uganda

ACTogether (Slum-Dwellers International's affiliation)
Uganda Youth Development Link (UYDEL)

Zimbabwe

Dialogue on Shelter (DOS) (Slum-Dwellers International's affiliation in Zimbabwe)
Junior Achievement Zimbabwe (JAZ)
Youth Alliance for Safer Cities (NEW in 2020)