

EXPLORING THE LINK BETWEEN
CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND
DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

A LEARNING PAPER



This research project was made possible through the collaboration of a diverse group of stakeholders.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

This Learning Paper describes a three-year research project that explored the links between child and youth participation and development effectiveness. The research seeks to influence development actors and donors to help create positive change for children, youth and communities living in poverty. The research was undertaken through field-based learning activities in Fiji, Laos and Nepal by a partnership of Australian non-government organisations (ANGOs) between 2013 and 2016. The partnership consisted of three ANGOs and their partner organisations in three countries: Transform Aid International and partner United Mission to Nepal and their partner Prayas Nepal in Nepal, ChildFund Australia and country office ChildFund Laos in Laos, and Live & Learn and partner Live & Learn Fiji in Fiji. The research was supported by an independent consultancy, InSIGHT Sustainability, a university partner, the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) at the University of Technology Sydney, and a volunteer Peer Review Group of child and development specialists.

Research Approach

The research focused on projects that involved children and youth in a participatory way at their core. These projects included: youth-led environmental management and livelihood initiatives in Fiji; sport and related child clubs in Laos, and child clubs in Nepal.

The research had three learning areas:

1. The contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness.
2. The contribution of child and youth participation to in-country partner organisation outcomes and ANGO program outcomes.
3. Child and youth participation in research practice.

A 'Development Effectiveness Analysis Mapping Tool' was created to assist in the research. The tool drew on relevant literature and was created to define the most important characteristics of development effectiveness as they relate to children and youth. These were identified as:

- * Participation in setting development priorities;
- * Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reducing marginalisation;
- * Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration;
- * Personal and community development; and
- * Socio-economic development.

The definition of child and youth participation used for this research was informed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID)'s 2010 framework, which categorised participation in terms of beneficiaries, partners and leaders.

Participatory research tools were designed to answer the research questions related to the three learning areas using the following methods:

1. 'Identifying and choosing your story' helped children and youth to tell their individual stories about changes that occurred as a result of their participation in community development activities. Children and youth then linked their 'change stories' to the development effectiveness characteristics in the Development Effectiveness Mapping Tool, using Change Cards with pictures¹. This mapping exercise was then repeated to enable children and youth to tell their stories about collective change (change to others in their families and communities). The stories of collective change were also linked to the development effectiveness characteristics. After children and youth shared their stories, they chose one change story to explore more deeply through the remainder of the research.
2. 'Exploring the change story' enabled children and youth to look more deeply at the one chosen change story. This process looked at *flow-on changes*² that occurred because of the chosen change story.
3. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with adults, including parents and community leaders in the communities where the research took place. Adults were also asked to talk about changes that occurred because of the change story and as a result of child and youth

1. Children and youth in Laos found this task quite difficult, so local staff assisted in assigning the chosen story to the development effectiveness characteristic(s).

2. The process for exploring 'flow-on changes' is described in more detail in Section 3

participation in the community. The change stories, and the flow-on changes that occurred, were written up as case studies in the nine research locations across Fiji, Laos and Nepal. (These are located in the case study section.)

Findings from the research

The contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness

The research provides evidence that child and youth participation can make a range of valuable contributions to development effectiveness. The research found many links between the changes described by all research participants (children, youth and adults) and the different types of development effectiveness defined for the research.

The seven important findings for Learning Area 1, *the contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness*, were:

1. Child and youth participation led to positive changes within children and youth themselves (e.g. improved interpersonal skills and self-confidence). These changes then enabled children and youth to influence broader change within families and communities. The research provided evidence of how personal development within children and youth influenced changes in their families and communities. These changes linked to all five development effectiveness characteristics defined for this research.

For example, *personal development* within children and youth influenced:

- * Increased income generation in Fiji
- * Improved environmental management in Fiji
- * Improved health in Nepal and Fiji
- * Improved education in Nepal
- * Increased social inclusion in Nepal
- * Increased knowledge sharing and collaboration in Nepal
- * Improved life skills in Laos
- * Increased protection of child rights in Laos.

2. Child and youth participation led to changes in relationships and shifts in power between children, youth and other family members, and within the broader community.
3. All participants in the research, young and old, shared that they valued the contributions that children and youth made to create positive change within their families and communities.
4. All participants in the research, young and old, agreed that working together as partners (rather than as leaders or beneficiaries) was the most important and valued way of working to achieve positive change in the community.
5. The range of changes identified by children, youth and adults during this research aligned with the original stated NGO objectives for the development projects. This suggests that objectives of the projects are being achieved and expected changes are experienced by children, youth and adults alike.
6. Child and youth participation has resulted in some immediate positive changes for children, youth and adults. These changes show that there are immediate benefits of supporting children and youth which go beyond preparing them to be leaders in the future.
7. Child and youth participation can bring about benefits related to personal and community development such as: improved equity, greater social inclusion and improved self-esteem

among children and youth. It appears that these benefits form the building blocks for good development outcomes; in the research they were found to contribute to longer-term benefits, such as socio-economic development, improved health and access to education.

The findings show that investing in children and youth can help bring about positive change for whole communities. The research provided evidence that supports the view that effective development practice is so much more than building physical infrastructure such as schools and latrines. It is about supporting practices that improve community cohesion and resilience, strengthen intergenerational relationships, increase opportunities and enable individuals to take collective action. Effective development practice also includes supporting children, youth and their communities to bring about positive change themselves from within their own families and communities.

The research provided examples of adults and community members listening to children's and youths' voices, and explored how this led to improved community collaboration and social cohesion. The changes that children, youth and adults described during the research included: increased access to education through improved attendance and retention at school, better knowledge about healthy lifestyles, and improved health and sanitation behaviours. Opportunities (such as socio-economic opportunities) for children and youth and their families also increased.

The children and youth involved in this research improved their skills, knowledge and confidence through their involvement in development activities. This, in turn, affected those around them. Their peers and the adults in their community joined with them to make positive changes in their family and community life and in some instances this spread further to the provincial level.

The case studies generated by this research demonstrate that through children and youth participating in development activities, communities learned more about what was important to the young people in their community. Further, the research also provides evidence that child and youth participation can lead to greater awareness and respect of child rights and child rights issues amongst adults.



The contribution of child and youth participation to program outcomes

As part of Learning Area 2, *the contribution of child and youth participation to program outcomes*, in-country partners conducted a self-assessment to see if the development effectiveness characteristics that children and youth linked their change stories in Learning Area 1 had any overlap or alignment with their NGO stated project outcomes (these outcomes were sourced from project design documentation).

The purpose of this exercise was to see if the changes which participants said were due to child and youth participation were the same as the intended outcomes of the project and, in the case of Fiji, whether changes described by research participants were in line with organisational objectives.

The important findings for Learning Area 2 were:

- * The in-country partners' self-assessments showed strong evidence of links between changes that happened because of child and youth participation (as identified by the research and using the development effectiveness characteristics) and their projects' defined outcomes.
- * Self-assessments by in-country partners showed that the children, youth and adults who participated in the research valued similar changes to the ones expected by NGOs as defined in their development programming. This was evident in the change stories participants chose to share, and in the ways in which these stories aligned with project outcome documentation.
- * In all countries, some weaker links were also recorded in the self-assessment. These weaker links to outcomes were most commonly explained by the fact that the related activities had yet to be conducted as they were planned for later in the program.

The research findings demonstrate the overall strong links between the changes which participants said were due to child and youth participation, the intended outcomes of the programs and the development effectiveness characteristics.

Child and youth participation in research practice

To gain an understanding of child and youth participation in research, Learning Area 3 drew on: daily reflection debriefs conducted during the field research, an online survey for in-country staff, and teleconferences with in-country partners. We learnt that child and youth participation in research is valued by both participants and researchers, though it requires dedicated support and good research skills.

The important findings for Learning Area 3 were:

- * Age appropriate illustrations are an effective way to engage children and youth in complex topics. The illustrations used in this research enabled researchers to communicate complex topics with children and youth which increased their understanding and ability to participate in the research in an informed way. The illustrated Change Cards prepared for this research were described by many in-country researchers as key to enabling youth to identify, match and discuss the different types of changes that occurred as a result of their participation in development projects. This highlights the need for age- and context-appropriate research tools.
- * Research design and tools in general need to be both age-appropriate and context-appropriate to research participants, and they need to consider of the experiences and capacity of the children and youth. For example the conduct of the researchers and wording they used when talking about changes in Nepal needed to be sensitive to the Earthquake that occurred between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the research.

- * Research with children and youth can take longer than expected. It is important to allow enough time to do it well.
- * Building on existing positive relationships with children and youth helps during the research process. The main research facilitators were NGO staff who had been working with the children and youth for some time and had already established a good rapport with them.
- * To allow children and youth to participate in the research process, researchers need strong research skills, good cross-cultural understanding and excellent research practice. Researchers need good training and support to understand how to use research tools and adapt them to the local contexts.

How this research can be used

The evidence and findings of this research can be used by development practitioners in several ways:

- * Use the research learnings to advocate about the value of child and youth participation in development programs.
- * Use the research findings to advocate for the importance of child rights and child and youth participation in achieving increased accountability from duty bearers.
- * Include child and youth participation in monitoring and evaluation.
- * Use the 'change story' research approach in project monitoring and evaluation.
- * Provide opportunities to children, youth and adults to work as partners in addressing issues that affect their communities.
- * Partner with children and youth and strengthen their capacity to shift negative power relations within communities in culturally sensitive ways.



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Learning Paper

This Learning Paper describes field-based research that explored the links between child and youth participation and development effectiveness. The research was conducted in Fiji, Laos and Nepal over two phases between 2013 and 2016. It involved a research partnership of Australian non-government organisations (ANGOs), in-country partners and a Sydney-based academic institution. This paper builds on our earlier research and provides learnings from Phase 2. An earlier Learning Paper reports on Phase 1.³

Audience

This paper is intended to be of interest to a variety of stakeholders. The primary audience is development practitioners and NGO staff. The secondary audience is the broader development sector. This includes development practitioners, donors, academics and government partners interested in child and youth-focused development programming.

3. See ChildFund Australia et al. (2015) *Mid-Term Learning Paper*, March 2015.

Structure of this Learning Paper

This Learning Paper is structured as follows:

Section 1 provides an overview of the research – sharing background, purpose and audience.

Sections 2 and 3 provide the research context and details of the research approach.

Section 4 provides the research findings and key learnings.

Section 5 presents the nine case studies that formed the data and evidence base for this research. These case studies are also intended to serve as a standalone resource.

Section 6 includes annexes which provide detailed country contexts and additional information on the approach of the research.

Background to the research

Since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted in 1990, the ways in which children and youth participate in development programs has received much attention from both development professionals and academics. A range of different ways to engage children and youth in development has been documented.⁴ However, the questions of if, and how, their participation contributes to development effectiveness had not been addressed directly, and remains unanswered for many development professionals. This research aims to offer more insights into these questions.

This research builds on earlier work conducted by ChildFund Australia, including two literature reviews on child and youth participation (2011 and 2012⁵). The literature reviews explored the practices, change processes and changes that result from child and youth participation. For example, the literature describes how child and youth participation in development projects can lead to children and youth having higher self-esteem and how it can contribute to them becoming more active citizens.⁶ The literature also describes how child and youth participation in development projects can increase their motivation and confidence, and improve child-adult relationships.

The literature describes how these changes can have a positive effect on children and youth in their families, schools and communities and could therefore contribute to more effective development. However, an understanding of how and why the process of child and youth participation influences development effectiveness could not be obtained from the literature reviewed. While some evidence of the contribution of child and youth participation in practice has been reported, for example, by Plan⁷, Save the Children⁸ and DFID⁹, the literature highlights the need for field-based research to show a clearer picture of the role of child and youth participation in development effectiveness. The present paper addresses this gap.

4. Asker, S. and Gero, A. (2012) *The role of child and youth participation in Development Effectiveness*, ChildFund Australia.

5. Ibid.

6. Sabo, K. (2001) *The benefits of participatory evaluation for children and youth*. PLA Notes #42. Pp 48-51. IIED, London.

7. Bruno-van Vijfeijken et al. (2011) *How does CCCD Affect Program Effectiveness and Sustainability? A meta-review of Plan's Evaluations*. Moynihan - Institute of Global Affairs.

8. Rajbhandary, J., Hart, R. and Khatiwada, C. (2001) *Extracts from The Children's Clubs of Nepal: a democratic experiment*. PLA Notes #42. 23-28. IIED, London.

9. DFID (2010) *Youth Participation in Development. A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers, DFID-CSO Youth Working Group*.

The research described in this Learning Paper is relevant to a broader ongoing conversation amongst academics and practitioners about how children and youth participate in different aspects of community life. For example, there are discussions about child and youth participation in research¹⁰ and in decision-making¹¹, and about the status of children and youth as citizens in the community.¹² There is also research that explores the politics of children's participation and how this relates to realising child rights.¹³ This research adds to these conversations. It introduces field-based examples of what participation can look like in a range of country and cultural contexts, and examines how this participation contributes to development effectiveness.

Purpose of the research

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Child Rights Working Group (now the ACFID Child Rights Community of Practice) identified the issue of child and youth participation and its contribution to development effectiveness as a research gap. Given the sector support for the topic, the research partners aimed to better understand, through this field-based research, if and how child and youth participation contributes to development effectiveness.

Research partners

Three ANGOs and in-country partner organisations conducted the research: Live & Learn with Live & Learn Fiji in Fiji, ChildFund Australia with ChildFund Laos in Laos, and Transform Aid International with United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and Prayas Nepal in Nepal. The research was supported by an independent consultancy, InSIGHT Sustainability; a university partner, the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) at the University of Technology Sydney; and a volunteer Peer Review Group (PRG) of child and development specialists.

Phase 1 of the research and connections to Phase 2

This section describes the phases of the research and key learnings from Phase 1 (conducted in 2014) and how these inform and link to Phase 2 (conducted in 2016). The overall objective of the research has been to explore the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness. Phase 1 explored what children and youth and also adults in the community viewed as the 'biggest change that made them happy or feel really good about themselves, their peers or their community' because of child and youth participation. They then explored how these changes linked to development effectiveness.

The research conducted in Phase 1 uncovered strong examples and stories with evidence of links between child and youth participation and development effectiveness. In Laos and Nepal changes that could be described as '*personal development*' were most common. In Fiji, a different set of changes related to '*socio-economic improvements*' were most commonly described. As explored further below, similar findings were also revealed through Phase 2 of the research. However, they were also strongly linked to other flow-on changes at the community level. This provides further evidence of the link between changes resulting from child and youth participation and development effectiveness.

10. Lundy, L. & McEvoy, L. (2012) *Law and Childhood Studies: Current Legal Issues*, Volume 14. Freeman, M. (ed.). Oxford University Press, p. 75-91.

11. Tobin, J. (2006) *Beyond the Supermarket Shelf: Using a Rights Based Approach to Address Children's Health Needs*. International Journal of Children's Rights, 14(3): 275-306.

12. Van Bueren, G. (2011) '*Acknowledging Children as International Citizens: A Child-Sensitive Communication Mechanism for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*' in Dr Antonella Invernizzi and Dr Jane Williams (eds), *The Human Rights of Children: From Visions to Implementation* (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2011) 117, 143.

13. White, S.C. and Choudhury, S.A. (2007) *The Politics of Child Participation in International Development: The Dilemma of Agency*. The European Journal of Development Research 19(4): 529-50.

Phase 2 of the research built on Phase 1 and provided new learning, showing how changes resulting from child and youth participation influenced a broader set of positive changes. These broader changes were both short and long-term, and also happened to different groups including child and youth peers, families, and the broader community. Detailed learnings from Phase 2 are noted in Section 4 of this Learning Paper.

Focus of Phase 2

Whilst Phase 1 of the research captured the many changes and their links to development effectiveness, Phase 2 sought to thoroughly explore more deeply one story about a change resulting from child and youth participation and its links to development effectiveness. Children and youth chose the story of change to be explored. Participants then looked deeply at the chosen story and explored the multiple layers and dynamics of flow-on changes that resulted due to the focal story of change. Throughout this paper these changes are described as 'flow-on changes'. Pivotal to the design of Phase 2 was exploring how different children, youth and adults in each community experienced the child and youth participation described in the focal story of change. Section 3 of this Learning Paper provides further detail on the Phase 2 research approach.

The research included three learning areas and key research questions which are noted in Table 1.

For the purposes of this research and for potential future use by practitioners and the wider development community, a 'Development Effectiveness Mapping Tool' was prepared to help identify the links between child and youth participation and development effectiveness. The mapping tool used for Phase 1 was further refined for Phase 2. In Phase 2 the tool included simple descriptions of the five main characteristics of development effectiveness, with specific examples of changes defined for children and youth and adults at the community level. The Development Effectiveness Analysis Mapping Tool used for Phase 2 of the research is presented in Table 2.

The tool was created because nothing else was found to exist to help determine or assess what development effectiveness looks like for projects that involve child and youth participation at the community level.



TABLE 1: LEARNING AREAS

Learning Area 1: learning about the contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness

For selected stories of change, explore in detail:

- * What changes have happened in the community that child and youth participation has contributed to?
- * Which aspects of development effectiveness were demonstrated and how?
- * What changes have occurred in the relationships between children and/or youth and others (parents, family, other relevant actors)?
- * How do research participants view children's and youths' contributions or roles in the achievement of these changes?
- * What aspects of child and youth participation did research participants value the most and why?
- * Why did child and youth participation lead to these changes?

Learning Area 2: learning about the contribution of child and youth participation to program outcomes

- * Which aspects of program outcomes were demonstrated by findings from Learning Area 1 and how?

Learning Area 3: learning about child and youth participation in research practice

- * What challenges, opportunities and good practices exist for effective child and youth participation in research practice?
- * What challenges, opportunities and examples of good practice exist for partnerships for development research?

A literature review of key documentation, including the Paris Declaration, the Busan Agreement, the Istanbul Principles and the ACFID Code of Conduct informed the chosen characteristics of development effectiveness.

The research did not seek to resolve the varied and contested definitions of development effectiveness that exist in the development sector. Instead, the framework served as a practical guide to support the research process and it provided a way of exploring linkages between child and youth participation and development effectiveness.

TABLE 2: DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS MAPPING TOOL

Development effectiveness characteristics	Change for children and youth	Change for others (parents, family, school, community, local government)
1. Participation in setting development priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children and youth (lead or partner) actively involved in setting NGO priorities (strategy, design, monitoring and evaluation) children and youth (lead or partner) actively involved in setting informal or formal community development activities (i.e. family, school or community, local government) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> child and youth views are invited and actively listened to in setting NGO priorities. Feedback is provided on how their input has been taken into consideration child and youth views are invited and actively listened to in setting local development activities and/or local policy formation (i.e. family, school or community, local government). Feedback is provided on how their input has been taken into consideration
2. Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children and youth are increasingly valued and treated as partners (by other stakeholders) through shared goals (project or broader community activities) and values, mutual respect, trust and integrity children and youth are able to negotiate with others (e.g. parents) without fear of conflict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> child and youth participation promotes equitable access to participate in project or broader community activities (e.g. regardless of caste, disability, sex and ethnicity) child and youth participation leads to increased action in addressing the causes and symptoms of marginalisation child and youth participation leads to an increased understanding of individual and collective rights
3. Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children and youth are able to share their knowledge and skills with peers, family and / or others in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children and youth are part of inclusive trustful partnerships between peers, children and youth and parents, adults and community leaders child and youth participation promotes exchange and use of new and existing community knowledge and wisdom
4. Personal and community development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in children and youth's self-esteem, empowerment, confidence, voice, agency, trust and resilience (individual or collective) children and youth are developing and using active and critical citizenship skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children and youth are influencing community development (collective resilience, level of conflict, trust, shifts in relations (family or community), cohesion, social networks) children and youth are respected and valued for their contribution to family life children and youth are contributing to community voice and influence in formal institutions, laws and policies
5. Socio-economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> changes in children and youth's access to assets and services (health, education, livelihoods) changes in children and youth's health and education (lower rates of sickness, improved school attendance / improved school grades / attendance, better livelihood opportunities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children and youth are contributing to wider community's access to assets and services children and youth are contributing to wider community's health and education improvement children and youth are contributing to wider community's employment and livelihood improvement

The five characteristics of development effectiveness were illustrated on five Change Cards using cartoons in Phase 2. Showing the characteristics of development effectiveness in pictures meant that children and youth could make sense of the different types of changes and consider and discuss how they linked or matched with their own experiences of child and youth participation. The Change Cards are presented in Figures 1–5.

For this research, child and youth participation was defined using the DFIDs 'three-lens approach' (see Figure 6), which identifies youth as beneficiaries, partners or leaders. This also helped the research partners decide what locations and development projects to include in the research. When choosing the research sites, good child and youth participation practices (including having youth as partners or leaders), and a capacity to undertake research and long-term community development activities, were prerequisites. Through this research, the research partners looked at a range of types of child and youth participation described by the research participants, as well as which type children and youth preferred, and which type adults preferred. Definitions adapted from the DFID three-lens approach can be found in Box 1.



▲ **Figure 1:** Change Card 1 – Participation in setting development priorities



▶ **Figure 2:** Change Card 2 - Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation



▲ **Figure 3:** Change Card 3 - Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

▼ **Figure 4:** Change Card 4 – Personal and Community Development



▼ **Figure 5:** Change Card 5 - Socioeconomic development

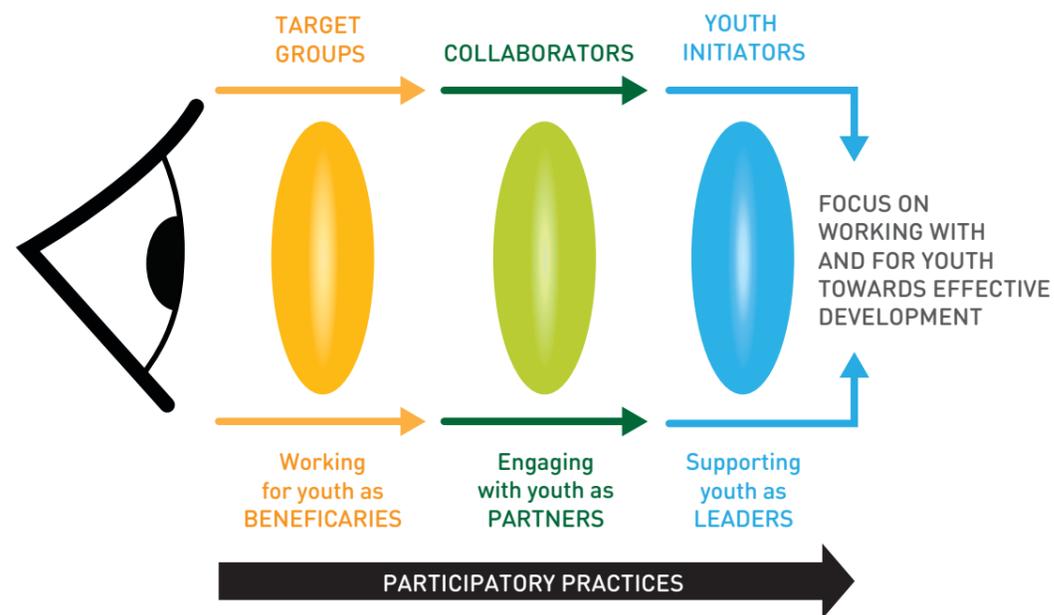


Figure 6: The three-lens approach to youth participation¹⁴



2

BOX 1: TYPES OF CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Children and youth as beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target group is adequately informed. • Participation explicitly focuses on children and youth issues through documentation. • Participation can prepare the ground for working as partners.
Children and youth as partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation involves collaborative interventions, in which children and youth are fully consulted and informed. • Participation implies mutual cooperation and responsibility. • Participation recognises that children and youth generally need experience working at this level before progressing to becoming leaders and initiators of development (if appropriate) – a progression which not all will want to, or be able to, make.
Children and youth leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation enables child/youth-initiated and directed interventions. • Participation opening up a space for child-/youth-led decision-making (delegation) within existing structures, systems and processes.

RESEARCH LOCATIONS AND FOCAL PROJECTS

It is important that findings from this research are understood in relation to where the research occurred.

Cultural, historical, environmental, economic, social and political factors can influence how research is carried out. These factors can also help us to make sense of what can be learnt from research.

This is particularly important because this research was conducted in three different country locations (Fiji, Laos and Nepal). Important information about these locations is included in Table 3 and within each case study. Further details are provided in the Annex on page 111.

14. DFID (2010) *Youth Participation in Development. A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers*, DFID-CSO Youth Working Group.

TABLE 3: RESEARCH LOCATIONS: FIJI

ANGO: Live & Learn Australia

Local NGO: Live & Learn Environmental Education Fiji

- Live & Learn Environmental Education Fiji has been delivering environmental and sustainable development projects in Fiji since 1999.
- The NGO has implemented a broad range of sustainable development projects within sectors including environment, water, sanitation and hygiene, governance and democracy, education and forestry.
- Live & Learn has well-established networks and partnerships with government, other development organisations and communities

Research location:

- The three villages where the research was conducted in Vanua Levu (Lutukina, Drawa and Batiri villages), were located outside the high-damage-intensity-zone of the Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Winston that hit Fiji in February 2016. However, the majority of root crops, food and livelihood sources were still damaged.
- In light of the food and livelihood insecurity in these villages, members of the target communities had to look for alternative sources of income outside the villages to support their families. During the research there were limited numbers of people in villages as many travelled closer to towns and urban areas to sell their produce and work to earn income for their families.
- The seasonal rural urban drift related to the sugar cane cutting season also affected the research. The majority of adults, parents and youths participate in this activity, reducing the number of participants for the research. Most of those absent due to the cane cutting season were male.

Project aim and details:

Two different projects are being implemented in the villages where the research was carried out:

1. REDD+ Project, Drawa and Batiri Villages

Project Aim: To pilot effective models for governance and implementation of REDD in Small Island Developing States in order to provide equitable benefits for forest dependent local and indigenous people.

Project Details: the REDD+ Project (EU funded) has been active since 2010. It focuses on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and on fostering conservation, the sustainable management of forests, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

2. Rural Beekeeping Livelihoods Project, Lutukina village

Project Aim: To reduce poverty and increase economic participation and food security in rural and remote Fiji.

Project Details: The Rural Beekeeping Livelihoods Project has been implemented since 2015 and is due for completion in 2018. As part of the project, youth participate in activities including beekeeping husbandry training, beekeeping practical and monitoring, beekeeping business plan development and consultations and participatory trainings with Live & Learn. The Beekeeping project works in partnership with multiple groups: Fiji Government (Ministry of Agriculture, Dept. of Cooperatives, Integrated Human Resource Development Program); Commercial Honey Supplies and Community members of the target community.

RESEARCH LOCATIONS: LAOS

ANGO: ChildFund Australia

Local NGO: ChildFund in-country office

- ChildFund began work in Laos in 2010, implementing community development programs in Xieng Khouang Province, one of the poorest areas in the country.
- ChildFund has a strong focus on improving access to quality education, and is expanding its work to include pre-primary education to ensure that children get the best possible start in life. In partnership with communities, ChildFund has also established projects to improve water, sanitation and hygiene, mother and child health, and food security and nutrition, and to provide opportunities for children and youth to participate in local decision-making. ChildFund has a strong focus on child protection, child rights and developing life-skills through tools including sport and multimedia.

Research location:

- The three communities where the research was carried out (Paka, Dindam and Houayzouang villages) are located in Nonghet District, a rural and mountainous area.
- Nonghet District is 120 km from Phonsavan, a small town which is the capital of Xiengkhouang Province (North-East of Laos).
- ChildFund Laos chose to work in this district as it is considered one of poorest in Laos.

Project aim and details:

Three different projects are being implemented in the villages where the research was carried out:

1. ChildFund Pass It Back, Paka Village

Project Aim: To build the resilience and leadership skills of young people in the region, enabling them to overcome evolving challenges in their own lives and to “pass it back” (i.e. pass on skills to others in their communities) whilst building a sustainable model for positive change.

Project Details: ChildFund Laos has been running a sport for development project called Pass it Back in Nonghet District since 2015 in partnership with the Lao Rugby Federation. The project provides opportunities for participation for two groups of children and youth – players (aged 11-16) and coaches (aged 18-30). Young women and men are trained as rugby coaches, and to deliver an integrated life skills and rugby curriculum to children and youth. The curriculum aims to build the resilience of children and youth through focusing on the topics of leadership, gender and financial literacy.

The project uses peer education as its main method of delivery, with coaches acting as educators and role models for the young children they train. This has been particularly important for increasing girls’ participation in the project, as young girls in Paka Village have traditionally faced a number of barriers, such as early marriage, stigma around sport participation, and low confidence. These barriers have prevented them from participating in sporting activities.

RESEARCH LOCATIONS: LAOS

ANGO: ChildFund Australia

Project aim and details:

2. Child Clubs, Dindam Village

Project Aim: Child clubs aims to increase understanding of, and commitment to, child protection among duty bearers and others in the community.

Project Details: ChildFund Laos has been running child club activities in Nonghet District since 2014. Through these activities, ChildFund Laos aims to increase child and youth understanding of child rights, child protection issues and duty bearers' obligations, and to increase opportunities for children and youth to lead, monitor and evaluate their own initiatives. Within the child clubs, children and youth have had opportunities to nominate themselves to participate in activities related to three areas: child protection, environmental protection and information sharing. Based on their topic of choice, children and youth have also received training in different skills, such as media, child rights, drama and monitoring.

3. Global Community, Houayzouang

Project Aim: To develop a two-way communication mechanism that builds knowledge and solidarity across communities in Laos and Australia (and potentially beyond), whilst successfully generating revenue for ChildFund Laos' programs.

Project Details: ChildFund Laos has been running an innovative communication for development project called Global Community in Laos since 2014. Five youth were selected by their communities to be "Youth Ambassadors." These Youth Ambassadors are responsible for engaging with Global Community supporters from overseas on important development issues on behalf of their communities. Through the project, the youth have received training in English and media literacy to enable them to film videos on issues important to their communities, conduct interviews with community members, and engage in online discussions with supporters. By providing the participants with these experiences, the project aims to strengthen their capacity to engage more effectively as active citizens and represent their communities to the outside world.

RESEARCH LOCATIONS: NEPAL

ANGO: Transform Aid International

Nepal INGO: United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and local organisation partner, Prayas

- Established in 1954, UMN is a cooperative effort between the people of Nepal and a large number of Christian organisations from nearly 20 countries on four continents.
- Multicultural teams of Nepali nationals and volunteer expatriate staff work alongside local organisations in less developed areas of the country, building partnerships that lead to healthy, strong and empowered individuals, families, and communities.

Research location:

- The three communities where the research was carried out (Baskharka, Talti and Chyanglee villages) are located in Dhading District, in central Nepal.
- These villages were affected by the earthquake of 2015. Many lives were lost and homes destroyed. Water scarcity especially affected women and girls who have the main responsibility for collecting water. School buildings were also damaged, affecting children's education. After the earthquake, UMN, together with Transform Aid International and other donors, worked to support communities in their reconstruction efforts.

Project aim and details:

- One project is being implemented in the villages where the research was carried out:

1. Child Centred Community Development Program (CCCDP), Baskharka, Talti and Chyanglee villages

Project Aim: Enabled communities, where children are heard, protected, given opportunity for their development free from any type of discrimination (gender, caste etc.) and threats to survival, and are able to attain their full potential

Project Details: The specific activities under the CCCDP, which were explored in this research, focused on: Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Training in Chyanglee and Talti villages, and a school quiz competition in Baskharka village.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research approach

Different research approaches were used for the three learning areas, as each area had a different focus.¹⁵

Learning Area 1 used a case study approach to explore the links between child and youth participation and development effectiveness. In this approach, children and youth described 'change stories' that happened because of their own participation in development projects. Illustrated Change Cards were used by children and youth to link their stories to the development effectiveness characteristics defined for this research.

Learning Area 2 used a self-assessment tool to explore the contributions of child and youth participation to program outcomes. In-country partners led the assessment to identify links between changes resulting from the child and youth participation described by research participants in Learning Area 1 in order to gauge the extent to which they aligned with their stated project objectives, and in some cases their organisational objectives or visions.

15. For more details on the research approach, see Annex 2.

Learning Area 3 used reflection questions to explore child and youth participation in research practice. Researcher daily debrief sheets were used during field research. A post-research survey using an online survey tool, and reflection/learning teleconferences with in-country partners, were used by the research partners to collect further information under this learning area.

See Section 3 for the specific research tools used for Learning Areas 1, 2 and 3.

The researchers

The research was carried out through the joint efforts of the partners:

In-country researchers in Fiji, Laos and Nepal: In-country head office partner staff led the research, and a team of trained local researchers (mostly in-country partner field staff) carried out the research in each of the nine research sites. In Laos and Nepal, researchers also included youth. Teams of in-country researchers tested the research tools and reframed and redesigned them to fit the local context. In-country partners worked with communities to set up the research, collect and collate research participation data, and provide contextual background. In-country researchers were trained by ANGO and in-country partner staff who had existing close relationships and familiarity with the partner organisation and country. A consultant closely engaged with the research also had familiarity with the country and partner staff and, for Phase 2 in Nepal, an experienced academic and practitioner from the Peer Review Group and who was familiar with Nepal volunteered.

ANGOs: ANGO staff, along with a consultant, were responsible for leading research training workshops in each country. They came up with the idea of the Development Effectiveness Mapping Tool and created its first iteration, co-designed the research and research tools, conducted quality reviews of data and co-wrote the case studies and Learning Paper.

Academic Partner: the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney (ISF), co-designed the research approach and research tools with the ANGOs, and helped prepare the training workshops. They developed a collaborative process with ANGO partners, and through them with in-country partners, to co-design all stages of the research. ISF analysed the research data and drafted the Learning Paper findings for research partner input.

Research participants

Research participants in each location are described in Table 4. See Annex for a gender breakdown of the children, youth and adults.



TABLE 4: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Case study location	Child and youth participants	Adult participants	Types of participation
Fiji	<p>Age: Youth out of school in their late teens to early 30s</p> <p>Culturally in Fiji, youth are considered youth until they are married. As such, in the research Fijian youths' ages spanned 16-35.</p> <p>Ethnicity: Indigenous Fijians (iTaukei)</p> <p>Number of participants: 23</p>	<p>Parents</p> <p>Community Leaders</p> <p>Number of participants: 15</p>	<p>Learning circles (children/youth)</p> <p>Interviews (adults)</p>
Laos	<p>Age: 11–18 years</p> <p>Ethnicity: Khmu and Hmong, two of the ethnic communities that ChildFund Laos works with in Nonghet.</p> <p>Number of participants: 34</p>	<p>Parents</p> <p>Community leaders</p> <p>ChildFund Laos staff</p> <p>Rugby Federation coaches</p> <p>Number of participants: 18</p>	<p>Learning circles (children/youth)</p> <p>Interviews (adults)</p>
Nepal	<p>Age: 11–18 years</p> <p>Ethnicity: Chepang, Dalit, Tamang, Gurung, Magar and other ethnic minority groups.</p> <p>Number of participants: 25</p>	<p>Parents</p> <p>Community leaders</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Number of participants: 10</p>	<p>Learning circles (children/youth)</p> <p>Interviews (adults)</p>

Research tools

All in-country partners in all three countries used the same over-arching research questions, data collection tools and format for analysis. This ensured consistent research practices and enabled research partners to compare and summarise learning across the three countries. The gender and ages of children and youth were recorded to ensure gender and age differences were taken into account in presenting the research findings.

Learning Area 1: learning about the contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness

Three main tools were used across all research locations. In-country staff were involved in testing the tools, and training was facilitated for around a week to prepare everyone for the field research and in-country analysis. The research tools included:

Tool 1. Identifying change stories and then choosing a focal change story with children and youth:

Using this tool involved facilitating a group of 5 to 12 children and youth (female and male) in a 'learning circle' in each location. The tool helped each child and youth to share one or two individual stories of change that happened due to their participation in development projects in the community. The first was about change they personally experienced, and the second was about change they saw happen to others in their community. The groups also included a participatory activity for children to link the change stories to the development effectiveness characteristics in the Development Effectiveness Mapping Tool illustrated by Change Cards with cartoons. Following this, the children and youth chose one change story to explore more deeply through the research. They chose one story by voting for the story they most wanted to share with their community.

Through this process children were able to lead the research by deciding what the research should focus on. An in-country staff member took on the role of facilitator with the support of a facilitator guidebook and another staff member acted as a note-taker to populate a formatted note-taker booklet to complement the facilitator guide and capture key data. In some villages youth assisted with group facilitation. In Laos and Nepal, children and youth identified which adults were involved in the change story and who should be interviewed for the research. In Fiji, adults who were likely to be aware of projects and associated changes automatically became involved in the research, as time did not allow for specific adults to be selected by the groups convened for Tool 1.

Tool 2. Exploring the change story with children and youth:

A second participatory process was developed to encourage the same children and youth to look more closely at the chosen change story. This process also occurred in a 'learning circle' and included identifying and exploring *flow-on changes* that happened as a result of the child and youth participation described in the chosen change story. Children and youth also looked at *changes in relationships* and looked at the role of child and youth participation in creating these changes. Again, an in-country staff member took on the role of facilitator with the support of a facilitator guidebook and another staff member acted as a note-taker and populated a formatted note-taker booklet to complement the facilitator guide and capture key data. In some villages youth assisted with group facilitation.

Tool 3. Semi-structured interviews with adults:

Adults (a mix of parents, community leaders, some teachers, and in-country staff) were asked to explore *flow-on changes* that happened because of the change story the children and youth chose. Adults were also asked to explore *changes in relationships* and to explore the role of child and youth participation in development activities. A semi-structured face-to-face interview template was prepared to guide the one-on-one (and at times two-on-one) interviews. Between 2 and 9 adults were interviewed for each story. In-country staff interviewed adults and scribed their responses on a template document.

The change stories, and the flow-on changes that occurred, including reflections from adults in their interviews, were written up as case studies for all nine locations involved in the research. The case studies can be found in Section 4 of this Learning Paper.

Learning Area 2: learning about the contribution of child and youth participation to program outcomes

In-country partners were asked to assess (using a ranking system) how closely the changes described by children and adults aligned with their stated project outcomes. In addition, partners were given the option to also assess how the changes aligned with their organisational outcomes (for example, their NGO mission or vision document that guides the work they do).

The same format and guidance was provided for each in-country partner, but the process to complete the assessment was unique to each country. No criteria were provided to guide the self-assessment. Instead, the in-country partners used their professional and individual judgment to assess learnings from Learning Area 1 against program outcomes.

Senior in-country staff carried out the assessments, which were then reviewed by ANGOs. Quotes from children and youth and adults gathered as part of the research for Learning Area 1 were used as evidence demonstrating the overlap between what research participants described as changes resulting from child and youth participation and expected program outcomes.

Learning Area 3: learning about the contribution of child and youth participation to research practice

Three sources of data were used to learn about 'challenges, opportunities and good practices which exist for effective child and youth participation in research practice':

1. Daily reflection debrief sheets for researchers.
2. An online survey completed by five individuals within the in-country partners.
3. A teleconference with in-country representatives to share experiences of the research.

Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted through many stages and by different research partners within each stage, as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7: Stages of data analysis

Data analysis also involved looking at the differences in how children, youth and adults described the changes resulting from child and youth participation, and how they linked to development effectiveness. Figure 8 provides an example of how these findings from Learning Area 1 are presented for each case study.

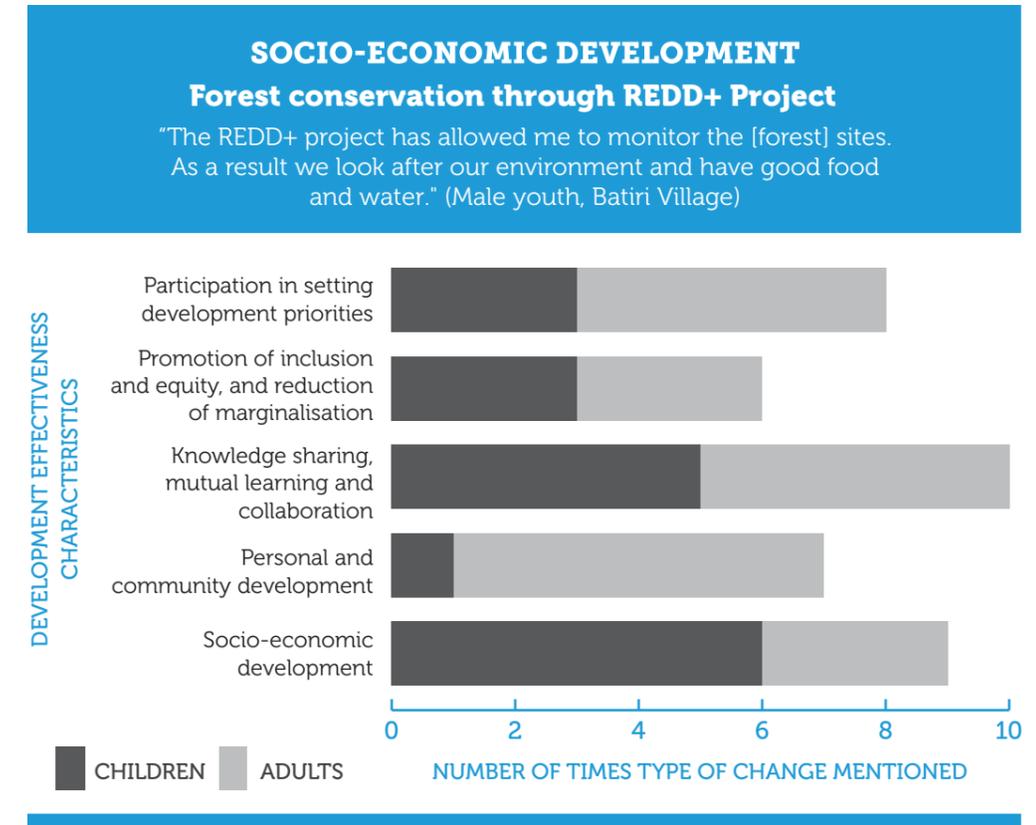


Figure 8: The main story of change, its flow on changes and how these additional changes link to development effectiveness characteristics

Ethical considerations and standards

At the start of the research, the ANGO partners, the university partner, ISF and the Peer Review Group developed 'Guidelines for Ethical Research'. These guidelines provided principles, practical steps and an ethical research checklist to guide researchers through the conduct of ethical research with children and youth. The ACFID (Australian Council for International Development) and RDI (Research for Development Impact) Network Principles and Guidelines for Ethical Research and Evaluation in Development also informed ethical considerations.¹⁶ A discussion of ethical research was included in training workshops for in-country researchers. See Annex for further details on our approach to ethical research.

Child rights-based approach to research

The research partners sought to apply a child rights-based approach to the research, in particular through respecting Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Article 12 is focused on children and youth expressing their views and having the right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, and it aims to ensure that their views are given due weight. This research focused on valuing the opinions and expressions of children and youth. To support the practice of child rights-based research, the research partners drew on the Lundy (2007)¹⁷ model of child participation. Lundy (2007) identifies the following four key areas of child and youth participation:

16. <http://rdinetwork.org.au/resources/effective-and-ethical-research-and-evaluation/>

17. Lundy, L. (2007) 'Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. British Educational Research Journal, 33(6): 927-942.

Space:	children must be given the opportunity to express a view
Voice:	children must be facilitated to express their views
Audience:	the view must be listened to
Influence:	the view must be acted upon, as appropriate.

This model was applied to the research in terms of its four elements: space, voice, audience and influence – see Table 5 and Annex for additional details.

Table 5: Lundy (2007) Model of child rights in research and how it was applied to this research

Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and youth were invited to participate in the research. • Children and youth decided the focus of the research by choosing the change story.
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and youth participating in the research participated in program activities for at least two years, meaning that they had the capacity to participate. • Participatory research processes / games and activities were used for children/youth to ensure their voices were heard. The processes mostly used open-ended questions to allow for free expression. • The research was conducted in 'safe places' and ensured the inclusion of all those that participated in the research.
Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's and youths' views were presented clearly in this Learning Paper so that they could be listened to by readers. • It is intended that learning from this research be shared in communities so that child and youth voices can be heard locally.
Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be no specific decision-making outcomes from this research, so the extent to which 'children's and youths' views inform decision-making' is not explicit – though it is expected that learning from this research will inform future child / youth participation programming.

Limitations of the research

All research projects have limitations. For this research, the limitations included: challenges in designing child-led research; translation issues; the skills and capacity of in-country researchers; the difficulties of attributing change to particular actions; multiple layers of analysis and multiple responsibilities across the partnership. Further details on these limitations, and how they were addressed and/or overcome, are provided in the Annex on page 111.



4

FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

Learning Area 1: The contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness

This section presents findings about the contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness. It begins by visually presenting the development effectiveness characteristics identified in the stories of change for each country. Findings show the breadth and diversity of changes described in the research which linked to the development effectiveness characteristics. It then presents 7 key findings and implications for practitioners. Data from nine case studies found in the next section were used to develop the key findings.

The breadth and diversity of ways in which individual child and youth stories of change link to development effectiveness

In addition to the changes identified by children and youth when using Tool 1, it is interesting to look at the flow-on changes that resulted from child and youth participation.

Overall, the stories of change shared by child and youth were found to link to a wide range of development effectiveness characteristics defined for this research. The stories of change were shared during the first research activity in which each child or youth was invited to share one or two stories about changes they had experienced as a result of their participation in development projects (the projects are described in Section 2 and in further detail in the Case Studies in Section 5 and in the Annexes). A total of 114 change stories were shared (Fiji 34; Laos 33; Nepal 47). See Annex for the range of activities children and youth participated in in each country.

Figure 9 shows the total number of changes shared by children and youth in each research country and how they link to a wide range of development effectiveness characteristics, especially in Nepal.

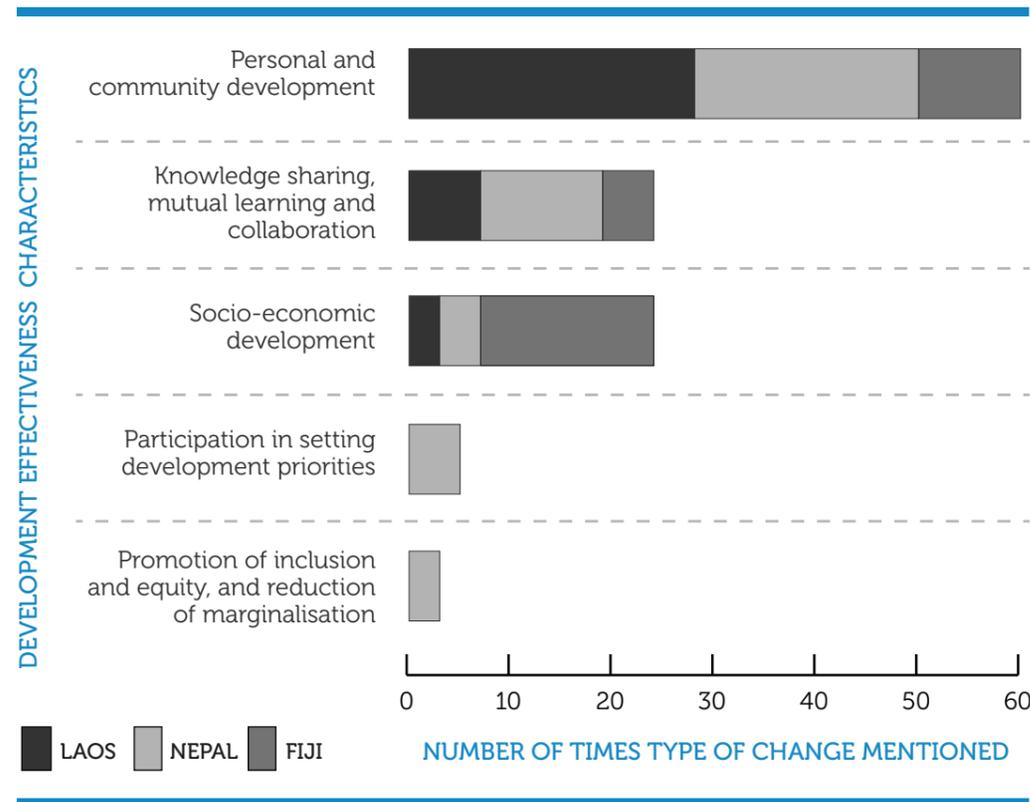


Figure 9: Total number of changes shared by children and youth in each country and how they link to the development effectiveness characteristics

In Laos and Nepal, the changes most commonly reported by children and youth linked to *personal and community development*. In Fiji, the most reported type of change was *socio-economic development*. Of interest, in Phase 1 Fiji saw a lot of changes related to personal and community development and knowledge sharing, and mutual learning and collaboration. The research findings suggest that these two characteristics form the building blocks for socio-economic development, and create the environment for development to be realised. Further, the age of youth in Fiji was culturally defined, and they were older than youth in Laos and Nepal. As such, the capacity for youth to participate in socio-economic development activities may have been higher in Fiji than in other locations.

For all three countries, the most commonly reported changes matched the focus of the project activities in the country context. For example, the ChildFund Laos Pass it Back project in Paka Village aimed to build life skills in children and youth, and research participants described improvements in *personal development*. In Fiji, the beekeeping project was intentionally a livelihoods project, and participants told stories about *socio-economic development*.

While all individual change stories were linked to one or two development effectiveness characteristics in the first research activity, when one change story was voted for and explored deeply in the second research activity, it became clear that the change had wider flow-on effects on peers, families and communities, and led to changes in other aspects of development effectiveness.

Breadth and diversity of how flow-on changes resulting from child and youth participation link to development effectiveness

In addition to the changes identified by children and youth when using Tool 1, it is interesting to look at the flow-on changes that resulted from the initial changes described by the children and youth. Overall, the flow-on changes shared by participants in each country were found to link to all five of the development effectiveness characteristics. The presence of all five characteristics suggests that child and youth participation can contribute to multiple types of change which benefit themselves, their families and their communities.

The 'flow-on changes' were shared through story telling in learning circles with children and youth and in semi-structured interviews with adults. These processes were undertaken during the second activity of exploring one chosen change story in each of the nine research locations across Laos, Fiji and Nepal.

The flow-on changes described by children, youth and adults and how they link to different characteristics of development effectiveness are shown in Figure 10. The numbers in the figure show how many times 'flow-on changes' were recorded.

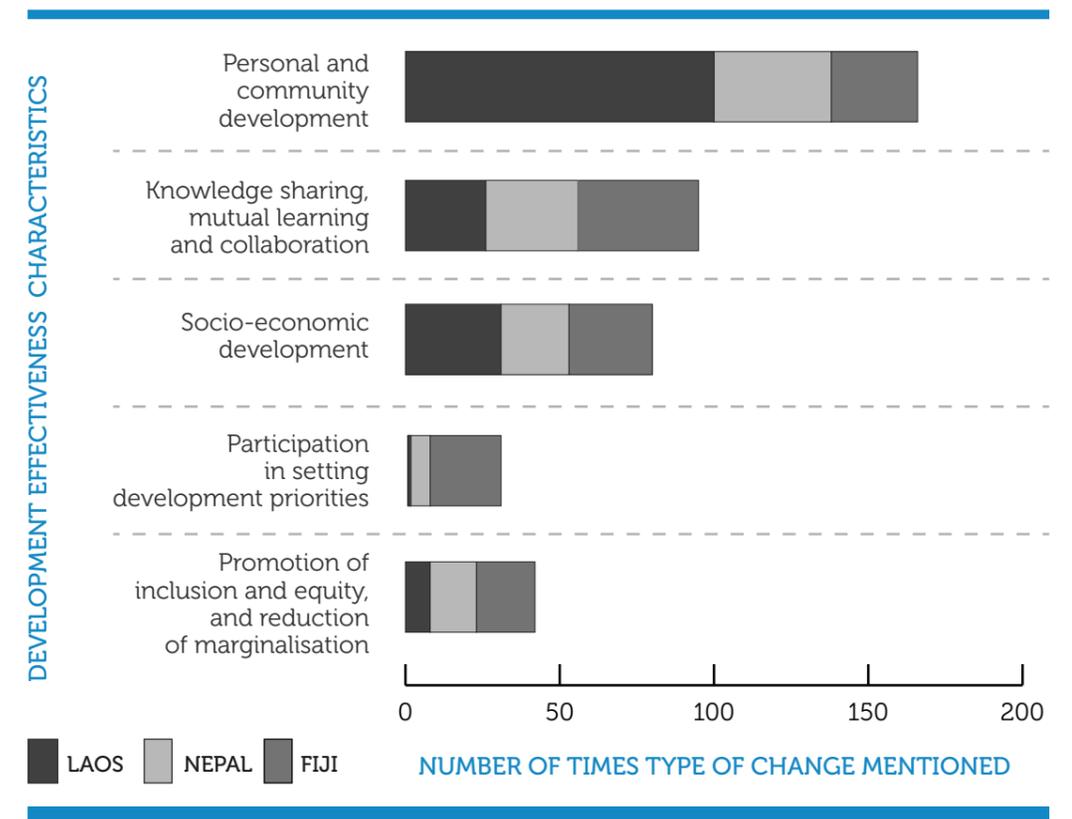


Figure 10: Number of flow-on changes described by children, youth and adults across the three countries (Fiji, Laos, Nepal) and links to development effectiveness characteristics

Figure 10 shows a spread of flow-on changes described in each country, and the slight differences between countries. In Laos, children, youth and adults described personal and community development more often than they did in Nepal and Fiji. This may be reflective of the project focus. In Nepal and Fiji there was a more even spread of flow-on changes, possibly because the projects had been running longer.

Figure 10 shows that changes which involved child and youth participation reached far beyond the initial primary focus of the research project. The participation of children and youth created a broad set of different yet interconnected changes in communities.

Key findings across the nine case studies

This research produced seven key findings in response to the question: What is the contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness? The findings draw on the nine case studies that span Fiji, Laos and Nepal (the case studies are located in Section 5). Following each finding are suggestions for what the finding means for practice for development practitioners.

Finding 1:

Child and youth participation led to positive changes within children and youth themselves such as improved interpersonal skills and self-confidence. These changes then enabled children and youth to influence broader change within families and communities.

Child and youth participation influenced change in the children and youth themselves for example, *personal development* including greater self-confidence, leadership skills, knowledge and interpersonal skills). Additionally, the research found that *personal development* within children and youth influenced changes in their families and communities and linked to the other development effectiveness characteristics.

For example, *personal development* within children and youth influenced:

- * increased income generation in Fiji
- * improved environmental management in Fiji
- * improved health in Nepal and Fiji
- * improved education in Nepal
- * increased social inclusion in Nepal
- * increased knowledge sharing and collaboration in Nepal
- * improved life skills in Laos
- * increased protection of child rights in Laos

Examples of how the positive changes that occurred within children and youth then influenced families and communities are provided below:

In Paka Village, Laos, children's and youths' participation in learning, playing and coaching rugby led to greater self-esteem and confidence and the ability to speak and act respectfully towards adults. As one girl noted, after participating in rugby: *"We know how to respect friends, adults and village leaders."*

These changes in personal development led to children and youth actively sharing the knowledge and skills they learned with their friends, siblings and parents, linking to the development characteristics of knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration. One boy who participated in the research noted: *"Those who play rugby teach me how to behave well, speak well and be polite with the parents, adults in the village."*

Adults also described broader changes resulting from the personal development of children and youth. For example, adults described greater respect of children and inclusion of children in village affairs: *"The village chief respects children and leads them to join the rugby or other activities to make them change."* (Mother)

Another example of children's and youths' personal development influencing broader change within families and communities occurred in Bashkharka Village, Nepal. Participation in a school quiz competition led to children having more self-confidence and increased the value they placed on education. This in turn led siblings and parents to place more value on education, and to make access to education more widespread.

Adults noted how children's participation had a positive influence on education in families and the community: *"Families used to prioritise work over children's studies. Now the community sends their children to school regularly."* (Female, Parent)

The research also showed how personal development led to changes in how education was viewed more broadly in the community. A 14-year-old girl noted: *"My community also gives importance to studies because of my parents. Seeing me go to school on time, other people send their children to school on time."*

The case studies demonstrated that the personal development of children and youth improved their relationships with their parents. One girl noted: *"My parents were proud of me for being second in the competition. I used to get very shy and scared to talk to my teachers. After participating in the competition I have overcome my shyness."* (Female, 14)

“Those who play rugby teach me how to behave well, speak well and be polite with the parents, adults in the village.” (Male child, Paka Village, Laos)

Learning for Development Practitioners: Activities that seek to promote the personal development of children and youth should be valued and included in development programming. These activities can contribute to a broad range of positive changes within children themselves and they can also lead to a wider set of changes in families and communities, such improved access to health and education.

Please see the case studies from Paka Village, Laos; Houayzouang Village, Laos; Bashkharka Village, Nepal; Talti Village, Nepal; and Drawa Settlement, Fiji which all demonstrate how positive changes in children and youth influenced broader change within families and communities.

Finding 2:

Child and youth participation led to changes in relationships and shifts in power between children, youth and other family members, and to changes in relationships and shifts in power within the broader community.

All nine case studies presented in this Learning Paper demonstrate changes in relationships resulting from child and youth participation. During this research all participants described shifts in their relationships. These included:

- * Changes in relationships between children and youth. Examples include: child-to-child and youth-to-youth learning (Fiji, Laos, and Nepal); greater trust between siblings (Laos and Nepal); greater respect and generosity between friends (Laos and Nepal); and children becoming role models for other children in their villages (Laos).

- * Changes in relationships between children and youth and adults. Examples include: village and community leaders including children and youth in community events and decision-making (Fiji, Laos and Nepal); parents listening and respecting their children more (Fiji, Laos and Nepal); and children and youth feeling more confident to speak with adults (Fiji, Laos and Nepal).
- * Changes in relationships between adults. Examples include: allowing women and girls to stay in the home and be included in community life during menstruation (Nepal) and the inclusion of 'married-in' people from outside the village in community life (Fiji).

Some country-specific examples of how child and youth participation influenced changes in relationships are provided below.

In Drawa Settlement, Fiji, youth described how their participation in forest conservation activities influenced changes in how adults related to youth. One youth noted: *"Before, families looked down at youth but now that more youth attend Live & Learn training and workshops on forest conservation, they now look up to youth."* Another youth said: *"Youth used to be looked down on by their families but now that they attend trainings and workshops, families look up to the youth."* These examples of shifting power relations and adult views of youth are particularly noteworthy given the Fijian culture and tradition where youth have limited voice in village matters.

“The children and adults joined for the work” [Male child, Dindam Village, Laos].

In Dindam Village, Laos, the participation of children in child clubs, and their sharing of their learning about child rights and child labour, changed the way parents treated children. As noted by one child: *"Before, they hit children because they didn't know the importance of children, but now they only tell the children when they do something wrong but don't hit them anymore. They speak more politely, they don't use "ku" and "mu" [slang words for 'I' and 'you']"*. [Female child]

In Chyanglee Village, Nepal, shifts in relationships between children and adults were also reported after children's participation in Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) training. For example, parents acknowledged a change in relationships with their children, allowing for more inclusive participation in family life: *"In the past parents got angry and didn't want to understand the message the children wanted to share from school. Children didn't want to talk to parents, but now when children get home late, we ask them nicely about why and understand them"* [Mother]. In Nepal, adults tend to hold authority and there are caste-based social hierarchies.¹⁸ These cultural norms, and the norm that men are the main decision-makers, are important to bear in mind when considering the findings from Nepal, especially in relation to shifts in power, as many research participants were from minority groups.

Learning for Development Practitioners: Development projects can be designed with the understanding that child and youth participation can influence changes in relationships in family and community life. While changes in relationships may seem 'intangible' and hard to measure, relationship changes can be identified as part of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to demonstrate the contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness. This can be done through case studies, change stories, interviews and qualitative evaluations.

18. Madsen, U.A. and Carney, S. [2011] Education in an age of radical uncertainty: youth and schooling in urban Nepal, *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 9(1): 115-133.

Finding 3:

All of the children, youth and adults who participated in the research valued the contribution that children and youth made to positive change within their families and communities.

The case studies provided evidence that children, youth and adults valued the contributions of children and youth to creating change within their communities, but often had different views on how they influenced change. Children, youth and adults described how child and youth participation was important in contributing to change across all five characteristics of development effectiveness.

Examples from the case studies of how child and youth participation influenced a broad range of important positive changes are provided below.

After they saw the success of the beekeeping activities in Lutukina Village, Fiji, community members came to value youth participation because it improved the community in a range of ways. One youth commented: *"The village looks up to the youth because they enable the beekeeping project and [other] village activities. It's a good feeling"* (Youth). This new level of respect for youth and their participation reportedly raised the village's profile and increased its socio-economic development: *"It [beekeeping] improves our relationship with government departments because they see that youth can do the job. [Provincial] government makes constant visits to Lutukina to support the youth."* (Youth)

In Dindam Village in Laos, the children and youth described how their participation in child clubs led to parents respecting and valuing their opinions more, being more supportive of children's involvement in development activities, treating children better, and also listening and considering messages from children about health, hygiene and the value of education. As noted by two girls: *"Community members have been washing their hands before eating since the children joined the child clubs"* (Female child) and *"There were changes in the family. For example, previously the parents didn't want their children to go to school but now they let them go."* (Female child)

In Chyanglee Village, Nepal, children's and youths' contributions to change were recognised because of their roles in delivering ASRH training. As noted by one Mother: *"I was happy that the children organised and conducted ASRH training with confidence. It's a great achievement and a chance to have them train their friends."* Children and youth described how they were encouraged to continue their work, and that they increased the participation of others: *"People in the community appreciate our work and they also participate in our programs."* (Male youth, 16)

“Youths from different tribes are working together, it [the project] has brought the tribes together which has brought the village together.” [Village Headman, Lutukina Village, Fiji]

Learning for Development Practitioners: Development projects that design for and include genuine participation of children and youth (in partnership with adults – see Finding 4) can contribute to a broad range of positive changes that are valued by young and old. Building the capacity of staff around programming for meaningful child and youth participation should be prioritised to support development effectiveness.

Finding 4:

All of the children, youth and adults who participated in the research agreed that working together as partners (rather than as leaders or beneficiaries) was the most important and valued way of working to achieve positive change in the community.

In this research, children, youth and adults were invited to explore the role of child and youth participation in development activities. They were all separately asked which role they most valued for children and youth: as beneficiaries, as partners or as leaders in change (see Figure 2 and Box 1 for details). In six out of the nine research locations, all research participants (children, youth and adults) most valued working in partnership.

Examples of how partnership was valued by children, youth and adults are provided below.

In Houayzouang Village, Laos, one boy noted that: *"Because there are children and adults working together to make change, children and youth learn together to make the change"* (Male child).

"I am able to counsel my parents that we should abide by newly developed customs, traditions and culture and leave traditional malpractices." (Sixteen-year-old girl from Talti Village, Nepal)

In Fiji, youth and adults also pointed to the importance of working together as partners to create change. For example in Batiri Village, the Village Headman noted: *"I prefer that we work together. If we don't work together there won't be unity."* In Lutukina Village, Fiji, a youth commented: *"We (people in the community) need togetherness and commitment from both youths and adults to do the work well, especially in the village"* (Male youth). In Fiji, this is an important change given that traditionally, youth do not have a strong role or voice in village decision-making.

In some communities children, youth and adults valued the role youth played in implementing decisions that were made either by adults or made in partnership with other youth. In these cases the focus remained on partnering for change.

Learning for Development Practitioners: Development practitioners should design projects that enable opportunities for children, youth and adults to work as partners. The research demonstrated that adults, children and youth all viewed working as partners as the most important and effective way to create positive change.

Finding 5:

The range of changes identified by children, youth and adults during this research aligned with the original stated NGO objectives for the development projects.

The changes described by the research participants (children, youth and adults) in each location aligned with the changes that the development projects aimed to achieve. This should reassure the ANGOs and in-country partners that their objectives are being met and in some cases exceeded. The research findings also highlight the link between achieved project objectives and broader development effectiveness outcomes. This research validates previous project monitoring data and found links between children and youth participation and development effectiveness.

For example, in research locations in Laos, research participants' descriptions of changes resulting from child and youth participation were similar to the development project objectives. The ChildFund Laos Pass it Back project in Paka Village aimed to build life skills in children and youth, and research participants described improvements in *personal development*. The Child Clubs project in Dindam Village in Laos focused on increasing children's understanding of child protection issues and duty bearers' obligations, and focused on children sharing their knowledge

with their peers, families and community. The success of the project was demonstrated through the adults having increased respect for children's opinions and treating children better within the community.

Another example of a connection between project objectives and descriptions of change by research participants was found in Lutukina Village, Fiji. The beekeeping project's aim was to develop sustainable livelihoods through income generation. The youth identified socio-economic development as the main change in their case study: *"When harvest comes I know we are going to get help from it like money. When money comes it will help the family and the village for what we need especially our children."* (Mother, 33)

"Changes have occurred, there is less exploitation of the menstruating women as [compared] to before..." (Mother, Talti Village, Nepal)

Learning for Development Practitioners: The changes described by children and youth resulting from their participation in development projects aligned with the objectives of these projects. This should be reassuring to development practitioners and NGO staff. Development practitioners could benefit from assessing the alignment of their project objectives with the development effectiveness characteristics generated by this research.

In addition, practitioners could benefit from integrating and/or adapting some of the tools used in this research (such as the Development Effectiveness Mapping Tool and the associated illustrated Change Cards) into their monitoring, evaluation and learning practice.

Finding 6:

Child and youth participation resulted in some immediate positive changes for children, youth and adults. These changes show that there are immediate benefits of supporting children and youth which go beyond preparing them to be leaders in the future.

To put this finding in context it is important to note that the projects featured in the research followed previous or parallel projects that had created trust between the community (particularly community leaders) and the NGOs, and that sought to create change in ways that were cognisant of local cultural norms and barriers to change.

Often, child and youth participation is valued because it helps train them to be future leaders. However, this research highlights that child and youth participation (and child-focused and child-centred programming) can also create immediate positive change. This finding supports research conducted elsewhere that emphasises that children are able and competent, and that their rights must be respected.¹⁹

The research demonstrated that as a result of their participation, children and youth are more listened to, they are provided with more opportunities to participate, and they are more valued by adults as partners in development. These changes occurred within the relatively short time frames of the development projects. The research highlights how children and youth were able to act as change agents in the present, and they should not be viewed merely as future change agents.

Examples from research participants of how child and youth participation resulted in positive and immediate change are provided below.

19. White, S.C. and Choudhury, S.A. (2007) *The Politics of Child Participation in International Development: The Dilemma of Agency*. The European Journal of Development Research 19(4): 529-50.

“I feel proud of my daughter. I wish she learns more from Child Club....” (Mother, Chyanglee Village, Nepal)

In Talti Village, Nepal, children, youth and adults stated that children’s and youths’ participation in ASRH training brought about wider positive change. Traditionally in this part of Nepal, women and girls are often excluded from community and household life when they are menstruating. This long-held traditional practice began to change as a result of the ASRH training. Participation in the ASRH training provided children and youth with the confidence and understanding they needed to influence the behaviour of others in their families and communities, as described by adults and the youth themselves. This in turn has helped change the norms in the community.

A young female noted: *“People in the community have started replacing their bad traditional thinking on health. For example, my grandfather did not used to allow us [menstruating women and girls] to enter [his] home or touch anything inside the homeand was not allowed to touch the most elderly of the home but now my grandfather does not do this because I educated him after taking Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health training.”* (Female, 16)

A mother noted: *“Changes have occurred, There is less exploitation of the menstruating women than there was before. We have taught them [children] what we know and they have taught us what they know. We tell them to do what they have learnt. During menstruation, we used to eat and sleep outside but now we don’t.”* (Mother)

Learning for Development Practitioners: Where trust relationships have already been built between in-country NGO partners and communities (particularly community leaders), development programs that include meaningful child and youth participation offer the potential to influence immediate and significant change for children, youth and adults. Child and youth participation in projects can equip children and youth with important life skills for the long term, and importantly their participation and partnering with adults in development projects is also beneficial now as they contribute to positive changes in their communities in the short term.

Learning 7:

Child and youth participation can bring about benefits related to personal and community development such as improved equity, social inclusion and self-esteem among children and youth. It appears that these benefits are the building blocks for good development outcomes; in the research they were found to contribute to longer-term benefits such as socio-economic development, improved health and access to education.

“Saving and protecting our forests means we eat fresh clean food, we don’t get sick, and we’ll save our money rather than spending it on medicine. Good available farmlands yield more plants and more income when we sell them.” (Youth, Batiri Village, Fiji)

The case studies collected in this research suggest that investing in child and youth participation has positive development benefits. Research participants shared examples illustrating how personal development, including improved self-esteem, can increase future socio-economic development including increased earning potential.

For example; *“The participation of children is important because ... the role they are taking on currently will enable them to take on further responsibilities at different organisations in future e.g. experience for job. They learn and are able to teach. They have learned to be calm and take on responsibilities.”* (Mother, Chyanglee Nepal)

In Batiri Village, Fiji, youth participated in forest conservation activities with personal and community development benefits, including improved equity of access to clean water. This led to longer-term improved health through a large reduction in typhoid cases in the village, as noted by the Village Headman: *“Before we used to be known as a village that has a lot of typhoid cases, but not anymore.”*

Youth participation development projects in Fiji also increased social inclusion, which helped to reunite a fragmented community. One youth noted: *“There was an increase in working together and listening to each other.”* The Village Headman said this unity had longer-term impacts beyond the village itself: *“The village is now working together. I am happy that the village is now working together, as the [provincial] government will only support a village if they are united. People from outside are now supporting the village because we are united.”* The research findings highlight the long-term benefits that social cohesion and unity provides, one of them being that government support is more likely when a strong and healthy community works together.

In Houayzouang Village (Laos), children learned English through the Global Community project. Children, youth and adults described how children had more confidence after participating in English classes: *“I have more boldness [self-confidence], I am happy to have the opportunity to learn English and know a lot of things”* (Female youth), and *“I see that she can speak and ask people in the village ... Now she is bolder [more confident] in the village. If she hears what adults say and doesn’t understand she can ask the adults”* (Father). The rise in confidence was described by children, youth and adults as having a positive influence on education and the value people placed on it, resulting in children and youth paying more attention at school, developing higher aspirations for the future and asking more questions of others: *“I pay more attention when studying English because I want to speak very well and I want to study abroad.”* (Female child)

These examples from Fiji, Nepal and Laos provide further evidence of both immediate and long-term links between child and youth participation and development effectiveness.

Learning for Development Practitioners: Development practitioners can embrace programs involving children and youth that recognise and focus on both immediate benefits related to personal and community development, and long-term benefits related to socio-economic development, improved health and access to education. Programs can be implemented that consider immediate and longer-term change for children, youth, families and communities as a result of child and youth participation.

Learning Area 2: The contribution of child and youth participation to program outcomes

In-country partners conducted a self-assessment to see if the changes described by children and adults from Learning Area 1 had any overlap or alignment with the NGO’s stated project outcomes (these outcomes were commonly sourced from project design documentation). A ranking scale of 1–5 was used to assess the links between development effectiveness characteristics and project outcomes – where 1 was a weak link and 5 a strong link between the development effectiveness characteristics linked to the change stories and stated project outcomes and in some cases also organisational objectives (see Section 3 for further details on the self-assessment tool).

“Children used to return home in the middle of the day. Now, mothers and children take their children to school. Now the presence of children has increased at schools.” (Male, Teacher/community leader, Bashkharka Village, Nepal)

Overall, across the three countries most responses in the self-assessments were given a ranking of 3 or 4 (indicating that the links between changes resulting from child and youth participation and expected program outcomes were of medium or high strength). Only two instances of not applicable (NA) were recorded, showing that the activities related to these outcomes had not yet been carried out due to project planning. This can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of self-assessment rankings for links between child and youth participation and program outcomes in all research sites (in Fiji, Laos and Nepal)

Ranking	Weak link > ----- > Strong link					N/A
	...1	...2	...3	...4	...5	
Total number of responses that recorded this ranking level	1	0	6	6	2	2

The key findings from Learning Area 2 were:

Finding 1: Overall, the in-country partner’s self-assessments showed strong evidence of links between changes that happened because of child and youth participation (as identified by the research and using the development effectiveness characteristics) and their defined program outcomes.

Finding 2: The self-assessments by in-country partners showed that the changes that the children, youth and adults valued the most were similar to the changes that the NGOs wanted to achieve. This was evident in the change stories the participants chose to share, and in the way these changes aligned with project outcome documentation.

Finding 3: In all countries, some weaker links between changes and program outcomes were also identified in the self-assessment. The main explanation given for the weakness of these links was that the activities related to them had not yet been implemented.

The self-assessment task demonstrates the value contribution that child and youth participation made to the achievement of expected development outcomes through NGO project design and programming.

Learning for Development Practitioners: Practitioners could benefit from integrating and/or adapting some of the tools used in this research (such as the self-assessment ranking system used to compare and contrast change stories with project objectives). The tools could be part of practitioners’ monitoring and evaluation and learning practice. The development effectiveness characteristics could also inform elements of project design documentation.

In-country partners described the self-assessment exercise as very useful and one partner is already using it to assess other development programs. Further details about research practice findings and an example of a completed self-assessment is provided in the Annex on page 111.



“As children got familiar with the researchers they were more open. They were more friendly and open on day two.” [UMN staff member, Nepal]

Learning Area 3: Child and youth participation in research practice

The experiences and findings were not the same across all three-country contexts. This highlights the influence of unique country and cultural settings, the need for age-appropriate tools relevant to the local context, and the need for research teams that can adapt research practice as required.

As noted in Section 3, three sources of data were used to inform the findings for Learning Area 3. The following key findings about effective child and youth participation in research practice emerged.

Finding 1:

Research tools should be developed to enable children and youth participation in the research

- * Age appropriate illustrations are an effective way to engage children and youth in complex topics. The illustrated Change Cards prepared for this research (depicting the five characteristics of development effectiveness as cartoons) were described by many in-country researchers as pivotal to enabling youth to identify, match and discuss the different types of changes that occurred as a result of their participation in development projects. Though researchers in Laos and some in Nepal did note that it was at times challenging for children to link their stories of change to the Change Cards, in Fiji participants found it to be relatively easy. This may have been because the Fiji youth were older.
- * Research design and research tools need to be age-appropriate as well as context-appropriate and they need to consider the experiences and capacities of the children and youth. For example, when talking about changes in Nepal, practitioners needed to be sensitive to participants’ feelings about the earthquake that occurred between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the research.
- * The tools developed for the research need to be adapted and customised to each country context as part of in-country training. This demonstrates the value and relevance of local researchers.

Finding 2:

Facilitating child and youth participation in research requires planning, preparation and skilled staff

- * Conducting research with children and youth takes planning and preparation. Researchers need to have well developed skills to support children and youth in reflection and sharing activities.
- * In Laos, the experience of using youth facilitators was valued but the researchers learnt that, ideally, training youth to use the research tools should occur after local adult facilitators develop confidence in facilitating them. This also highlights the need to ensure all designated researchers are appropriately skilled and confident to carry out the research.
- * Having a 'test' or mock research situation (for facilitators and note takers) is a very useful way to enhance staff confidence and practice before heading into the field.

Finding 3:

Children have a high capacity to participate in meaningful research and share their experiences if they are appropriately supported to do so.

- * Children gained confidence through the research practice, especially as relationships were developed with the researchers over the multiple days of research.
- * Children found it easier to talk about changes related to themselves, rather than changes in others or in the community (Laos and Nepal). In Fiji the 'splash and ripple' process (in which children identified the areas where one change made flow-on changes happen) helped participants to share changes more broadly in the family and community.
- * Research with children and youth can take longer than expected. It is important to allow enough time to do it well.
- * Children were capable of sharing very detailed information about their lives, including private and culturally sensitive information about reproductive health (in Nepal) when surrounded by trusted people (in the case in Nepal this was other youth and NGO adult staff). As noted within the daily reflection debrief sheets "it [children sharing their experience and views] didn't come as expected but children know what they were saying." (UMN staff member, Nepal)
- * Building on existing positive relationships with children and youth helps the research process. As such the main research facilitators were NGO staff who had already established a good rapport with the children and youth, and had been working with them for some time.



5

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1 FIJI

Exploring links to development effectiveness characteristics through youth participation in forest conservation REDD+ activities in Batiri Village, Fiji

The change story chosen by youth

Youth in Batiri Village, Fiji, chose to explore the benefits of their participation in a forest conservation REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) project as the focus of their chosen change story for this research. Batiri youth made this decision after discussing all the ways they had been participating in Live & Learn development programs and the many positive changes that resulted (youth in Drawa also chose a story relating to this project).

Prior to the REDD+ project, local water sources were polluted and food crops were not growing as well, typhoid cases were commonplace and the area was known as a health hazard zone. Youth participation in the project started to shift these prevailing conditions. In the change story that was chosen by Batiri youth as the one they would explore further in the research, the male author of the story said:

"The REDD+ project has allowed me to monitor the [forest] sites. As a result we look after our environment and have good food and good water."

Some other youth shared stories which closely related to the one above:

"Protecting the forest maintains clean water where I take my baths and now I have a clean body with no skin disease (typhoid)." (Female youth)

"Keeping my forest allows me to eat healthy root crops and vegetables and healthy farms means a healthy body." (Female youth)

When exploring more stories related to the chosen one above, it became clear that while Batiri's youth chose to focus on and explore a change story about youth participation in forest conservation, the changes they have experienced have been far reaching; increased self-confidence among youth has led to action for forest conservation and more. It has been the catalyst for reuniting the wider community, with positive shifts reported in youth-to-youth and youth-to-adult relationships, an increase in provincial development assistance because of rediscovered community unity, and notably, a dramatic reduction in typhoid.

During the course of the project there was a period with no cases of typhoid at all in the village (due to cleaner water sources as a result of youth participation in forest conservation efforts). The sum of these changes show the potential reach and change that can be realised through meaningful youth participation in development projects and how the changes can be easily linked to all of the development effectiveness characteristics. Multiple changes associated with the chosen change story were described by youth and adults. These changes demonstrate the range of immediate and longer-term impacts that youth participation can bring about, and they show the longer-term links between youth participation and development effectiveness.

"The REDD+ project has allowed me to monitor the [forest] sites. As a result we look after our environment and have good food and good water."



The youth were then asked to work together to link the chosen change story to one of a range of development effectiveness characteristics. The development effectiveness characteristics were presented to them as themed cartoon illustrations on the Change Cards used in this research. Together, the youth chose to link the chosen change story to *socio-economic development*.

The development project

With funding from the EU, Live & Learn Fiji have worked with youth in Batiri Village since 2010 to engage youth and community members in forest conservation REDD+ activities. The project focuses on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and fostering conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. Youth participated in awareness and education sessions, trainings and participatory planning meetings initiated through the REDD+ project. Activities included the formation of a community forest conservation committee consisting of youth, adults and the headman, all of whom had participated in leading conservation actions and planning.

About Batiri Village

Batiri Village is 41 km south-west of the main town of Labasa in Cakaudrove Province, on Vanua Levu Island in Fiji. Batiri consists exclusively of indigenous Fijians also known as iTaukei. There are schools located near Batiri, including Batirilagi Primary School (a five-minute drive) and Ahmadiyya Secondary School (a ten-minute drive).

There is no health clinic in the village, but some villagers have received basic emergency training with the District Health Centre to become village nurses and they are able to offer basic first-aid. It takes 40 minutes to drive to the nearest health centre, 15 km away.

A piped water supply from the main government reservoir was recently constructed to Batiri Village. About two-thirds of the village have access to water pipes as they are able to pay the fees for connection and water meter installation. Other households are still saving up to pay for the installation fees.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with five youth aged between 24 and 35 (two females and three males). Discussions were also held with adults in the community. In Batiri Village the researchers spoke to one church elder, two parents of youth involved in the project, and one village leader (all four were males). Many of the women and other community members were involved in community activities at the time. Please note that culturally in Fiji, people are often considered youth into their 20s and mid-30s, especially if they are not yet married.

How the changes that resulted from youth participation link to development effectiveness

In addition to improvements in the environment and food and water quality, the youth and adults explored flow-on changes linked to socio-

economic development that happened because of youth participation in forest conservation activities. This section provides an overview of the identified cascade of flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story and seeks to explain how the flow-on changes are linked to development effectiveness characteristics (see Figure 11).

Overall, youth and adults valued similar types of changes resulting from youth participation. The most commonly reported change described by youth was socio-economic development. This change was also described by adults but not to the same extent. Youth and adults provided similar numbers of examples of knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration and promotion of inclusion, equity and reduction of marginalisation. Adults provided more examples than youth for personal and community development and participation in setting development priorities.

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Both youth and adults described positive changes linked to knowledge sharing, and mutual learning and collaboration. Youth described how youth-to-youth relationships and youth-to-adult relationships had changed because of their participation in the project, for example:

“There was an increase in working together (youth with youth) and listening to each other.” (Youth)

“The change story has brought youth and adults closer together as there has been more discussion about the change.” (Youth)

Youth also felt the changes resulting from the forest conservation activities had changed the way youth were perceived and valued by their families and in the wider community. The following quotes illustrate this:

“Families look up at youths and care more about the actions youths are doing” (Youth).

“Youth voted with adults for a water management committee.” (Youth)

It is important to note that previously, youth were not given an equal vote on committees; as such the above quote represents a small but important shift, not only in youth-adult relations, but also in community decision-making dynamics.

A male youth described how he was keen to ensure the forest management plan was communicated to the whole community:

“The do’s and don’ts of our forest management plan must be widely made known to the community.” (Male youth)

Accordingly, youth were empowered and trained (by Live & Learn) and enabled by the headman and adults to be able to share the forest management plans with others in the community. Consequently they were able to gain widespread support.

Adults recognised the changes in relationships between youth and their parents, and also in relationships in the village more widely:

“Parents are supporting the youths more.” (Village Headman)

“Through education youth have impacted families by activating their efforts. For example youth have concerted efforts in ensuring healthy living by limiting rubbish and keeping a healthy clean village.” (Father)

Socio-economic development

Both youth and adults described changes linked to socio-economic development. Youth easily identified the importance of a clean environment and its connection to improved health. For example, youth said:

“Looking after the forest allows us to breathe fresh air, drink clean water, have a lot of biodiversity and avoid soil erosion.” (Youth)

“Healthy forest results in a healthy family.” (Youth)

“We feel happy because there’s lots of food and family members eat properly and they become healthy and happy.” (Male youth)

Youth also linked their participation in forest conservation to a reduction in health problems. The reduction in typhoid cases in the area has been a major health achievement for the whole community:

“A healthy forest, will lead to a clean river and having clean water allows me not to have skin disease (typhoid).” (Youth)

Additional positive flow-on changes were identified by the youth, including saving money, as they were able to grow food themselves on healthy land instead of buying imported foods. They were also able to identify the possibility of generating additional income by utilising the healthier land. For example:

“Saving and protecting our forests means we eat fresh clean food, we don’t get sick, we’ll save our money rather than spending it on medicine. Good available farmlands yield more plants and then more income when we sell it.” (Youth)

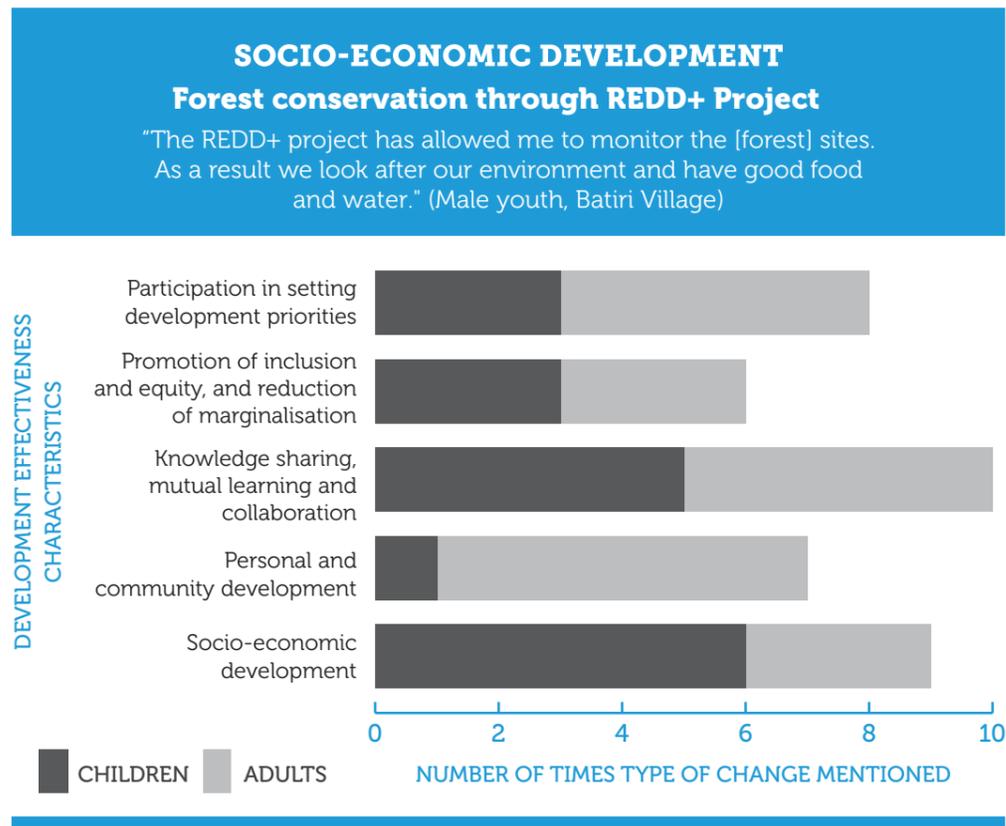


Figure 11: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Batiri Village, Fiji

Batiri's Village Headman felt very strongly that youth brought about these changes, particularly change related to how united the village now was: "The role of youth is important as they bring REDD+ projects into the village despite village [elders'] disputes. They bring more development and more livelihoods" (Village Headman).

"The village is now working together. I am happy now the village is now working together, the government [provincial] will only support a village if they are united. People from outside are now supporting the village because we are united." (Village Headman)

Feelings of pride in the local community also resulted from: positive socio-economic changes, a more reunited community, and no longer being known as health hazard zone. This resulted in more people visiting their village:

"The province feels happy and proud of Batiri. We are happy to meet new people" (Male youth).

"Before we used to be known as a village that has a lot of typhoid cases, but not anymore." (Village Headman)

Participation in setting development priorities

Changes linked to participation in setting development priorities were described by youth and by adults. Adults described how they worked with youth on forest conservation decision-making and committees, and how adults learnt from youth. For example:

"We've noticed the change [forest conservation]. Most of the time we waste precious resources and we lose our identity in the process [cutting

down or selling forest can be seen as selling cultural identity] but through the efforts of youth forest conservation we are able to retain these two, our resources and identity." (Male adult)

Some adults noted how youth could usefully play a greater role in village decision-making. This is ground-breaking, given that younger village members are not usually invited to be active participants at decision-making tables:

"Sometimes youth do not participate in [high level] village meetings. They only participate in communal activities. They need uplifting and empowerment." (Father)

Youth also described ways in which they were playing active roles in land-use planning relating to forest conservation:

"Some youth participate in land use planning and serve on the village Forest Conservation Committee, which sets local village laws for forest conservation, oversees the forest land use planning, monitors conservation progress and enforces the Forest Management Plan." (Youth)

"Youth are keen to pursue a legal instrument of protecting the area by getting the area protected under a Conservation Lease." (Youth)

"Youth assist adults to host the Forest Conservation Committee. The Village Headman coordinates the youth." (Youth)

Youth also described how they worked with adults to plot areas on a map that had been demarcated as agricultural land. In addition, youth told of how they assisted the community in hosting the Forest Conservation Committee whenever Live & Learn conducted meetings or training in the village.

OBSERVATION

The participation and self-mobilisation of youth in forest conservation activities led to shifts in how the community at large, including peers, parents and elders, related to and listened to youth. In turn this allowed youth to feel supported to make further positive changes beyond the conservation activities. The attitude and support of the village headman in knowledge sharing and empowering youth was also a key factor in enabling the changes.



OBSERVATION

The broad range of positive changes above that fall within the socio-economic development effectiveness characteristic includes both individual and collective outcomes for the people of Batiri across all age groups. The impact of youth participation in forest conservation that resulted in pronounced changes in water quality, and hence in health improvements, cannot be overestimated; the village is now viewed by its own people, as well as outsiders (government and others villages) in a more positive, productive and healthy light.

How youth described their contribution to the development activities and related changes

To delve deeper into the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness, the researchers asked youth to explore and discuss their roles in making the changes they identified happen. Youth discussed, and ultimately made a judgement about, whether they participated as **beneficiaries, partners** or **leaders**.

Youth provided examples of their contributions to change as beneficiaries, partners and leaders. However, they had the most to say about partnering and leading, and felt their contributions as **partners** were the most important. For example:

"Communal work such as cleaning the village, cleaning the schools, and planting food are undertaken collectively with youths and adults." (Male)

One example of youth as beneficiaries, which falls within the usual cultural way of how things are done in Fijian communities, was provided by one youth only. He commented that youth are invited to share their thoughts, yet culturally respect any decision elders may make:

"During village meetings, whatever decisions adults make, youth action-out. Although we share our thoughts, we tend to respect the decisions of our elders more." (Youth)



OBSERVATION

It is possible to create new community structures and committees which have youth in leadership roles, and which do not threaten long-held traditional structures and cultural norms. The Forest Conservation Committee in Batiri Village is one example. These structures can provide opportunities for youth to participate at the centre of decision-making. This enables them to demonstrate to adults and others how useful youth voices could be in other community decision-making arenas.

OBSERVATIONS

Most youth felt they participated as partners and leaders in making changes happen. However, youth valued their roles as partners with adults most.

Most adults felt youth participated as partners and leaders in making the changes happen. Both youth and adults valued youth participating as partners the most.

How adults described the contribution of youth to the development activities and related changes

Adults provided numerous examples of youths' contributions to change as **partners and leaders**:

"I prefer that we work together. If we don't work together there won't be unity. Youths must be supported in their work. Elders only talk. Youth do the work." (Village Headman)

"Our traditional customs allow us to work together with youth. We work together with youth to do communal chores and at the beginning of each month we would collectively offer our crop harvest to the elders and to the church. This custom has allowed us (adults) to continuously work with youths especially in the forest conservation efforts." [Father]

When asked (separately) what type of contribution they most valued, both youth and adults chose the contribution of being partners.

CASE STUDY 2 FIJI

Exploring links to development effectiveness characteristics through youth participation in the Nakau forest conservation program in Drawa Settlement, Fiji

The change story chosen by youth

Youth in Drawa Settlement, Fiji, chose to explore the benefits of their participation in a forest conservation REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation)

project as their change story for this research. Drawa youth made this decision after discussing all the ways they had been participating in different Live & Learn development programs and the many positive changes that resulted (youth in Batiri also chose a story about their participation in this project).

Youth in Drawa Settlement together with Live & Learn staff voted for the following change story to explore further in the research. One youth said: "Forest conservation has given me a better life."

As a result of their participation in the forest conservation project, youth discussed the actions they had taken, and the positive changes they had seen in their local environment that had flow-on effects for 'a better life' and improved health. When thinking about what they did that led to a 'better life', youth offered the following:

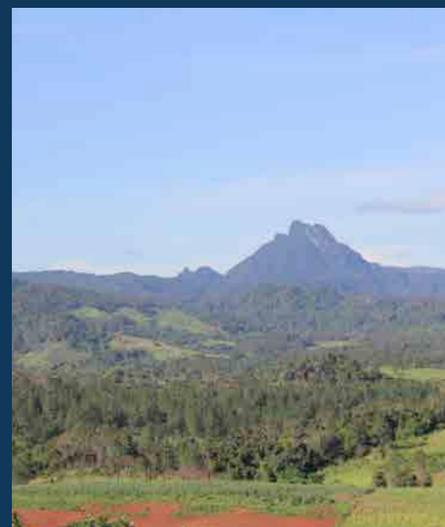
"We planted trees and plants next to the rivers. Now the water is clean and I am healthy." (Male youth)

"Forest conservation has taught me to protect my forest and to avoid logging it. By protecting our forests, it has given us clean air to breathe, clean water to drink and abundant food that we fish in the stream, hunt and forage in the forest. By conserving our forest it has made my life better." (Male youth)

The initial changes identified happened due to youth participation in forest conservation and REDD+, and linked to better health and personal development. Flow-on effects resulted in more food to harvest and sell, which resulted in more cash for education and generally a 'more healthy life'. Further, a more united wider community and improved relationships between youth and elders at the local and provincial levels represented a major shift in power relations, especially in a culture with highly defined structures and roles for youth and elders.

Over half the youth change stories (that were not chosen to be the one explored further in the research) were about youth being able to vote for the first time on the village REDD+ development project. Prior to this, youth were not given a formal vote in village decision-making arenas. While none of these change stories was chosen to be the one explored more deeply, they reflect the impact and breadth of changes that are happening locally, and how important and empowered youth feel when they participate in voting and decision-making processes. For example:

"Forest conservation has given me a better life."



"We voted during the meeting. We have to go to a meeting to pick our rep [representative for the Forest Conservation Committee]." (Male)

"I voted during the REDD+ meeting." (Female)

"Before a project is brought into the village, we vote to agree/disagree. I voted!" (Male)

"My village agreed not to cut trees near rivers. I voted." (Male)

After choosing to explore the story above about a 'better life' in further depth, the youth were asked to link it to a development effectiveness characteristic. The development effectiveness characteristics were provided in the form of themed cartoon illustrations on Change Cards for matching purposes. Together, the youth chose to link the chosen change story to personal and community development.

The exploration of the chosen change story revealed that changes related to personal and community development as a result of youth participation also resulted in flow-on changes linked to development effectiveness characteristics.

The multiple types of changes described by the research participants (both youth and adults) demonstrate the interconnected pathways of change enabled by youth participation, and how participation has made a difference to the community. It is notable that a project focused

on forest conservation, implemented with youth participation, can contribute to such a broad range of good development outcomes.

The development project

With funding from the EU, Live & Learn Fiji has worked with youth in Drawa Settlement since 2011 to engage youth and community members in forest conservation and REDD+ activities. The project focused on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and fostering conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. Youth participation has involved map reading, forest surveying, using GPS, voting on projects, making plans, transferring knowledge to family members and working with the Forest Department, Live & Learn Fiji and GTZ (German Technical Cooperation Agency). The next stages in the project include the community selling the carbon sequestered through forest conservation for income.

About Drawa Settlement

Drawa Settlement is 48 km south-west of the main town of Labasa in Cakaudrove Province on Vanua Levu island, Fiji. It is a small settlement with about nine households and 60 people. Drawa Settlement consists only of indigenous Fijians also known as iTaukei. There is a primary school located in the nearby village of Lutukina.

There is no health clinic in the village but some village members have received basic emergency training with the District Health Centre to become village nurses and are able to offer basic first-aid. The nearest health centre is located 14 km away. It takes one hour to drive there in a four-wheel drive vehicle.

Drawa Settlement has piped water for communal use, which is sourced from a spring near the village. Most houses have access to piped water, with only two houses having to share piped water with their neighbours.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with 11 youth aged between 21 and 37 (six females and five males). Discussions were also held with adults in their community. In Drawa Settlement, Live & Learn Fiji researchers spoke to one parent and one village leader (both males). Many of the adult women and other parents were involved in community activities at

the time and could not take part. In Fiji, people are often considered youth into their 20s and mid-30s, especially if they are not yet married.

How the changes that resulted from youth participation link to development effectiveness

In addition to improvements that contributed to a 'better life' and were linked to community and personal development, the youth and adults explored flow-on changes that happened because of the chosen change story and youth participation in forest conservation activities. This section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story, and seeks to explain how the additional changes are linked to the development effectiveness characteristics. Both youth and adults gave examples of 'flow-on changes' that linked to all five development effectiveness characteristics (see Figure 12).

PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Forest conservation through REDD+ Project

*"Forest Conservation has given me a better life."
(Male, youth, Drawa Village).*

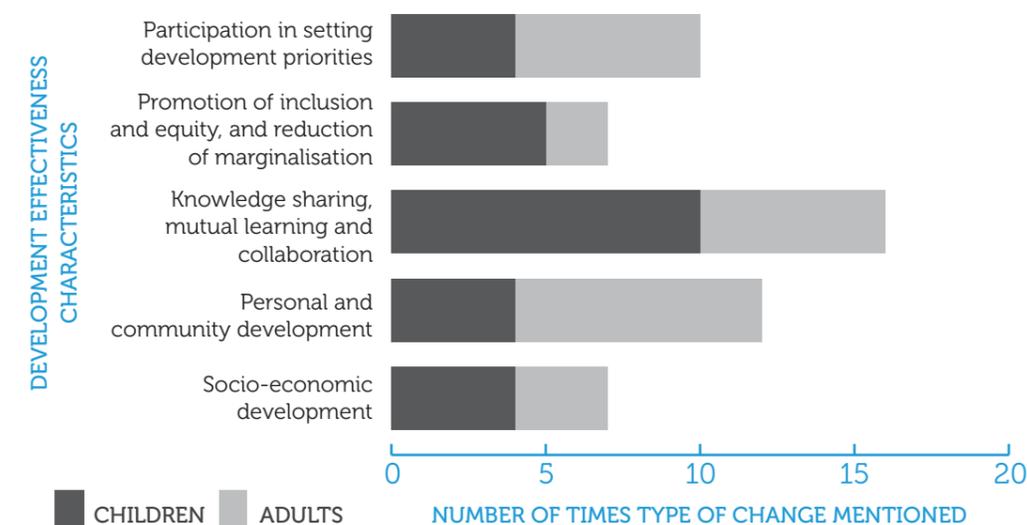


Figure 12: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Drawa Settlement, Fiji

Overall, youth and adults valued similar types of changes resulting from youth participation. The most commonly reported change described by youth was knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration. This type of change was also described by adults. Adults described changes linked to personal and community development more than youth. Interestingly, the adults also described youth contributions to participation in setting development priorities slightly more than youth. Youth described changes in relation to promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation more than adults.

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Youth most often described knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration in their ‘flow-on changes’ resulting from the chosen change story. For example, youth described how they were encouraged to share their knowledge with others in the village:

“Lots of people found our conservation efforts interesting and they wanted to know more.”
(Female, 35)

“Youth have transferred knowledge learning from [the REDD+] training to family members.”
(Youth)

The actions of youth, and their ability to share their knowledge with others, was also recognised by other villages and in provincial government, as described by another youth:

“The province [including other villages and the provincial government] have looked at the Drawa youth differently [positively] because we are more active.” (Youth)

Connections and intersections with other development effectiveness characteristics were

OBSERVATIONS

Increases in confidence have enabled youth to be good communicators of their new knowledge and experiences. As a flow-on effect, the respect given to them community members, particularly adult family members and elders, has increased.

also evident in the descriptions of change by youth. For example they reported that increased confidence (personal development) led to the ability to share knowledge (knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration). A youth who had experienced an increase in confidence described how youth were now able to communicate to others the importance of choosing forest conservation rather than logging:

“I protect my forest and if someone wants to log my forest I’ll tell them the right way by refusing to log.” (Youth)

Adults also described examples of how youth had shared forest conservation knowledge with them:

“We [adults] have a more clear understanding about the value of forests for the people and the environment after undergoing awareness programs.” (Village Headman)

“Today, we have a more clear and defined understanding about boundaries of the project area and clan-land boundaries that we did not know before.” (Father)

Because youth are sharing information and knowledge, improvements in relationships between youth and their families have resulted. Both youth and adults described this:

“Youth used to be looked down on by their family but now that they attend trainings and workshops, they look up to the youth.” (Youth)

“Families now support the youths because they are more experienced and knowledgeable.”
(Youth)

“[There is] more cohesiveness, working together and a strong bond forged because of the project.” (Father)

Socio-economic development

Changes in socio-economic development were noted by both youths and adults. A change in attitude through education has enabled the wider community to reassess their decisions toward the value of their forests and flow-on effects to their health and livelihoods:



“Before [the REDD+ project] we valued our forest less and just thought of it as a product that earns us money [through commercial logging], but through education we now have come to learn the value of forests for biodiversity, livelihood opportunities and more food available.” (Youth in plenary)

Youths noted that forest resources are also potential sources of income. For example, at the time of the research, families are able to sell freshwater prawns at their local market for \$30/kg. With improvements in water quality due to youth participation in forest conservation activities, a higher prawn yield has been realised, enabling higher household incomes from prawn sales:

Further, youth clearly associate protecting their forests with a healthy life:

“[REDD+] has strengthened our understanding, opened our mindset and resulted in more food, pig, prawn and fish and give us a healthy life.”
(Youth in plenary)

“A healthy village means no more sickness is found in the village.” (Male)

Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction in marginalisation

Changes linked to promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction in marginalisation were described by youth and to a lesser extent by adults.

Three issues relating to marginalisation, equity and inclusion were raised by youth:

1. Traditional gendered roles assigned for community tasks are transitioning to being viewed as shared roles.
2. Adults within the wider community are becoming more inclusive in the way they view the role of youth.
3. Attitudes and practices toward people who have married into the community and their inclusion and participation in village life are changing.

OBSERVATIONS

Youth are motivated and encouraged by working together for forest wellbeing, and by seeing the changes their work is bringing about which raise the socio-economic, health and livelihood situations of their families.

Youth described examples relating to all three, while adults only raised the latter two issues.

Comments about shifting traditionally gendered roles were described by a youth below:

"Before the male youths would differentiate tasks set for male and female youths by focusing only on farming and the forest conservation project, but now male youths are helping female youths with the household chores and other household activities." (Female, 25, Youth)

Forest conservation has also brought about changes to the amount of work some women need to undertake to catch marine life for food.

"[Now] women don't have to go as far to fish prawns, fish and eels, because they [youth] have protected the forest." (Youth)

Both youth and adults described how youth participation and inclusion in village life was valued and encouraged by their families and adults more now than before:

"Before families look down at youth but now that more youth attend Live & Learn training and workshops on forest conservation, they now look up at youth." (Youth)

"[The role of youth] is important because it's the youth who will need to learn to take care of their own land, own resources – hence it is important that they participate [in REDD+]." Father

Both youth and adults reported greater inclusion of people who had married into the village. These people, who were previously thought of as outsiders, were encouraged to participate in the forest conservation activities:

OBSERVATION

The forest conservation project was able to promote inclusion and equity, and a reduction in marginalisation. Some of these changes were delightfully unintentional and reflect what can happen when good youth participation conditions prevail.

"We no longer count them [married-in people] as outsiders ... they also help to spread the good work of our efforts in forest conservation." (Male Youth)

"Before they [people who had married into the village] didn't fully support the village projects because they were shy and reserved. I would tell them that they are no longer visitors and since they are now in Drawa village, they must feel comfortable in participating and doing village activities especially when it concerns the forest conservation project." (Male, Village Headman)

The fact that the project was able to include these 'outsiders' was a talking point for both youth and adults, and the acceptance of these people was viewed as a very positive change. This was also an intentional project design feature on the part of Live & Learn Fiji.

Personal and community development

Changes linked to personal and community development were described by both youth and adults. Adults noted a change in youth confidence as a result of their participation in the forest conservation project that the youth did not directly mention about themselves. For example:

"They've grown confident." (Father)

"Because youths are attending workshops they are more confident." (Village Headman)

Youth described changes in community development and explained how they felt proud and had courage because of their forest conservation efforts. They noted how their province had developed a good reputation due to the project gaining a lot of positive interest:

"They [the province] look up to our village because we've conserved our forest and rivers." (Female youth, 35)

"People [at the provincial level] are looking up at the village, sharing our stories of forest conservation, and sharing our project visibility through our business logo. We have the courage to share these stories because we know what we are doing." (Youth)

Another aspect of community development is positive changes in unity, identity, self-worth and duty. Adults described this:

"Before [the project] youth were not united. Because of the project they are now working together. I have seen a huge change." (Village Headman)

"Through the respect they have shown to others and to their elders, I feel that youth now have a solid sense of identity that they belong somewhere [Drawa Settlement] and it is their duty to look after it." (Father)

Also key to community development is a strengthening of relationships. Adults described strengthened relationships between youths and other youth, and between youth and their families:

"There's more respect between youths and adults." (Father)

"Families and the village are now supporting the youth now they are active." (Village Headman)

Participation in setting development priorities

Adults described many changes in youth participation in setting development priorities. For example:

"Before, I would ask youths to do things and they wouldn't do it. After the project came into Drawa, the youths helped a lot and even volunteered to do communal [village] development work." (Village Headman)

Adults recognised how youth had acquired a better understanding of the value of forests, and were making their voices heard in local planning:

"The youths have voiced their concerns about a neighbouring clan that have logged their forest." (Father)

"At the provincial level the efforts in forest conservation in Drawa Settlement have gained a lot of attention and interest." (Father)

Youth also described participation in setting development priorities and how they felt trusted and respected within this process:

OBSERVATION

Changes in personal and community development appear to be the building blocks or catalysts for other development effectiveness characteristics to emerge. Without the building blocks of unity, empowerment, trust and respectful relationships between youth and adults, as well as other non-tangible changes that fall into the category of personal and community development, communities do not have the conditions to achieve good outcomes (e.g. in education, health). In the case of Drawa, youth participation in forest conservation activities has had flow-on effects to both positive health and education outcomes via these pathways to change.

OBSERVATION

Trusting youths and providing opportunities that enable them to participate in meaningful change can change community attitudes toward youth participation in community development more generally.

"Youths took part in developing the REDD+ plan and decision-making." (Youth)

"Before there was no proper development plan, but now there is a proper plan in place and youth take part." (Youth)

"The village looks up to youth because youths move the village." (Male youth)

"The village trusts the youth more because a lot of work is given to the youth to do." (Youth)

How youth described their contributions to the development activities and related changes

To delve more deeply into the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness, the researchers asked youth to explore and discuss their roles in bringing about

the changes they identified. Youth discussed, and ultimately made a judgement about, whether they participated as *beneficiaries*, *partners* or *leaders*.

Youth provided examples of their contributions to change as beneficiaries, partners and leaders. They felt their contributions as *partners* were the most important. For example:

Youth discussions highlighted how youth acknowledged the traditional structures of decision-making being 'in the hands' of leaders/elders. They said that they acted as partners in making the desired changes happen. Although the term 'beneficiary' doesn't neatly reflect the cultural construct of respecting elders' decisions, the youth chose to associate with the term as they felt that respecting elders was different from partnering. With this in mind, the contributions of youth as beneficiaries are described in the following examples:

"Youth give recommendations, but the elders and chiefs make the final decision." (Male, 29)

"Adults make more decisions and give directions; youths action out these directions." (Male youth)

Interestingly, adults did not provide any examples of youths as beneficiaries.

Youth and adults agreed that the most important contribution youth made was as partners, despite adults recognising youth as leaders in carrying out work. Examples of youth seeing themselves as partners and leaders are provided below:

OBSERVATION

Youth agreed that their most important contributions were as partners.

"Youths and adults listen to each other to work together." (Female 25)

"We [people in the community] need togetherness and commitment from both youth and adults to do the work well, especially in the village." (Male youth)

"All the education and training for forest conservation are understood more by youth than adults." (Female youth)

How adults described the contribution of youth to the development activities and related changes?

When asked what type of contribution they most valued, adults also chose *partners*, but they also recognised youths' roles as leaders in carrying out the work.

In contrast to youth, adults provided examples of youths' contributions to change only as partners and leaders. For example:

"I prefer for both adults and youths to take part in decision-making but youth should take the lead in carrying out the project." (Village Headman)

"I prefer that youths partner with adults so they listen to each other, share ideas, share the load of the work and be thoughtful towards each other." (Father)

OBSERVATION

In the cultural setting of Drawa in Fiji, both youth and adults felt most comfortable with youth participating as partners; however in practice 'partners' may take the form of adults making the final decisions about what happens and youth taking the lead in putting these decisions into effect.

CASE STUDY 3 FIJI

Exploring links to development effectiveness

characteristics through participation in a rural

livelihoods beekeeping project in Lutukina Village, Fiji

The change story chosen by youth

Youth in Lutukina Village, Fiji, chose to explore the benefits of their participation in a rural livelihoods beekeeping project for this research. Lutukina youth made this decision after discussing all the ways they had been participating in Live & Learn development programs and the many positive changes that had resulted.

Youth voted chose the following change story to explore further in the research: "After the beekeeping training my family are invested (committed to the value of the project). It helps us work together; it also helps us share and talk. When harvest comes I know we are going to get help from it. When money comes in it will help the family and the village to pay for what we need, especially our children." (Female, 33)

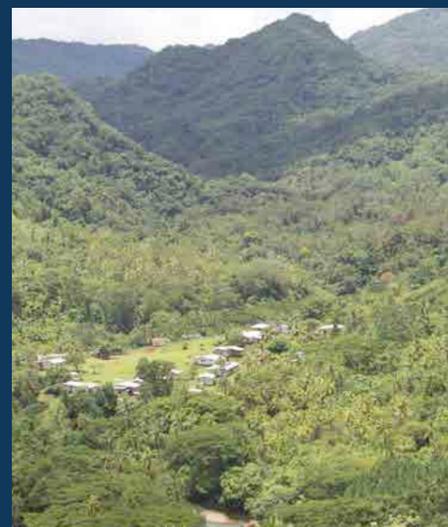
When the youth and adult participants explored the story in more depth it became clear that while the story was about the benefits related to income generation from beekeeping (e.g. cash is now available for school education levies and youth are saving money for a community school bus), the flow-on effects were much broader. There were health benefits from youth cleaning the local water source. Health improved so much that money usually set aside for hospital visits could be saved and used elsewhere. There were also reported community-wide and provincial shifts in how adults viewed and valued youth due to the leadership role youth showed in beekeeping. The head man said that youth participation in the community is bringing together two tribal groups who have been estranged for a long time.

After choosing to explore the change story above in further depth, the youth were asked to link it to a development effectiveness characteristic. They were asked to choose from development effectiveness characteristics that were provided in the form of themed cartoon illustrations. Together, the youth chose to link the chosen change story to socio-economic development.

The development project

With NZAID funding the rural livelihoods beekeeping project commenced as an income generating activity in 2015 (less than a year before Phase 2 of this research). Live & Learn, Lutukina community members, commercial honey suppliers and a beekeeping trainer (sub-contracted by Live & Learn), together with the Department of Agriculture, all worked together on the project. The level of uptake and interest, and the results of the first harvest, surprised Live & Learn staff as well as youth and

"After the beekeeping training my family are invested (committed to the value of the project). It helps us work together; it also helps us share and talk. When harvest comes I know we are going to get help from it. When money comes in it will help the family and the village to pay for what we need, especially our children."



adults in the community. Youth and women were the main target groups in this project, and most had been involved in a concurrent Live & Learn Fiji project (River Care) for the first phase of the three-year research period. Youth attended hive training, monitored the beehives, made commercial plans and worked together.

About Lutukina Village

Lutukina Village is 48 km south-west of the main town of Labasa in Macuata Province on the island of Vanua Levu, Fiji. Lutukina has 27 households and around 145 people. The community consists only of indigenous Fijians also known as iTaukei. Lutukina District Primary School is located near the village and children from other nearby villages attend.

There is no health clinic in the village but some village members have received basic emergency training with the District Health Centre to become village nurses and they are able to offer basic first-aid. The nearest health centre is located 11 km away.

There is piped water in the village, but during dry periods, Lutukina faces water scarcity as the water sources dry up. The people of Lutukina have little option but to resort to drinking and using the river water which may be contaminated from settlements and livestock

farms up-river. About two-thirds of the houses have piped water, with other households relying on assistance from those who have access.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with 11 youth aged between 18 and 33 (four females and seven males). Discussions were also held with adults in their community. In Lutukina Village, Live & Learn Fiji researchers spoke to seven parents of youth (two females and five males) and two village leaders (both males). Please note that in Fiji, people are often considered youth into their 20s and 30s, especially if they are not yet married.

How the changes that resulted from youth participation link to development effectiveness

In addition to improvements in income, health and water quality, linked to socio-economic development, the youth and adults explored flow-on changes that happened because of the chosen change story and youth participation in beekeeping. To explain how additional changes link to a number of the development effectiveness characteristics, this section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story (see Figure 13 below).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Beekeeping as an income generating activity

"After the beekeeping training my family are invested (committed to the value of the project). It helps us work together; it also helps us share and talk. When harvest comes I know we are going to get help from it. When money comes in it will help the family and the village to pay for what we need, especially our children." (Female, 33, Lutukina Village)

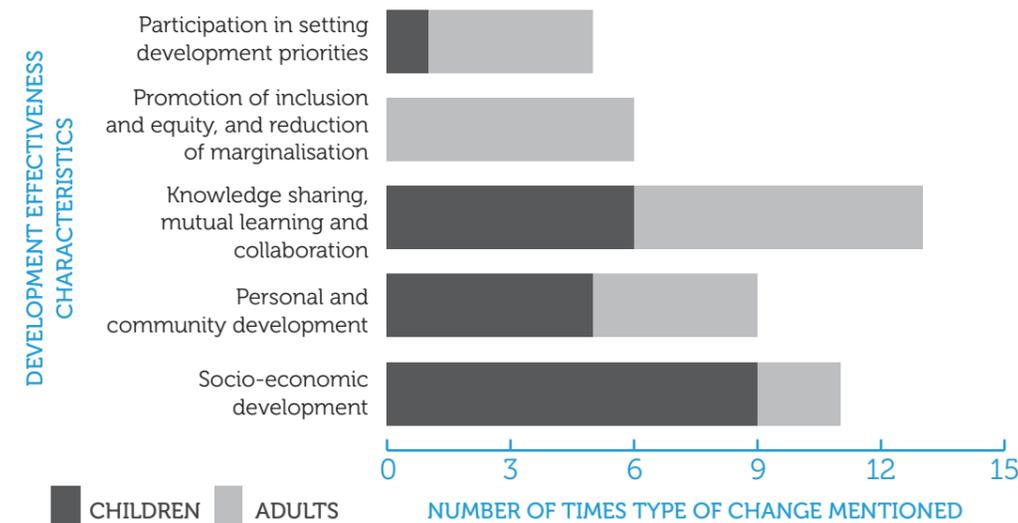


Figure 13: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Lutukina Village, Fiji

The most commonly reported change described by youth was socio-economic development. This type of change was also described by adults, but not to the same extent. Youth described changes relating to personal and community development more than adults. Adults described changes linked to *promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation and participation in setting development priorities* more than youth. Both youth and adults described youth contributions to *knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration*.

Socio-economic development

When exploring the chosen change story, youth focused mostly on describing changes linked to *socio-economic development*. Youth easily identified the connection between beekeeping and income generation, and spoke of the potential family-level benefits from selling honey:

"When harvest comes, I know that we are going to get help from it like money. When money comes it will help our family and also the village to pay for what we need, especially for our children." (Female youth, 33)

"Now we know how to use the beehives so we can sell the honey. It's easy money." (Male youth, 19)

"After we sell the honey, we get money for the household." (Female, 33)

Youth reported that they felt happy and satisfied with their participation in beekeeping. They had been exposed to financial literacy benefits and skills that enabled them to look after their families and the wider community with the profits from honey sales. For example:

"We learn how to save money and how our family can save money from beekeeping." (Female, 22)

"Through the beekeeping project we learned about beekeeping. Through this we will earn money and we can do developments in the village." (Male, 27)

"A church function was held in another village and there was no money to pay for the vehicle to transport of some members of the church. The beekeeping funds had some money and it was enough to pay for the transport." (Male)

Further, increased income led to youth making investment plans to be able to transport village children to school, thus increasing access to education:

"There are healthy hives if we look after them properly. With income [from honey] we can purchase a community truck to transport school kids from the village to school." (Youth)

Adults similarly recognised the economic benefits of beekeeping, as noted by this parent:

"Through beekeeping, it is more like a stay-at-home business and it knocks on our door." (Father)

OBSERVATION

Youth felt a sense of worth and importance in accessing the new income source which they used for their families and to contribute to community education plans and projects. Their hard work from making and maintaining hives and collecting and selling harvested honey enabled youth to use their new financial literacy skills, and to be financial decision-makers in their own right.

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Changes linked to knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration were described equally by youth and adults. For example, youth described how their participation in beekeeping enabled them to take ownership of the project through linking their increased knowledge to change:

"Before, I had little knowledge on hive management but now I'm happy to know what to actually do to properly manage hives because it is my responsibility and duty to look after [the hives] well." (Female, 33)

Seeing results has increased the momentum and enthusiasm in the village to join the beekeeping training, and this was mentioned by several youth:

"Now participants are eager to join trainings. Before they didn't ... now we all know what is being discussed, and everyone is equal in understanding." (Female, 27)

"Especially when they [youth and adults] hear that Live & Learn is holding a meeting/training in the village, they all come to the community hall" (Female, 27)

Youth noted how they had improved the ways they worked together and how collaboration had increased not only among the beekeepers, but also with others in the community:

"Before we didn't know how to do the honey business and we didn't work together but now there is more cohesiveness because we know what to do." (Youth)

Adults also reported how youth participation had brought families and the community as a whole closer together as they better supported the youth:

"There has been a big change in relationships. Beekeeping has brought families together through the idea of harvesting. There are lots of shared stories about it with youth." (Father)

"Now the village is supporting the youths and we are working together." (Mother)

OBSERVATION

Equipping youth with the knowledge they need to take ownership of a new livelihood project in the village enabled them to have something to champion, lead and share with others. They were able to show they could excel at a project when given trust and scope to do so. They worked together, and the confidence of girls and women increased.

Similarly, adults recognised the improvements in how youth worked together with other youth:

"Youth are supporting each other. The project brought the youth together in the community." (Village Headman)

Parents described how beekeeping was a new experience, and there is growing interest in the village to be part of the work. The project design targeted the participation of girls and women and accordingly adults noticed participation was reported to contribute to increasing the confidence of young and older women:

"Before only two women harvested the honey, youth were scared to harvest because they did not know what to do. Now they help the women and advise the women on what to do." (Mother)

Personal and community development

Changes in personal and community development were described equally by youth and adults. Youth reported higher levels of pride and confidence as a result of their participation in the beekeeping project:

"I feel proud and confident to do beekeeping by myself" (Female youth, age not recorded).

"Before I was scared to meet people during harvesting; now we discuss things and work together." (Female youth)

"I can take ownership through the knowledge I've gained." (Youth)

Another important aspect of personal development was the changes in relationships within the broader community, and with the provincial government. Youth described this change:

"The village looks up to the youth because they run the beekeeping project and [other] village activities. It's a good feeling." (Youth)

"It [beekeeping] improves our relationship with government departments because they see that youth can do the job. The [provincial] government makes constant visits to Lutukina to support the youth." (Youth)

Adults similarly recognised the benefits beekeeping had for the village's reputation, with one parent noting:

"We even provide honey samples for the provincial office to taste to experience the good honey we are producing." (Father)

Having seen what youth could accomplish with beekeeping, adults described how youth were given responsibility to lead other projects:

"We [adults] have confidence in the youths. They are now taking on bigger projects like building village houses." (Village Headman)

OBSERVATION

Adults and youth realised the untapped potential of youths through changes brought about by youth participation in the beekeeping project. After witnessing what youth could accomplish, community leaders are now giving youth more scope to be involved in other projects. This represents an important shift in the value given to youth participation and a change in roles due to an increase in youth participation in village and community development affairs. It also acknowledges the breadth of change youth participation is able to achieve.

Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction in marginalisation

Adults provided several examples of how youth participation in the beekeeping activity resulted in changes linked to promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction in marginalisation. Adults described how youth are now viewed as having more worth by their families:

"Now the families don't look down on youth. They look at them differently because they see the changes in them and in the village. The success of the family is now in the youth." (Village Headman)

The Village Headman also noted how youth from different tribes were participating alongside each other. This has implications for the village as a whole as there had been rifts for many years:

"Youth from different tribes are working together, it [the project] has brought the tribes together which has brought the village together." (Village Headman)

Finally, adults reported how youth participation had changed the relationships of villagers with 'outsiders' who had married into the village in terms of participation levels and the value placed on these 'outsiders'. This was noted by a woman who had married into the village. Unlike

the other Fiji REDD+ project, the objective of improving relationships with people who had married into the village was not built into the beekeeping project:

"This year has been a good year. Also, in the past two years the relationships in the village with us women who are married into the village is very good ... now people are listening to each other, and there is no division." (Mother)

Setting development priorities

Both youth and adults commented on the increased visibility of youth in community and provincial representation, the increased reporting of youth to the local and provincial governments, and the participation of youth in community development decision-making. For example, before the beekeeping project the village youth group occasionally sent youth activity reports to the Ministry of Youth & Sports, but after the training, youths said they had grown in skills and confidence and are able to produce their own monthly reports to the Ministry of Youth and Sports with the assistance of the village headman.

"We believe that if we keep them [the Ministry of Youth & Sports] informed, then they will support us which will make us feel proud." (Female youth, 33)

Youths mentioned that youth-led honey sales are now reported to the provincial office, as their participation and sales are part of the Tikina (cluster of villages) Report that goes directly to the provincial office:

"Every morning, there seems to be an increase in bees. Youths become more aware and are responsible and they are even questioned about the beekeeping projects during the village meetings." (Male adult)

How youth described their contribution to the development activities and related changes

To delve deeper into the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness, the researchers asked youth to explore and discuss their roles in making

the changes they identified happen. Youth discussed, and ultimately made a judgement about, whether they participated as **beneficiaries, partners** or **leaders**.

Youth provided examples of their contributions to change as beneficiaries, partners and leaders. Most discussion was around partnering. Examples of youth as partners are provided below.

"Only by working together will things work well." (Male, 18)

"[It is] easy to complete tasks because they [adults and youths] work together." (Female, 22)

Another male youth stated that youths and adults work together because of "the community-oneness, cohesiveness and thoughtfulness."

When asked what type of contribution they most valued, youth said they valued **partnerships** most.

How adults described the contribution of youth to the development activities and related changes

In contrast to youths, adults only provided examples of youths' contributions to change as partners and leaders. Adults provided more examples than youth did of youth contributing as leaders, for example:

"Because they [youth] have the strength to do the work, the time for us adults is finished. Now is the time for the youths to look after the village." (Village Headman)

"Since the youths attended training, they are doing all this work. Before, they did not know what to do." (Village Headman)

Adults valued youths' contributions as leaders in undertaking/implementing activities themselves, but also valued partnering with them in decision-making, with adults providing nine quotes relating to youth as partners. For example:

OBSERVATION

Being accountable for, and included in, meaningful reports to the local and provincial authorities and ministries adds to feelings of worth and satisfaction for youth. Increased visibility in contributing to development priorities also acknowledges that youth participation in beekeeping is making a direct difference to their own, as well as other community members' lives.

OBSERVATION

Most youth said they valued participating as partners most, as they preferred being supported by adults.

OBSERVATION

Adults valued youths' contributions as leaders in undertaking/implementing activities themselves but also valued partnering with youths in decision-making.

"Youths are taking part in village activities. On some mornings [in the past] the village headman would summon the youths to do community work by blowing on the conch shell. Now they [youths partnering with adults] go to plant root-crops. Before this did not happen." (Male Tribe leader)

"Youths need to work together with adults because if only one person is doing the job then they will not achieve their goal. They can only achieve their goal if they work together." (Mother)

When asked what type of youth contribution they most valued, adults chose a mix of **partnership** and **leadership**.

OBSERVATION

Youth working on a beekeeping project toward a common goal have raised the profile of youth generally and brought together previously divided tribes. Adults have witnessed this improvement in relationships between the youth and a whole-of-community change has followed. The project is also changing perceptions toward 'outsiders' or married-in people (especially women), through their inclusion in beekeeping, and the changes experienced. As such, the project has had many unexpected yet highly important impacts that are linked to the promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction in marginalisation development effectiveness characteristic.

CASE STUDY 4 LAOS

Exploring the links between development effectiveness and child and youth participation in child clubs in Dindam Village, Laos

The change story chosen by children and youth

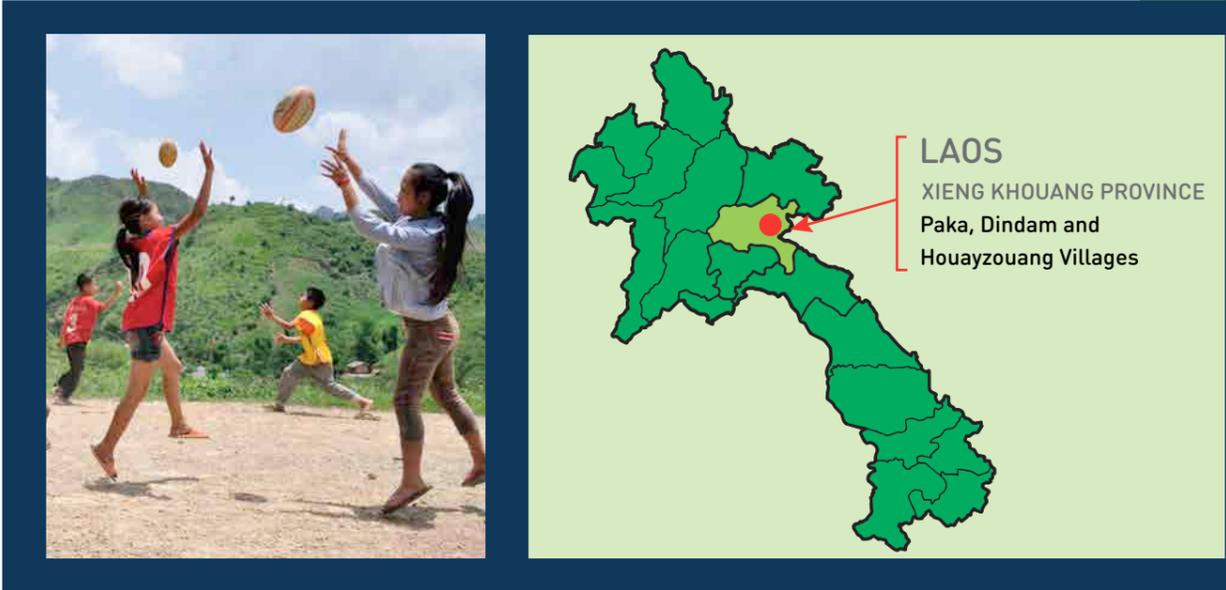
Children and youth in Dindam Village, Laos, chose to explore the benefits of their participation in child clubs as their change story for this research. They made this decision after discussing the different ways that children and youth participated in community development projects run by ChildFund Laos, and the changes that resulted from their participation in these projects.

Awareness about children's rights and child protection is limited in Laos, especially in rural communities such as in Dindam Village. One girl reflected that as a result of her participation in child clubs, she shared knowledge with her parents and others in the community about children's rights. She said this has led to children being more protected in the community: "Before joining the child club, I didn't know about children's rights and child protection and the importance of children. Since I have participated, I know about child protection. My parents also know about child protection, and how to take care of children. Community members also know about child protection." (Female youth, 16)

By exploring her change story more deeply with other children and youth, it became clear that children's and youths' participation in child club activities also led to flow-on changes in the community. Prior to participating in child clubs, children and youth had limited opportunities to participate in their communities, and had limited knowledge about their rights. Through learning about their rights, children gained more self-confidence, which resulted in them voicing their opinions more at home and in the community, having more respect for others in the community, being role models for other children and youth, and sharing knowledge about the importance of good hygiene. Adults recognised and respected children and youth more, reduced their use of child labour, improved their treatment of children, and actively encouraged the participation of children and youth in education, decision-making and child club activities in the community. This highlights the multiple ways in which child and youth participation contributes to development effectiveness.

The girl who shared her story was asked to link the story to one of the five development effectiveness characteristics that were presented to them as illustrated cartoons. The children found this task quite difficult, so the local staff assisted in the process, linking the girl's story to the characteristics knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration, and promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation.

"Before joining the child club, I didn't know about children's rights and child protection and the importance of children. Since I have participated, I know about child protection. My parents also know about child protection, and how to take care of children. Community members also know about child protection."



The development project

ChildFund Laos has been implementing child club activities in Nonghet District for the past three years. Through these activities, ChildFund Laos aims to increase children's and youths' understanding of child rights, child protection issues and duty bearers' obligations, and to increase opportunities for children and youth to lead, monitor and evaluate their own initiatives.

In the child clubs, children and youth have had opportunities to nominate themselves to participate in activities related to three areas: child protection, environmental protection and information sharing. Based on their topic of choice, children and youth have also received training on different skills such as media, child rights, drama and monitoring.

About Dindam Village

Dindam Village is located in Nonghet District, 14 km from the district capital. The village has a primary school, but no health clinic. Village members have access to communal water, and some households have access to piped water. The village has a population of 300, all of whom are from the Khmu ethnic minority. This group is particularly vulnerable and has often been excluded from development opportunities due to a number of factors, including language barriers, and lack of access to general services and social protection.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with children and youth aged 11–16 (six females and five males). Adults also participated in conversations with the researchers in their community. In Dindam Village, the researchers spoke to one female adult (a parent), and two community leaders (both males).

How the changes that resulted from child and youth participation link to development effectiveness

As a result of children and youth sharing the knowledge they learnt, there was greater protection of children and an increased understanding of child rights in the community. Children, youth and

adults also explored flow-on changes that occurred due to children's and youths' participation in child clubs. This section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story, and seeks to explain how the additional changes are linked to the development effectiveness characteristics. Both youth and adults gave examples of 'flow-on changes' that linked to all development effectiveness characteristics (see Figure 14).

PROMOTION OF INCLUSION AND EQUITY, AND REDUCTION OF MARGINALISATION & KNOWLEDGE SHARING, MUTUAL LEARNING AND COLLABORATION

Growing awareness of child rights and child awareness

"Before joining the child club, I didn't know about children's rights and child protection and the importance of children. Since I have participated, I know about child protection. My parents also know about child protection, and how to take care of children. Community members also know about child protection."
(Female youth, 16, Dindam Village)

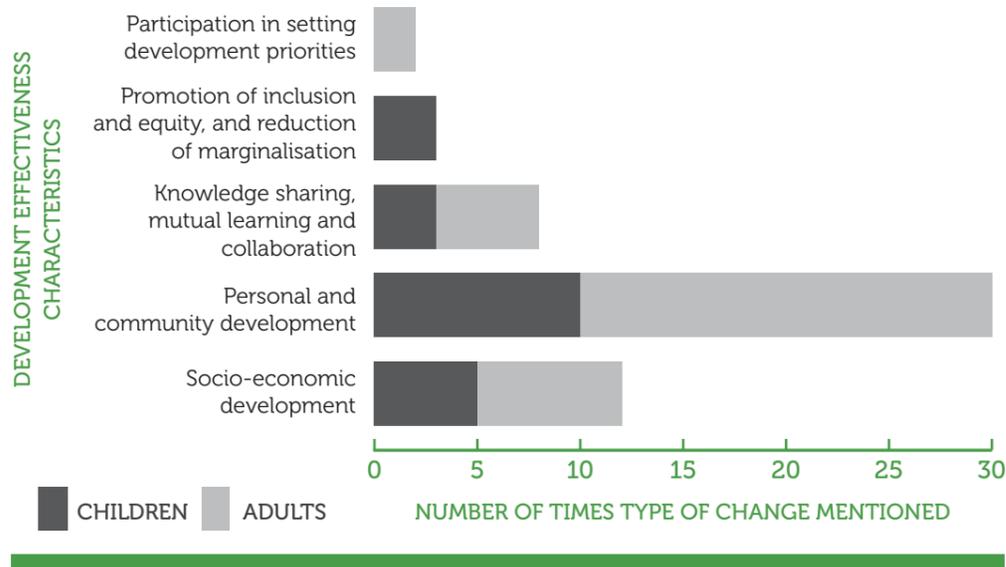


Figure 14: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Dindam Village, Laos

Personal and community development

The majority of children's and youths' examples of how their participation in child club activities resulted in change were related to improvements in their self-esteem, confidence and knowledge. For example:

"It made me bolder and [I] have more general knowledge." (Female child)

"My sister is bolder." (Male child)

Children and youth also shared that their relationships with parents and teachers in their community improved as a result of their participation in child clubs:

"Parents listen more to the children's opinions." (Female child)

OBSERVATION

Children's and youths' participation in development activities led to children having greater self-esteem and self-confidence. This resulted in parents and other community members having increased respect for children's opinions, and in improvements in children's relationships with other children and youth in the community.

"Teachers respect children more because the children joined the child clubs and they already have knowledge." (Female child)

Adults described many changes to children's and youths' self-confidence and to their relations with one another which resulted from their participation in child clubs. Interestingly, adults described these changes more often than the children and youth:

"The activities taught my daughter to be a better person." (Mother)

"There is solidarity between children from different households or between friends. They know how to respect the villagers and elderly. Children help each other to make decisions about joining the activity." (Mother).

"When they talk to older people and friends they know how to respect them. Older people know how to respect and compliment them." (Mother)

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Children and youth described examples of how sharing the knowledge they gained from child clubs with others resulted in community members engaging in healthier behaviours:

OBSERVATION

Children's and youths' participation in child clubs resulted in children gaining new knowledge and sharing this with their parents and peers. This resulted in parents valuing and respecting children's opinions more and being more supportive of children's participation in development activities.

"Since they joined the child clubs, the children advise people to use the toilets instead of open defecation." (Female child)

"After we learned [about hygiene], we told the community so they cleaned the ditches." (Female child)

On the other hand, adults described how children and youth were more respected and recognised in their families after they shared their new knowledge on child rights. For example:

"After they joined the activities, when they come back they tell their parents what they have learnt. Before, the parents said to their children: 'Don't do that, don't do this!' but now they don't anymore, now the parents support more the children to join the activities." (Male village authority)

"Children and parents know about child rights and they listen to each other's opinions. The family members exchange the knowledge and there is solidarity." (Mother)

"When the children learn new things they teach their siblings, and because of that they talk to each other more within the family." (Male, village authority)

Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation.

Children and youth reported that when they saw the benefits of their participation in child clubs, their parents understood more about the importance of child rights:

"Before joining the child clubs we didn't know about child rights, but now we have development and solidarity in the village, we know the importance of children, and children have more solidarity between themselves" (Female child).

Children and youth also described how their participation in child clubs led to adults treating them better, as they began refraining from using physical abuse or child labour:

"Before, they hit children because they didn't know the importance of children, but now they only tell the children when they do something wrong and don't hit them anymore. They speak more politely, they don't use 'ku' and 'mu' [slang words for 'I' and 'You']." (Female child)

"Parents learned about child rights, and after that they don't use child labour too much." (Female child)

Interestingly, these changes were only mentioned by children and youth, and not by adults.

Socio-economic development

Children described how sharing the knowledge they gained from participating in child clubs led to people in the community having better hygiene and valuing the importance of education:

"Community members began washing their hands before eating after the children joined the child clubs." (Female child)

"There were changes in the family. For example, before the parents didn't want their children to go to school but now they let them go." (Female child)

Parents also stated that they were more encouraging of their children attending school as a result of children participating in the child clubs:

"The parents know how to love their children and advise the children to go to school. They tell the children that they care about them so they know they are loved." (Mother)

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in child clubs resulted in improved hygiene and changes in parents' attitudes towards the value of their children's education.

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in child clubs increased adults' understanding about the importance of children's rights. This resulted in children being more respected, valued and treated better by adults in their community.

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in child clubs resulted in improved hygiene and changes in parents' attitudes towards the value of their children's education.

Participation in setting development priorities

Only one adult described how children's participation in child clubs had resulted in children contributing more to decision-making within the community:

"The adults listen to what the children want and like to do. Parents and community members appreciate the importance of children more than they did before. They approve the children's opinions ... Based on my observations, the villagers also support children every time we are doing an activity. The village authority also helps and is a leader for doing the activity every time. The community approved what the children did." (ChildFund Laos Child and Youth Participation Officer)

How children and youth described their contribution to the development activities and related changes

In order to explore more deeply the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness, the researchers asked children and youth to explore and discuss their roles in making the changes happen. Children and youth were asked to describe how they participated in the development activities which created the changes in their community. Children and youth



discussed, and then made a judgement about, whether they participated as **beneficiaries, partners** or **leaders**.

Most of the children and youth (nine quotes) stated that they participated in the development activities as **partners**, for example:

"I agree [that they acted as partners] because the children and adults joined together in the work." (Male child)

"I agree [that they acted as partners] because children and adults exchanged their knowledge." (Female, Exploring the Story of Change)

However, some children stated that it was the role of adults to teach children, and that children should follow instructions as **beneficiaries**:

"I disagree because the adults make the children follow." (Female child)

"I disagree because the adults don't allow children to lead because the children are too young." (Male child)

Some children also said that they led the changes that occurred in their communities as a result of their participation in the child clubs:

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in child clubs resulted in adults giving more consideration to their opinions.

"There are activities children tell adults to create. For example, children told the adults to dig a hole to put garbage in, the adults followed what children said because the children had learned about that." (Female child)

All the children and youth agreed that the most important contributions of children and youth to the changes in their community were as **partners**.

How adults described the contribution of children and youth to the development activities and related changes

Adults were also asked to describe how children and youth had contributed to the changes that resulted from children's and youths' participation in child clubs. When asked to choose whether children and youth participated as beneficiaries, partners or leaders, most

adults (13 quotes) described children as **partners**. For example:

“Children worked with ChildFund during some activities and after that they were clever and they could participate in village meetings instead of their parents, and they could come back to explain the meetings to their parents.” (Mother)

Interestingly, adults provided many more examples (ten quotes) of children as **leaders** than did the children and youth themselves:

“They [children] became role models in the village for their friends, parents and community members.” (Mother)

“They know how to analyse the challenges, plan together, assign responsibilities, and monitor and evaluate, and they pass on what they have learnt.” (Female, ChildFund Laos Child and Youth Participation Officer, Conversations)

When asked which type of child and youth participation they valued the most, all adults said they valued children as **partners** in creating change.

OBSERVATION

Despite children and youth describing different ways in which they contributed to the changes in their community as a result of their participation in the child clubs, all children viewed working in partnership with adults as the most important way children and youth can achieve change.

OBSERVATION

Adults said that children and youth played the roles of partners and leaders in the development activities. Adults also valued the contribution children and youth made to achieving change in the community in partnership with adults.



CASE STUDY 5 LAOS

Exploring links to development effectiveness
through child and youth participation in learning
English in Houayzouang Village, Laos

The change story chosen by children and youth

Children and youth in Houayzouang Village, Laos, chose to explore the benefits of their participation in learning English through a communication for development project as their change story for this research. They made this decision after discussing the different ways that children and youth participated in community development projects run by ChildFund Laos and the many positive changes that resulted from their participation in these projects.

Prior to participating in English classes, children and youth in Houayzouang Village were shy and lacked confidence as they had limited opportunities to take on leadership roles within their communities and communicate with people from outside their communities. One of the young women reflected on her experience after she started learning English through the communication for development project: “Before joining this activity or learning English I had no boldness and I didn’t have a lot of knowledge. Since joining the activity for learning English with ChildFund, with the teacher Leo, I feel that I have developed more boldness. I have knowledge and more ability, and I go to school. At school my friends compliment me and they want to join the activity with us. My parents, brothers and sisters are also happy that I joined the activity and have the chance to learn English. My friends also encourage me, they speak well to me and we help each other. I feel happy that I joined the activity and have the chance to learn English. It gives me knowledge, ability and more boldness than I had before joining the activity and learning English. This activity made me change my ideas and my thinking. I know how to love other people, respect older people, brothers and sisters.” (Female, 16 years)

The young woman shared that her participation in English classes provided her with the confidence and skills to challenge her way of thinking, behave more respectfully towards others in her community, and develop positive aspirations. Through exploring her change story more deeply with other children and youth, it became clear that children’s and youths’ participation in English classes also led to broader changes in the

“Before joining this activity or learning English I had no boldness and I didn’t have a lot of knowledge. Since joining the activity for learning English with ChildFund, with the teacher Leo, I feel that I have developed more boldness. I have knowledge and more ability, and I go to school. At school my friends compliment me and they want to join the activity with us. My parents, brothers and sisters are also happy that I joined the activity and have the chance to learn English. My friends also encourage me, they speak well to me and we help each other. I feel happy that I joined the activity and have the chance to learn English. It gives me knowledge, ability and more boldness than I had before joining the activity and learning English. This activity made me change my ideas and my thinking. I know how to love other people, respect older people, brothers and sisters.”



community. By sharing their newfound English language skills with others within and outside the community, children and youth improved their relationships with adults and peers. They received more respect and recognition from parents and community leaders, and adults' understanding of the importance of educating their children increased. These changes highlight the multiple ways in which child and youth participation in development activities can contribute to development effectiveness.

The young woman, and the other women and youth in the village, were asked to link it to one of five development effectiveness characteristics. These characteristics were provided via illustrated cartoons. The children found this task difficult, so the local staff assisted in the process, linking the young woman's story to the characteristics of personal and community development and socio-economic development.

The development project

ChildFund Laos has been implementing an innovative communication for development project called "Global Community" in Laos since 2014. Five youth from Houayzouang were selected by their communities to be Youth Ambassadors. These Youth Ambassadors are responsible for engaging with Global Community supporters from overseas on

important development issues on behalf of their communities. Through the project, the youth have received training in English and media literacy to enable them to produce videos on issues important to their community, conduct interviews with community members, and engage in online discussions with supporters. In doing so, the project aims to strengthen youths' capacity to engage more effectively as active citizens and represent their community to the outside world.

About Houayzouang Village

Houayzouang Village is located in Nonghet District, 33 km from the district capital. The village has a primary school, but no health clinic. Village members have access to communal water, and some households have access to piped water. The village has a population of 369 people, consisting of 65 families, all of whom are from the Hmong ethnic minority group. This group is particularly vulnerable and has often been excluded from development opportunities due to language barriers, and lack of access to general services and social protection.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with children and youth aged 11–17 (six females and six males). Adults in their

community also participated in conversations with the researchers. In the village, the researchers spoke to two female adults (both parents), and four males (two parents, one NGO staff member and one community leader).

How the changes that resulted from child and youth participation link to development effectiveness

In addition to gaining more knowledge, self-confidence and respect from others as a result of sharing the skills and knowledge they learnt, children, youth and adults explored flow-on changes that occurred due to children's and youths' participation in English classes. This section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story, and seeks to explain how these additional changes are linked to the development effectiveness characteristics. Children, youth and adults gave examples of 'flow-on changes' that linked to four areas of development effectiveness characteristics (see Figure 15).

PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Growing awareness of child rights and child awareness

"Before joining this activity or learning English I had no boldness and I didn't have a lot of knowledge. Since joining the activity for learning English with ChildFund, with the teacher Leo, I feel that I have developed more boldness. I have knowledge and more ability, and I go to school. At school my friends compliment me and they want to join the activity with us. My parents, brothers and sisters are also happy that I joined the activity and have the chance to learn English.

My friends also encourage me, they speak well to me and we help each other. I feel happy that I joined the activity and have the chance to learn English. It gives me knowledge, ability and more boldness than I had before joining the activity and learning English. This activity made me change my ideas and my thinking. I know how to love other people, respect older people, brothers and sisters."

(Female, 16, Houayzouang Village)

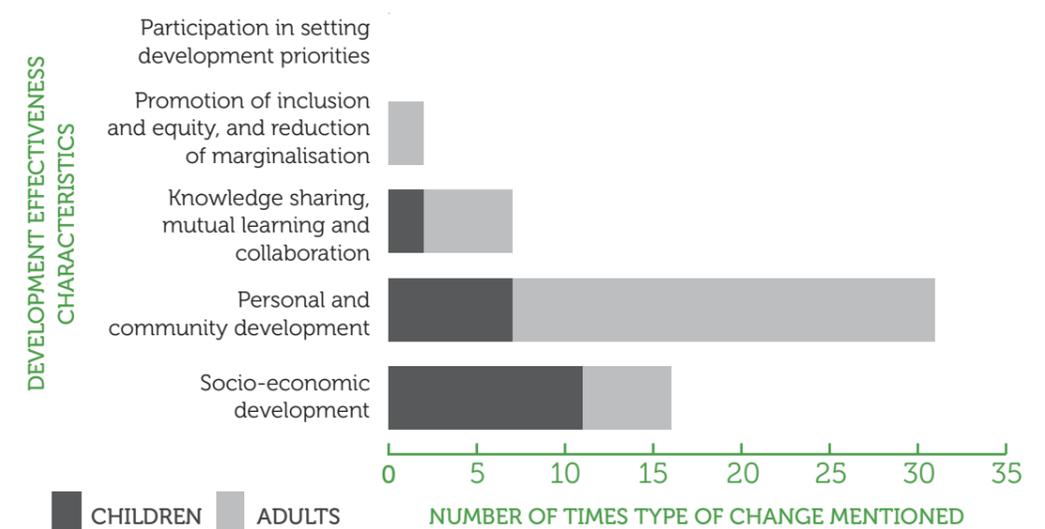


Figure 15: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Houayzouang Village, Laos

Socio-economic development

Both children and adults described how receiving English lessons from a foreigner increased children's knowledge of the outside world, improved their self-confidence and enabled them to develop positive aspirations for the future:

"I pay more attention to studying English because I want to speak very well and I want to study abroad." (Female child)

"At school she [the female student] can now ask the foreign teacher. Before [attending the English classes], she didn't." (Father)

"I have more knowledge because I paid attention in the English classes." (Female youth)

"I have more boldness. I am happy to have the opportunity to learn English and know a lot of things." (Female youth)

Children, parents and community leaders also described how both children's and adults' opinions about the importance of education changed as a result of children's participation in English classes:

"My parents are happy and they want ChildFund to teach more, three times a week." (Female youth)

"The community in the village is happy with the ones who study English with ChildFund. Adults in the village compliment them and tell them to pay attention to their studies and then to teach their friends in the village." (Male youth)

"The parents, brothers and sisters are happy and tell the children to pay more attention to their studies and not to miss classes because it

OBSERVATION

The participation of children and youth in English classes led to them gaining new skills, broadening their knowledge of the outside world, and developing positive aspirations. This resulted in parents, siblings and other community members having a greater understanding of the value of educating children.

is a good opportunity because ChildFund comes to teach for free." (Male village authority)

Personal and community development

Children and youth described how their participation in English classes allowed them to improve their speaking skills, and to be better behaved. It also led to parents listening to them more at home:

"Parents, brothers and sisters speak well to me. They listen to my opinions more and talked to me after I came back from the English lesson." (Female youth)

"It made me have more discipline." (Female, Exploring the story of Change)

"My parents, brothers and sisters are happy for me. They told me to pay attention to my studies." (Female youth).

Adults reported that children's self-confidence increased and their ability to talk to adults from both within and outside the community improved as a result of their participation in English classes. This led to the wider community having increased respect for children:

"I see that she can talk to people in the village ... Now she is bolder in the village if she hears what adults say and doesn't understand she can ask the adults." (Father)

"The village leader and adults listen to him [child] more, they compliment and respect him more." (Father)

"When donors came to visit, children were able to speak English with foreigners. The community was happy and praised them." (Male, ChildFund Laos staff member, Conversations)

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Children and youth described how sharing the knowledge and skills they gained from English classes led to positive changes in their relationships with their friends:

OBSERVATION

The participation of children and youth in development activities increased their confidence and they were more willing to communicate with adults both within and outside their community. This resulted in parents and other community members having increased respect for, and recognition of, children and youth's voice and agency.

"My friends are happy for me. They ask me about the English lessons." (Female child)

"When I come back from the class I teach my friends and other people." (Male child)

Adults also recognised the benefits that children's and youths' participation in English classes had for increasing the knowledge and skills of their siblings and the wider community, and described more examples of this than did the children and youth:

"When she comes back from learning English she also teaches her younger siblings." (Mother)

"In the village she likes to speak English with her friends. I see that the children have fun and they love and help each other." (Father)

"After the children learned English they also taught their younger siblings or friends in the village. Sometimes you see that children learn English words together; they have a conversation, practise speaking English together." (Male, ChildFund Laos staff member)

Both adults and children described how adults and peers had more respect for the children who participated in the English classes after they shared their skills with others in the community:

"Because I am a good person – that's why I respect adults and I want adults to respect me." (Female child)

"The community respects the children because there are things that they can teach, especially about English. After their English classes they are able to teach the community." (Male, village authority)

Promotion of inclusion and equity, and the reduction of marginalisation

Some adults described how children's and youths' participation in English classes led to other children in the community wanting to join in this activity:

"Some friends saw that my child learned a lot and knows more things than his friends, and now they want to join the classes." (Father)

"There are a lot of children who didn't join the Global Community group or the English learning group, but they see that the children can speak English so they are interested and they want to join." (Male, ChildFund Laos staff member)

No children described changes in relation to this development effectiveness characteristic.

How children and youth described their contributions to the development activities and related changes

In order to explore the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness more deeply, the researchers asked children and youth to explore and discuss

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in English classes can result in children and youth sharing new knowledge and skills with their siblings, friends and parents, and this has led to the broader community having greater respect for the children in their communities.

their roles in making the changes happen. Children and youth discussed, and then made a judgement about, whether they participated as **beneficiaries, partners** or **leaders**.

Most of the children and youth stated that they participated in the development activities as **partners**. For example:

“Because there are children and adults working together to make change. Children and youth learn together.” (Male child)

“Sometimes the adults made the decisions but sometimes the children also made the decisions.” (Female child)

Children and youth also described their participation in the development activities as ‘partners’ and ‘beneficiaries’.

All the children and youth agreed that the most important contributions of children and youth to the changes in their community were as **partners**.

How adults described the contribution of children and youth to the development activities and related changes

Adults were also asked to describe how children and youth had contributed to the changes resulting from their participation in learning English. When asked to choose whether children and youth participated as beneficiaries, partners or leaders, adults gave more examples of children as leaders and partners than did the children and youth themselves.

An example of children as **partners** included:

“In the family, the parents, brothers and sisters are proud and always compliment her because she pays attention to her studies and listens.”

OBSERVATION

Adults said that in development activities children and youth acted as partners and leaders, but viewed the most important contributions children and youth made to achieving change in the community as occurring in partnership with adults.

OBSERVATION

Children’s and youth’s participation in learning English accentuated the unequal distribution of opportunities in their community, thereby highlighting the need to ensure that development activities are more inclusive of all children and youth.

OBSERVATION

Children and youth described their participation in development activities as beneficiaries, leaders and partners, but recognised that the most important changes in their community resulted from their participation in child clubs occurred in partnership with adults.

Now she can speak English a lot. Before, she didn’t know a lot about English.” (Father)

Examples of children as **leaders** were described by adults:

“At school if there is something she doesn’t understand, she asks her friends. I see that they learn together and help each other.” (Father)

When asked which type of child and youth participation they thought was the most important, adults, like the children and youth, said they valued children as partners in creating change relating to the **promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation**. Neither adults nor children nor youth described changes related to **participation in setting development priorities**.

CASE STUDY 6 LAOS

Exploring links to development effectiveness through child and youth participation in rugby in Paka Village, Laos

The change story chosen by children and youth

Children and youth in Paka Village, Laos, chose to explore the benefits of their participation in rugby through a sport for development project as their change story for this research. They made this decision after discussing the different ways that children and youth participated in community development projects run by ChildFund Laos and the changes that resulted from their participation in these projects.

Prior to participating in rugby activities, children and youth in Paka Village were shy and lacked confidence, as they had limited opportunities to participate in their communities. One of the girls reflected on her experience since she started playing rugby through the sport for development project:

“I like the rugby most because thanks to playing rugby I made new friends. I had fun when playing rugby. I learned the skills needed to play rugby, how to speak better, and have better behaviour within the family. My family is happy.” (Female, 12 years old)

The girl shared that her participation in rugby provided her with the confidence and skills to influence the behaviour of others in her family. After exploring her change story more deeply with other children and youth, it became clear that children’s and youths’ participation in rugby activities also led to broader changes in the community. Prior to participating in rugby activities, many children and youth did not have the opportunity to participate in sport activities in Paka Village. After participating, children shared the skills and knowledge they learned with other children and adults, and this resulted in more children being allowed to play rugby, which led to their being better behaved, sharing their newfound rugby skills and knowledge with their friends, siblings and parents, receiving more respect and recognition from community elders and peers, and reaping the health benefits of playing regular sport. This highlights the multiple ways in which child and youth participation can contribute to development effectiveness.

The girl who shared her story was asked to link it to one of five development effectiveness characteristics. These characteristics were provided via illustrated cartoons. The children found this task quite difficult, so the local staff assisted in the process, ascribing the girl’s story to the characteristic of personal and community development.

“I like the rugby most because thanks to playing rugby I made new friends. I had fun when playing rugby. I learned the skills needed to play rugby, how to speak better, and have better behaviour within the family. My family is happy.”



The development project

ChildFund Laos has been implementing a sport for development project called “Pass it Back” in Nonghet District since 2015, in partnership with the Lao Rugby Federation. The project provides opportunities for participation for two groups of children and youth – players (aged 11-16) and coaches (aged 18-30). Young women and men are trained as rugby coaches and they deliver an integrated life skills and rugby curriculum to children and youth. The curriculum aims to build the resilience of children and youth through focusing on the topics of leadership, gender and financial literacy.

The project uses peer education as its main method of delivery, with coaches acting as educators and role models for the young children they train. This has been particularly important for increasing girls’ participation in the project, as young girls in Paka Village have traditionally faced a number of barriers, such as early marriage, stigma around sport participation and low confidence. These barriers have prevented them from participating in sporting activities.

About Paka Village

Paka Village is located in Nonghet District, 7 km from the district capital. The village has a primary school, but no health clinic. Village members have access to communal water, and some households have piped water access. The village has a population of 423 people, all of whom are from the Hmong ethnic minority group. This group is particularly vulnerable and has often been excluded from development opportunities due to language barriers, and lack of access to general services and social protection.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with children and youth aged 11–18 (six females and five males). Adults also participated in conversations with the researchers in their community. In Paka Village, the researchers spoke to four female adults (two parents, one rugby coach, and one staff member from the Lao Rugby Federation), and two males (one parent, and one rugby coach).

How the changes that resulted from child and youth participation link to development effectiveness

As a result of children and youth gaining more self-confidence from participating in rugby, the sharing of skills and knowledge among children and adults increased. Children, youth and adults also explored flow-on changes that occurred due to child and youth participation in rugby. This section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story, and seeks to explain how the additional changes are linked to development effectiveness characteristics. Youth and adults gave examples of ‘flow-on changes’ that linked to four areas of development effectiveness characteristics (see Figure 16).

PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Learning rugby for personal development

“I like the rugby most because thanks to playing rugby I made new friends. I had fun when playing rugby. I learned the skills needed to play rugby, how to speak better, and have better behaviour within the family. My family is happy.”
(Female, 12, Paka Village)

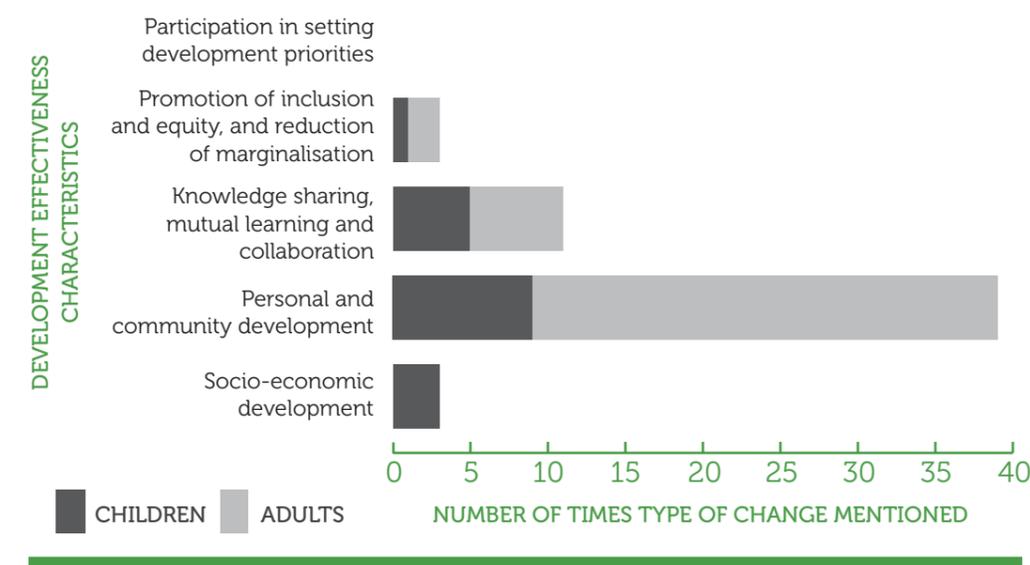


Figure 16: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Paka Village, Laos

Personal and community development

Children and youth described being more ‘bold’ (translated from the local language as ‘self-confidence’), and being more valued and respected by members of their community as a result of participating in rugby. For example:

“My parents like that I play rugby because they think that if I play a lot in the future I will be bolder.”
(Female child)

“I saw my friends, Blia and Youa, [since participating in rugby activities] they have become bolder when they answer questions at school.” (Female child)

Children and youth also shared that they had become more respectful of elders and better behaved as a result of their participation in rugby:

"We know how to respect friends, adults and village leaders." (Female child)

"My friends also tell me that I am good[at playing rugby]. They want to play." (Male child)

Adults also reported similar changes relating to personal development, and, interestingly, described these more often than the children and youth:

"In the village children are bolder than before. For instance, before they were shy about going out and playing with friends. My child has changed a lot. He is bolder, and he likes to go out and play with friends." (Mother)

"Before, children could not speak to adults. Now, they are healthy, bold." (Male, Pass it Back Coach)

The changes from playing rugby described by adults also included changes in relationships within the family and between community members:

"Before the children joined the rugby activities they had no discipline. Now they have learned life-skills, how to speak and how to behave with adults ... People in the village also compliment them and they have better conversations." (Pass it Back Coach)

"Sisters, younger sisters and parents are happy. The parents listen to their children more than before. Relationships between the family members are better than before. About the parents' behaviour: they share decision-making with their children. The siblings also have better behaviour, and it is the same for every person in the family and the sister-in-law." (Mother)

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration.

Children and youth shared the knowledge and skills they gained from participating in rugby activities, which led to children and youth being better behaved and having more respect for friends, siblings and adults in the community:

OBSERVATION

The participation of children and youth in rugby led to increased self-confidence, more respect towards parents and being better behaved. This resulted in parents and other community members having increased respect for, and recognition of, children's and youths' involvement in their community.

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in development activities can result in children and youth sharing knowledge and skills with their siblings, friends and parents, and adults having a greater appreciation of the ability of children to influence change in their communities.

"I heard my friend who plays rugby saying that we have to speak well to other people and we have to respect each other whether people are smart or simple-minded because they have a mind. We learn from ChildFund and rugby about child rights." (Female child)

"Those who play rugby taught me how to behave well, speak well and be polite with parents and other adults in the village." (Male child).

Adults also described how children's participation in rugby had positive impacts on children's relationships with their siblings. For example:

"He is only nine years old but he knows how to say: 'Playing rugby helps us to have knowledge!' so I think: 'He is very young but he knows how to speak like that!' maybe it is because his brother taught him what he learned." (Mother).

Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation

Children reported that upon seeing the benefits of their participation in rugby, parents were

more willing to allow their siblings to participate in rugby activities:

"At first my parents didn't allow me to go to play rugby because if I did I could not help them, but when I came back I also transferred my knowledge to my brothers and sisters so now my parents allow us to play rugby." (Female, Exploring the Story of Change)

Adults also described how children's participation led to greater recognition and inclusion of children in their community:

"The village chief respects children and leads them to join the rugby or other activities to make them change." (Mother)

"When they organised a competition in the village, the children were able to get permission from the village leader to inform people about it with the loudspeaker." (Female, Lao Rugby Federation)

Socio-economic development

Only children described changes in relation to socio-economic development, reporting that their participation in rugby resulted in changes to their physical fitness and health:

"Playing rugby made me thin and strong. For example, at school I can do arm wrestling with boys bigger than me" (Female, Youth).

"Playing rugby made me stronger. For example, now I can run easily without being tired like in the past." (Female, Youth)

How children and youth described their contribution to the development activities and related changes

In order to explore the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness more deeply, the researchers

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in rugby challenged traditional views about the value of children's contributions to their families and communities, and created more opportunities for children and youth to participate in community activities.



asked children and youth to explore and discuss their roles in making the changes happen. Children and youth were asked to describe how they participated in the development activities which caused the changes in their community. Children and youth discussed, and then made a judgement about, whether they participated as **beneficiaries, partners** or **leaders**.

Most of the children and youth (12 quotes) stated that they participated in the development activities as **partners**. For example:

"Because adults and children worked together to bring about change." (Female youth)

"Adults and children have to agree and work together in unity." (Male youth)

No child or youth described children as 'beneficiaries'. All the children and youth agreed that the most important contributions of children and youth to the changes in their community were as **partners**.

OBSERVATION

Children's and youth's participation in rugby activities has resulted in improvements to their health.

OBSERVATION

Children and youth said they made their contributions to changes in their community resulting from playing rugby as partners, and believed that working in partnership with adults was the most important way of achieving change.

How adults described the contribution of children and youth to the development activities and related changes

Adults were also asked to describe how children and youth had contributed to the changes resulting from their participation in rugby. When asked to choose whether children and youth participated as beneficiaries, partners or leaders, most adults described children as **partners**. For example:

"Because adults and children work together and consult each other to make the changes and they learned from each other. Adults advise the children for some things and they learn from the adults." (Pass it Back Coach)

Adults also described children as **beneficiaries**, for example:

"First they didn't know how to play rugby and didn't know what the techniques are. We taught the theory and then the practice, the principles about playing rugby." (Female, Lao Rugby Federation)

Some adults provided examples of children as **leaders**. When asked which type of child and youth participation they liked the most, adults said they valued children as partners in creating change.

OBSERVATION

Adults viewed the role of children and youth in the development activities as beneficiaries, partners and leaders, but regarded working in partnership with adults as the most important way children and youth contributed to change in the community.

CASE STUDY 7 NEPAL

Exploring links to development effectiveness

characteristics through child and youth participation

in a quiz competition in Bashkarkha, Nepal

The change story chosen by children and youth

Children and youth in Bashkarkha Lower Secondary School chose to explore the benefits of their participation in a quiz competition as their change story for this research. They made this decision after discussing the ways that children and youth participated in community development projects run by United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and the changes that resulted from their participation.

This change story revealed how children's and youths' participation in the quiz competition led to personal and community development through increasing the value placed on education, and an increase in access to and involvement in education and program activities. Children, youth and adults all described how, as a result of the quiz, there was more support for children and youth to attend school from their parents and the wider community.

In Nepal, adults tend to hold authority and there are strong social hierarchies around caste. These cultural norms, and men's traditional control of decision-making, are important to consider when reading quotes in this study from young girls, many of whom are from minority groups.

Two young women described how their participation in a child club activity (the quiz competition) resulted in them overcoming shyness, studying more and having a better relationship with adults around them:

"After receiving prize in the quiz competition, I like to study more and learn new things. My parents loved me more. I was so happy to be loved. I have started doing better in my studies. My teachers care for me and help me out."

"I had never participated in any programs in the past. After getting an opportunity to participate in the quiz competition, I was very happy. My parents were proud of me for being second in the competition. I used to get very shy and scared to talk to my teachers. After participating in the competition, I have overcome my shyness." (Female, 14)

"After receiving prize in the quiz competition, I like to study more and learn new things. My parents loved me more. I was so happy to be loved. I have started doing better in my studies. My teachers care for me and help me out." (Female, 15)

Through exploring the initial change story more deeply with children, youth and adults, it became clear that there were broader changes within the family and wider community that resulted from the children and youth participation in the quiz competition. These related to socio-economic development, knowledge sharing and mutual learning and collaboration.



Children's and youths' contributions to the changes were reported and valued by parents and adults in the community. Children and youth valued their participation most as leaders, while adults most valued the children's contributions as partners.

After choosing their story, the children and youth were asked to link the change story to one of the development effectiveness characteristics. These characteristics were provided to them in illustration form. The children and youth linked their change story about the quiz competition to **personal and community development**.

The development program

In Baskharka Lower Secondary School in 2014, child club members organised a quiz competition with the support of UMN's partner Prayas and the school. Child club members participated in the competition and were awarded prizes.

Children and youth participate in child clubs which are formed in the schools and communities. They meet monthly to discuss different issues and make plans. They organise a variety of different activities and participate in activities organised by other clubs or stakeholders (e.g. self-assessment of the

school). They are also involved in different forums and committees such as village Child Protection Committees and Child Club Networks. The program is funded by Transform Aid International (TAI) and implemented by UMN in partnership with their boundary partner Prayas.

About Baskharka Village

Baskharka, Nepal, is 35 km from Gajuri (the local market) and 57 km from Dhading Besi (the district capital). The population of Baskharka is approximately 640, with only the Tamang ethnic group living in the village. Baskharka Lower Secondary School is the only school in the village, and children study there up to grade eight. Beyond grade eight students go to other schools. As there is no health clinic in the area, people have to travel 3–6 hours by foot to access the nearest clinic. There is no piped water in the village.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with children and youth aged between 14 and 19 (six female and three male). Discussions were also held with two females (both parents) and two males (one teacher and one community member).

How the changes that resulted from child and youth participation link to development effectiveness

In addition to improved confidence and a greater focus on learning and school attendance which was linked to personal and community development, the children, youth and adults explored flow-on changes that happened because of the quiz competition. This section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that happened because of the chosen change story, and seeks to explain how the additional changes are linked to development effectiveness characteristics (see Figure 17).

PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Participation in a quiz competition

"I had never participated in any programs in the past. After getting an opportunity to participate in the quiz competition, I was very happy. My parents were proud of me for being second in the competition. I used to get very shy and scared to talk to my teachers. After participating in the competition, I have overcome my shyness." (Female, 14, Baskharka Village)

"After receiving prize in the quiz competition, I like to study more and learn new things. My parents loved me more. I was so happy to be loved. I have started doing better in my studies. My teachers care for me and help me out." (Female, 15, Baskharka Village)

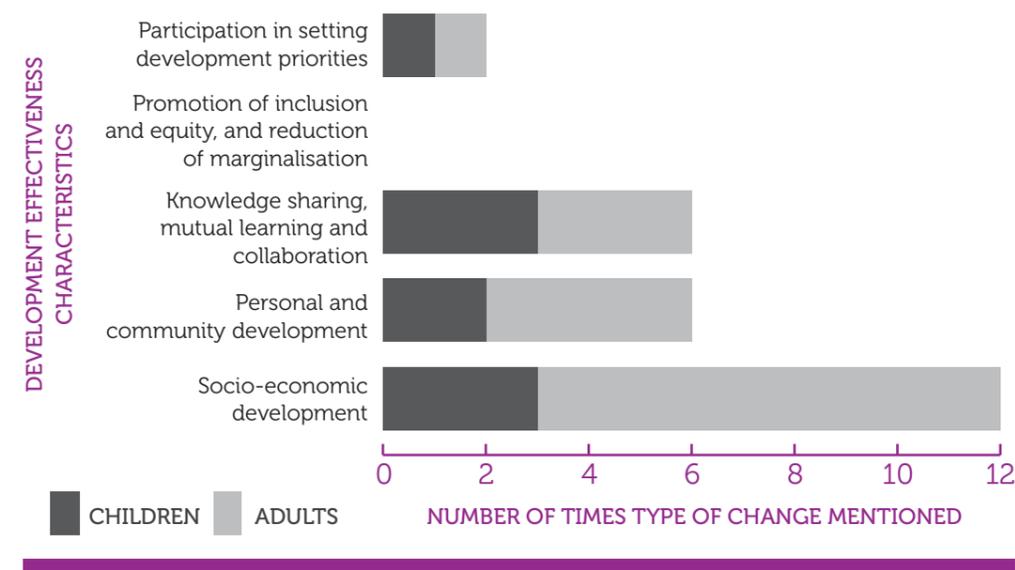


Figure 17: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Baskharka, Dhading, Nepal

Socio-economic development

Children, youth and adults (though more adults than children and youth) described changes as being linked to *socio-economic development* because of the quiz competition.

Children and youth provided many examples of how their participation in the quiz competition links to *socio-economic development* (e.g. improved education outcomes). They described how the quiz encouraged parents and the community more broadly to value education. For example:

"Parents pay more attention to our studies than household chores. When I am doing household work, my parents ask me if I have studied." (Female youth)

"People in the society have started paying attention to their studies. They also encourage their children to participate in programs." (Female youth, 14)

"My community people also give importance to studies because of my parents. Seeing me go to school on time, other people send their children to school on time." (Female youth, 14)

The increased value placed on education in the community was also a change echoed by adults, who described how they, and their community, increasingly valued education:

"My daughter has encouraged her brother to study together until 10 pm with her. As a result, my son studies hard till late." (Mother)

"Community people say good things about our children. They also send their children to school on a regular basis." (Male, Teacher/community leader)

One parent noted how she valued her child's education and participation at school so much that she paid for others to do chores rather than get her child to do the work:

"I encourage my daughter to study even though I have lots of work, I do them myself or even have people paid to help me so I can let my daughter be regular at class/school." (Mother)

Adults described changes they observed in children relating to increased enthusiasm for studying, diligence at school and corresponding increases in confidence:

"My daughter has become more active since last two years after her involvement in child club. She is confident and a hard worker. She gives more time for her studies." (Mother)

"It [youth participation] enables them to have a better future. It also enables them to be more confident in expressing their views with confidence." (Mother)

A father noted how other parents had a new respect for their children, and listened to them more. This shift reflected a new level of trust

OBSERVATION

The participation of children and youth in the quiz competition led to more value being placed on education by children and youth and the adults in their families and communities. This contributed to increased access to education, and higher retention rates at school.

and acknowledgement of children's voices and advocacy:

"Parents look up to the students in child club and are encouraged to send their children to school." (Father)

Personal and community development

Children, youth and adults described changes linked to *personal and community development* –adults described more of these changes than children.

The increased confidence of the children and youth after participating in the quiz competition enabled them to ask more questions of adults and learn more. For example:

"Increased speaking skill and capacity, such as introduce and talk with new people, talk to teachers and ask them questions without shame. I am confident to do better." (Female youth, 15 years)

"When I was awarded second in quiz competition, my sister started teaching me more. My parents encourage me to ask questions to my teachers when I don't understand my lessons. My parents give me more responsibilities." (Female youth, 14 years)

Changes in relationships between children and adults were also described by parents:

"We know that we should send our children to school regularly. We listen to what children have to say." (Mother)

Adults also described changes in the children's behaviour, noting how they were more

responsible and studied more, and how this also changed their relationships with adults:

"Children are more responsible; when I visit my parents, they take care of the house." (Mother)

"Previously, my children's study was poor but now they have started to study by participating in quiz and by studying in the library." (Male, Teacher/Community leader)

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Children, youth and adults all described changes linked to knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration. Children described how they shared new knowledge with their parents. For example:

"I teach my parents about things they don't know and they do the same. When I spend more time doing house chores my parents tell me my studies are more important than the chores." (Female youth, 14 years)

Children's parents described how their children had begun teaching them and other adults in the community:

"She talks to the neighbour and teaches them what she knows. Her friends come and learn from her." (Mother)

Setting development priorities

Children, youth and adults all described changes linked to participation in setting development priorities. A young person explained how children were encouraged by the community to participate in programs. A parent observed how parental behaviour had changed because of children's sharing of information, and how children were actively listened to.

"Community people started encouraging their children to participate in programs." (Youth)

"Because of children sharing information at home, parent's participation in school or other general development work has increased. Parents have developed a sense that they should send their children to school and what kind of quality education to be provided." (Father)

OBSERVATION

Participation of children, youth and adults in development programs and school activities increased as a result of child and youth participation in the quiz competition.

How children and youth described their contributions to the development activities and related changes

In order to explore the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness more deeply, the researchers asked children and youth to explore and discuss their roles in making the changes happen. They were asked to describe the type of participation they engaged in during the development activities which brought about the changes. Children and youth made judgements about whether they participated as **beneficiaries**, **partners** or **leaders**.

Children and youth provided examples of their contributions to change as **partners** (three quotes) and **leaders** (three quotes). None of the children described themselves as beneficiaries.

OBSERVATION

The confidence of children and youth was increased through their participation in the quiz competition. This resulted in increased respect for them, and improved relations with the adults around them.

OBSERVATION

The value of education and sharing knowledge between children and youth and adults in the community has increased as a result of child and youth participation in the quiz competition.

Examples of comments about children and adults working together as **partners** include:

“Our school ground was very small. Child club worked together with teachers and other adults to make it bigger.” (Female youth, 14 years)

“In the quiz competition, we (Child Club) and teachers worked together in making up quiz questions.” (Female youth, 16 years)

Examples of comments about children working as **leaders** include:

“While organising the quiz competition, we at child club made plans and the teacher helped us.” (Female youth, 14 years)

When asked what type of contribution they most valued, children and youth chose their contributions as **leaders**. They also all agreed that the most important contribution of child and youth participation to the development activities was as leaders.

How adults described the contribution of children and youth to development activities and related changes

Adults were also asked to describe the type of child and youth participation occurred in the development activities that they witnessed. When asked to choose whether children and youth participated as beneficiaries, partners or leaders, adults provided examples of children’s contributions to change as **partners** (four quotes) and **leaders** (five quotes). Like the children and youth themselves, adults did not provide any examples of children and youth acting as beneficiaries.

OBSERVATION

Adults said that children and youth contributed to development activities and related changes mainly as partners and leaders. Adults most valued the roles that children and youth played as partners.

OBSERVATION

Children and youth said they contributed to development as partners and leaders, with their role as leaders being the most valued.

Adults provided many examples of children’s and youths’ ability to initiate activities on their own as leaders. Although more examples of children as leaders were provided, all adults agreed the most important contribution of child and youth participation was as **partners**. For example:

“Children used to skip class and return home in the middle of the day. Now, mothers or their older siblings, who are child club members, take their children to school and the presence of children has increased at school.” (Male, Teacher/community leader)

Examples provided by adults of children working as leaders include:

“The child club members organised the quiz competition in their own initiative. They asked Prayas and teachers for their support in conducting the program.” (Male, Teacher/community leader)

“Children have active participation in bringing development. They took initiative to take smaller children to school. They also asked for quality education.” (Male, Teacher/community leader)

CASE STUDY 8 NEPAL

Exploring links to development effectiveness through child and youth participation in adolescent sexual and reproductive health training in Chyanglee Village, Nepal

The change story chosen by children and youth

Children and youth in Chyanglee Village, Nepal, chose to explore the benefits of their participation in adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) training as their change story for this research. They made this decision after discussing the ways that children and youth participated in community development projects run by United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and the changes that resulted from their participation.

Traditionally in this part of Nepal, women and girls are often excluded from community and household life when they are menstruating. This change story revealed that through participation in the adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) training, children and youth increased their confidence and knowledge.

Two adults shared their perspectives on the positive changes they had seen as a result of children’s and youths’ participation in project activities:

“Children used to shy away when they had their periods whereas now they are confident to come and let us know and we let them go home. Before, they used to skip classes without letting us know because of shame.”

“Children used to shy away when they had their periods whereas now they are confident to come and let us know and we let them go home. Before, they used to skip classes without letting us know because of shame.” (Female teacher)

“The training they participated in was good. My daughter wanted to conduct a similar training at her school along with her friends. I am glad and happy about the change in our children. My daughter and others are able and can do stuff we can’t, such as read, write, participate and train; they can do even better than us.” (Mother)

When exploring this change story further with children, youth and adults, it became clear that child and youth participation in the ASRH program had far-reaching effects on their peers and adults in their household and communities. Girls experienced a reduction in marginalisation during menstruation, which in the local context was a significant change in their lives. Greater confidence in themselves was complemented with increased support from their families, teachers and the community for girls during menstruation. Children, youth and adults also spoke about improved hygiene practice, increased peer support and the sharing of knowledge as a result of child and youth involvement in the ASRH program. Adults recognised that the capacity



building of children and youth had the potential to increase their future employment opportunities and promote socio-economic development.

Children's and youths' contributions to change were reported and valued by parents and other adults in the community. Children, youth and adults all valued the role of children and youth as partners in creating change.

After choosing which change story to explore further, the children and youth were asked to link it to a development effectiveness characteristic. These characteristics were provided via illustrated cartoons. The children and youth linked the changes from the chosen story to the characteristics of *personal and community development* and *knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration*.

The development program

UMN, with funding from TAI, and in partnership with their boundary partner Prayas, implemented a Child Centred Community Development Program in Chyanglee. As part of the program children and youth participate in child clubs, which are formed in schools and communities. They meet monthly, discussing different issues and making plans. They organise different activities and participate in activities organised by other clubs or stakeholders (e.g. self-assessment of schools). They are also involved in different forums or committees such as village Child Protection Committees and Child Club Networks. In Chyanglee Village in February 2016, children attended training in ASRH as part of their child club activities. Children learned about improved washable pads, a more accessible and sustainable alternative to commercial pads.

About Chyanglee Village

Chyanglee is 17 km away from Adhamghat (the local market) and 42 km from Dhading Besi (the district capital). The road to Chyanglee is usable in the dry season, but becomes inaccessible in the wet season (from June to September). The population of Chyanglee is approximately 550, with people from different ethnic groups (Tamang, Magar, Chepang etc.) in the village. Many of these ethnic groups are extremely marginalised and ostracised from the wider community. Chyanglee has a higher secondary school (Dol Bhanjyang) and a health post. There are only a few community taps for people to fetch water from.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with children and youth aged between 11 and 16 (eight females, one male). Discussions were also held with adults in their community. In Chyanglee Village, the researchers spoke to two female adults (both parents) and one male (teacher).

ASRH training. The children and youth explored several flow-on changes that happened as a result of the training. This section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story, and seeks to explain how the additional changes are linked to development effectiveness characteristics [see Figure 18].

How the changes that resulted from child and youth participation link to development effectiveness

The children and youth gained increased confidence as a result of participating in the

Personal and community development

Children, youth and adults all provided many examples of changes which linked to the development effectiveness aspect of *personal and community development*.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING, MUTUAL LEARNING AND COLLABORATION & PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Adolescent sexual and reproductive health training

"Children used to shy away when they had their periods whereas now they are confident to come and let us know and we let them go home. Before, they used to skip classes without letting us know because of shame" (Female teacher).

"The training they participated in was good. My daughter wanted to conduct a similar training at her school along with her friends. I am glad and happy about the change in our children. My daughter and others are able and can do stuff we can't, such as read, write, participate and train; they can do even better than us" (Female parent, Chyanglee Village).

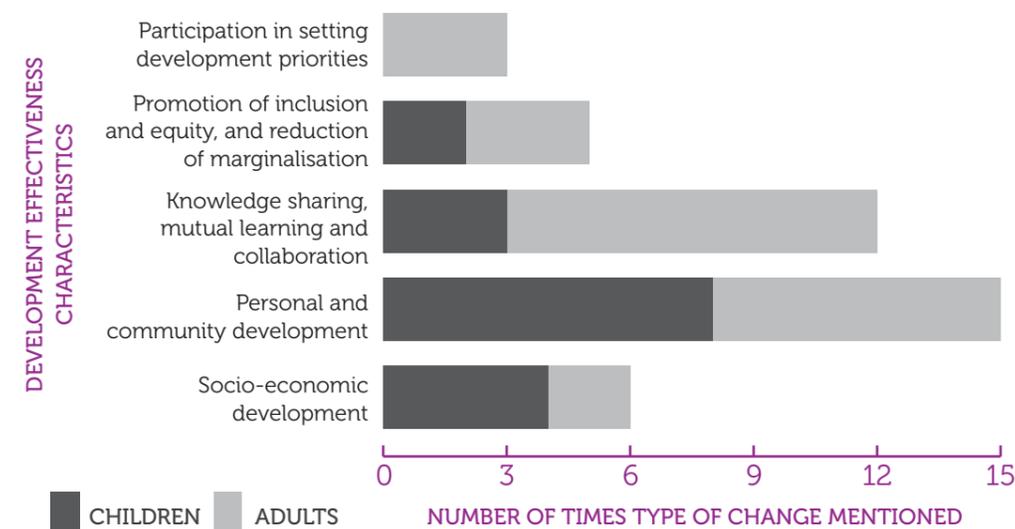


Figure 18: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Chyanglee, Dhading, Nepal

Children and youth expressed how improvements in their confidence and self-esteem had resulted from their participation in the training. For example:

"I trust myself, am confident about the future, have hopes for the future. I feel like I can do things with confidence." (No attribution)

"Encouragement from my parents helped me gain more confidence to carry out the training later." (No attribution)

Adults similarly described how girls had grown in confidence:

"My daughter was very shy. She rarely went to any training. After participating in child club, she rarely misses any training." (Mother)

"Girl children now act against teasing. They even make complaint against such behaviour, at times even about some teachers. I deal with these issues sensitively without mentioning the name of the complaint maker." (Female, Teacher)

Children and youth also described changes in their relationships with adults. Parents gave permission and time for children to participate in child club activities. They also described an increase in trust between children and their parents and teachers. For example:

"Family members trust me and give me responsibilities of home when they are out." (No attribution)

"Children come and share their problems with us. We trust each other." (Female teacher)

Girls and their mothers reported that girl children were given more responsibility after the ASRH training. Children learned about hygiene and cleanliness, with the training teaching them about improved washable pads, a sustainable alternative to commercial pads. Mothers took extra care with girls and girls shared information from their training:

"We use clean pads. We have learned to dry our pads under sun, change up to 3-4 pads per day. We keep ourselves clean every day" (No attribution).

"They (mothers) give me nutritious food during menstruation." (Female, 15)

OBSERVATION

Participation in the ASRH training increased the confidence of children and youth and led to positive changes in hygiene, cleanliness and respect, and support for girls within households and the wider community.

"I was very happy that the children organised and conducted Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health (ASRH) training with confidence. It is a great achievement and change to have them train their friends." (Mother)

Changes in community development relating to improvements in sanitation in the community were observed by both children and adults:

"All people of the village are clean and clean the surroundings more." (Female youth, 14 years)

"Mothers group were involved in school cleanliness, plantation and weeding." (Female, Teacher)

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Children, youth and adults all described changes which link to *knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration*, though more adults did so than children and youth.

Children and youth provided examples of knowledge sharing and collaboration as a result of their training. For example, they organised sharing sessions and additional training on ASRH for other children at school. Children could be open and share their problems with each other, and with mothers and teachers, and accordingly, supported each other when necessary:

"When I had irregular menstruation, I shared this problem with my friends and we went to the health post together." (Female youth, 15)

"We provide our handkerchief to menstruating friend if she hasn't put on a pad." (Female youth, 15)



Children and youth also recognised changes in adults because of their participation in the training. For example, parents had access to information about ASRH, and learned and understood about menstruation hygiene, family planning and changes in adolescents. Children also explained how adults and children worked together in the community. For example, the mothers' group helped children organise the ASRH training.

Children and youth described how they were encouraged by their community and parents to participate and continue their advocacy work on ASRH:

"People in the community appreciate our work and they also participate in our programs." (Male youth, 16)

"My family gives me encouragement to do good work [participate in programs]; I was feeling awkward about giving ASRH training but after encouragement of my parents I was able to give it." (Youth)

Adults recognised how children could collaboratively share their knowledge with others:

"Children organised a two-day training on ASRH for other children from this school and invited

two other child clubs from the community to attend the sessions. We respect them for sharing their learning with other children." (Female, Teacher)

A parent reported how children and youth had shared knowledge with school child clubs, their families and the wider community. Through this, they grew in confidence and were respected more by the wider community:

"They [children] share knowledge between each other such as why we should be involved in sanitation awareness and the group i.e. mothers group itself." (Mother)

"They [children] are a medium of communication. They patiently explained to the parents about how they benefit from their involvement at child club." (Mother)

"Sharing is crucial. Not every child can attend all training. If a child/children who have participated share their learning it helps the whole school's children learn." (Mother)

Due to the sharing and mutual learning that was led by children and youth, parents had increased respect for and pride in their children. This also highlights changes in relationships between children and adults. For example:

OBSERVATION

Increased learning and confidence in children and youth due to their participation in ASRH training has improved social acceptance of menstruating women and girls and increased shared learning, respect and collaboration within households and communities.

"Children communicate with parents. They have encouraged parents to get involved in school development work. Parents listen to their children." (Mother)

"We respect them for sharing their learning with other children." (Mother)

"I feel proud of my daughter. I wish she learns more from child club. My son (my daughters older brother) is a littler naughtier; my daughter talks to him and tells him to become a better brother and person. I trust my daughter more. There is a mutual sharing between me and my daughter and the training she attends." (Mother)

Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation

Children, youth and adults all described changes linked to the *promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation*. Adults described these types of changes more than children and youth.

Children and youth described how, through their gains in confidence and knowledge, they were able to take action against discrimination between boys and girls:

OBSERVATION

Due to the ASRH training and the increased confidence and sharing that followed, relationships between adults and children and youth have improved. There is more respect and inclusion, and children and youth themselves as well as adults are making greater efforts to reduce marginalisation and promote equity in the home and community.

"While walking alone in street, group of boys or girls used to laugh towards opposite sex accordingly, then we complained about this to our teachers and responded towards this injustice, after this the problem has decreased." (Female youth, 15).

There were also reports that discrimination against menstruating girls had decreased gradually. Evidence of this was seen in the way mothers now provided more nutritious food to their daughters, and cared for them more because of improved understanding.

Parents let their children, especially daughters, attend training away from their homes. This change reflects parental support and promotion of the inclusion of girls in training and development and improves equality.

Children and youth highlighted an important change in adults: they began supporting children and youth more:

"After our involvement in child club, teachers and mother's group encourage us to study. They have selected the most intelligent and needy students and provided school materials for them." (Female youth, 15)

Adults described how girls' confidence had grown and that they were advocating on their own behalf, changing past practices of marginalisation in the community:

"Girl children now act against teasing. They even make complaint against such behaviour, at times even about some teachers. I deal with these issues sensitively without mentioning the name of the complaint maker." (Female, Teacher)

Parent's acknowledged a change in their relationships with their children, and reported that this enabled more inclusive participation in family life:

"In the past parents got angry and didn't want to understand the message the children wanted to share from school. Children didn't want to talk to parents but now when children get home late, we ask them nicely about why and understand them." (Mother)

Socio-economic development

Children, youth and adults all described changes linked to *socio-economic development*, with this type of change being described slightly more by children than adults.

Children and youth described how the ASRH training led them to change the behaviour that affected their health and to share their knowledge with the broader community:

"[We] have learned understand and follow ASRH."

"We told village people that unhealthy behaviours can cause different types of disease." (Youth)

Children also reported that after participating in the training, they noticed more use of temporary and permanent family planning. They also observed that their parents went to the health post more often for health check-ups.

Adults recognised the long-term benefits of children participating in the activity, including an increase in their ability to earn an income:

"The participation of children is important because ... the role they are taking on currently will enable them to take on further responsibilities at different organisations in future and provide them with experience which will help them get jobs. They learn and are able to teach. They have learned to be calm and take on responsibilities." (Mother)

Participation in setting development priorities

There were no specific examples provided by children and youth about their roles in setting development priorities, but there were a lot of mentions of their roles in organising training sessions and influencing adult decision-makers' opinions on matters that concerned them.

"After children have participated in child clubs, they have been able to help increase parents' participation in school activities, such as school management committee meetings." (Female, Teacher)

One mother also shared:

"When children explain things to parents, parents tend to grasp them more effectively. People in the community now gather on time for meetings or public works." (Mother)

How children and youth described their contribution to the development activities and related changes

To explore the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness more deeply, the researchers asked children and youth to think about and discuss their roles in making the changes happen. Children and youth were asked to describe how they participated in the development activities which caused the changes. Children and youth made judgements about whether they participated as **beneficiaries, partners** or **leaders**.

Children and youth reported they contributed to change as **beneficiaries and partners**. They were aware that overall, adults were usually the decision-makers (consistent with cultural norms) but they recognised they could play a range of contributing roles. Children and youth noted that sometimes they were **beneficiaries** in participation:

"Adult makes decisions and ask us to follow them. When they make decisions, they sometimes invite us to be involved, and other times they don't." (Female, 14)

OBSERVATION

Child and youth participation in the ASRH training has increased the knowledge and practice of healthier behaviours among children and youth as well as some adults. It has also increased the general capacity for children and youth to participate and influence their communities.

"Not every decision made by adults is good. Adults first make decisions by themselves and later they ask us to follow them." (Male, 16)

Other children and youth noted children's and youths' contributions to change as **partners**. They shared how children, youth and adults all worked together to bring about wider community change:

"Children and youth have worked together with the elders, the grandparents and the mothers' group to bring about change." (Female, 14)

"Children can't bring about changes alone; they need the support of elders. Everyone must work together to bring about change. For example, we [child club members], Prayas Nepal staff and the mothers' group worked together to control the use of pesticides and campaigned against child marriage." (Female, 11)

None of the children and youth said that they played roles as leaders, but rather stressed the importance of collaboration and collective action, stating that:

"Children and youth are not only responsible for change; elder's, grandparents, mothers group and organisation helped children and youth to bring change." (Female, 14)

"Change happens because of mutual understanding between children, youth and elders." (Female, 15)

All the children and youth agreed that children and youth made their most important contributions as **partners**.

How adults described the contribution of children and youth to the development activities and related changes

Adults were also asked to describe how children and youth had participated in the development activities. When asked to judge whether children and youth had participated as beneficiaries, partners or leaders, adults provided examples for each of the roles.

Examples provided by adults of children's role as **beneficiaries** included:

"They were taken to different places by Prayas / UMN for exposure. They have learned from what they have observed." (Mother)

Adults provided examples of the benefits they'd seen from working as **partners** with children and youth:

"Changes happen quicker when or if done along with others rather than alone. Together, youth and adults can learn from each other and bring changes." (Mother)

"Children worked together with mothers' groups to bring changes in the community. They are planning to hold an awareness rally in the community soon." (no attribution).

Adults described how children and youth worked as **leaders**. They described how the children and youth organised training in their village. This involved speaking with adults in their community to secure resources and convince adults to allow children and youth to attend the training.

"They have self determination to bring about change. They want improvements at school." (Female, Teacher)

Interestingly, adults also most valued the contributions children and youth made to development activities as **partners**.

OBSERVATION

Children and youth recognised cultural norms of adult decision-making but they thought change was most effective when children and youth worked together in partnership with adults and elders.

OBSERVATION

Adults provided examples of the roles played by children and youth as beneficiaries, partners and leaders. However, like the children and youth, they placed most value on the roles children and youth played as partners.

CASE STUDY 9 NEPAL

Exploring links to development effectiveness through child and youth participation in adolescent sexual and reproductive health programs in Talti Village, Nepal

The change story chosen by children and youth

Children and youth in Talti Village, Nepal chose to explore the benefits of their participation in an adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) program as their change story for this research. They made this decision after discussing all the ways they had been participating in development programs run by United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and the changes that resulted.

Traditionally in this part of Nepal, women and girls are often excluded from community and household life when they are menstruating. The chosen change story revealed a reduction in marginalisation, and girls who participated in the program developed increased confidence in their ability to influence the behaviour of others. One of the young women shared that because of her participation in the ASRH program:

"My family doesn't mistreat any menstruating women. People in the community have started replacing their bad traditional thinking on health. For example, my grandfather did not used to allow us to enter [his] home or touch anything inside home and was not allowed to touch the most elderly of the home [when women and girls were menstruating] but now my grandfather does not do such activities because I educated my grandfather after taking Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health training" (Female, 16)

Through exploring this story more deeply, it became clear that by increasing the knowledge and confidence of children and youth, broader positive community development occurred. Prior to the training, talking about menstruation with parents or brothers would have been considered inappropriate. After the training, children were sharing their problems with the family more and this was having positive changes for women and girls at the household and community levels.

Adults valued and recognised children and youth as the primary change agents (i.e. as leaders), and respected their knowledge. Adults changed long-held traditional views that discriminated against women and girls.

After choosing which story to explore the children and youth were asked to work together to link it to a development effectiveness characteristic. These development effectiveness characteristics were

"My family doesn't mistreat any menstruating women. People in the community have started replacing their bad traditional thinking on health. For example, my grandfather did not used to allow us to enter [his] home or touch anything inside home and was not allowed to touch the most elderly of the home [when women and girls were menstruating] but now my grandfather does not do such activities because I educated my grandfather after taking Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health training."



provided in the form of cartoon illustrations. The children and youth linked this story to personal and community development.

The development program

With funding from TAI, local organisation UMN, and their boundary partner Prayas, ran ASRH training for children and youth in Talti village. The training was an activity of the Child Centred Community Development Program and was part of their child club activities in February 2016. The training provided girls and boys with information on ASRH that they then shared with their friends and families.

The child clubs were formed in schools and communities. The children and youth met monthly, discussing different issues and developing strategies to address them. They organised different activities and participated in activities organised by other clubs (e.g. self-assessments of schools). The children and youth were also involved in different groups such as the village Child Protection Committees and Child Club Networks.

About Talti Village

Talti is 17 km from Malekhu (the local market) and 36 km from Dhading Besi (the district capital). The population is approximately

1700 in Talti village, which has different ethnic groups including Tamang, Chepang, Magar and Gurung. Many of these ethnic groups are extremely marginalised and ostracised. Talti has a secondary school (Pipal Bhanjyang) and other primary schools, as well as a local health clinic. For many, there is a lack of access to piped water which has implications for menstrual hygiene and women's privacy, and is a challenging issue for women and girls in Talti Village.

Participants in the research

The researchers conducted learning circles and activities with children and youth aged between 14 and 17 (five females and two males). Discussions were also held with adults in their community. In Talti Village we spoke to one female adult (a parent) and two males (one parent and one teacher).

How the changes that resulted from child and youth participation link to development effectiveness

In addition to increased social acceptance of women and girls during menstruation which was linked to personal and community development, the children, youth and adults explored flow-on changes that happened because of child and youth participation in

ASRH training. This section provides an overview of the identified flow-on changes that occurred because of the chosen change story, and how they linked to the five development effectiveness characteristics [see Figure 19].

PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Adolescent sexual and reproductive health training

"My family doesn't mistreat any menstruating women. People in the community have started replacing their bad traditional thinking on health. For example, my grandfather did not used to allow us to enter [his] home or touch anything inside home and was not allowed to touch the most elderly of the home [when women and girls were menstruating] but now my grandfather does not do such activities because I educated my grandfather after taking Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health training." (Female, 16, Talti Village)

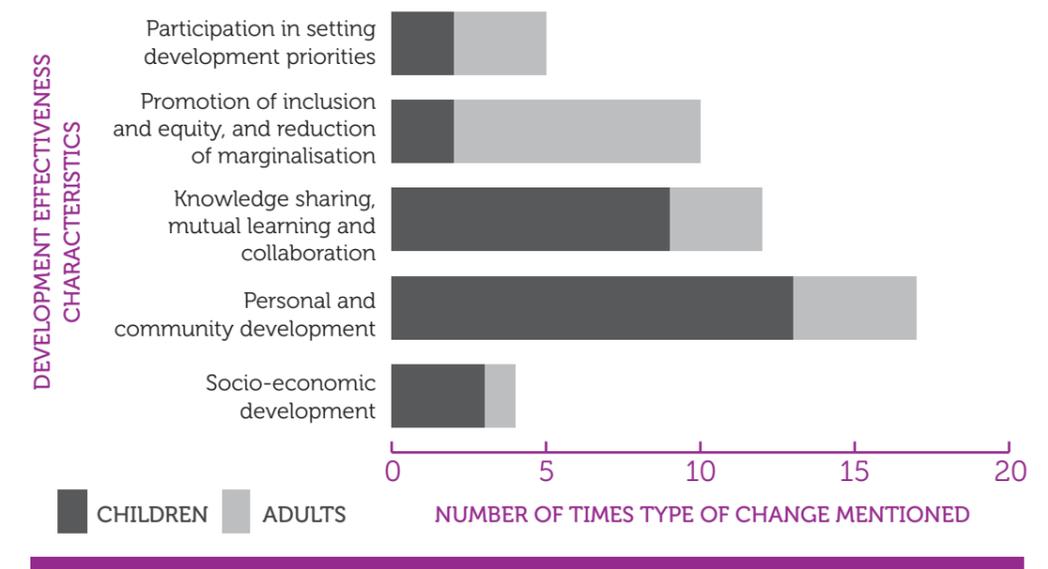


Figure 19: Chosen story of change and other flow on changes described for Talti, Dhading, Nepal

Personal and community development

Children and youth reported greater confidence, overcoming past feelings of embarrassment and shyness about sharing their problems with others. Changes that related to increased self-confidence (in children and youth) and a broader understanding about the normal bodily functions of women and girls were also shared. For example:

"Back then we used to feel shy when our teachers taught us about reproductive health. We used to keep our heads down and laugh. The teacher then told us off. We always ran away from his class. Later when Prayas provided us the training on ASRH, we started asking questions and gathering information about it." (Male, 17)

"Before we used to feel shy and scared about counselling them [parents] because we thought they would punish us or scold us." (Male, 17)

OBSERVATION

The participation of children and youth in development activities led to increased skills, knowledge and confidence within the children and youth. This enabled their voices to be shared, heard and considered within their community, leading to positive change within their households and community.

OBSERVATION

Child and youth participation in development activities had an effect on those around them. Because of their participation, children and youth could mobilise peers and adults in their community. This promoted knowledge sharing, mutual learning and increased collaboration between children, youth and adults. They worked together to create a more open and supportive society for women and girls.

Children and youth shared how community development had occurred because of the ASRH training, and said that adults had also changed their behaviour.

"People in the community have started replacing their bad traditional thinking on health." (Female, 16)

Adults also reported changes in behaviour relating to personal and community development for children, youth and adults. For example:

"Even the grandparents have understood more than they did before. The girls are not afraid to show their sanitary pads in public anymore. Friends wash their pads together using public taps." (Mother)

"I let my sisters enter in the kitchen when they have periods, buy sanitary pads for them." (Male, Adult)

"Even the old and wise listen to what the children have to say." (Mother)

Knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration

Children and youth talked openly about menstrual hygiene with their friends and mothers, with a view to changing traditional discriminatory practices. As described by the research participants, these practices have changed as a result. For example:

"I am able to counsel my parents that we should abide by newly developed customs, traditions and culture and leave traditional malpractices." (Female, 16)

"Changes have occurred, there is less exploitation of the menstruating women as [compared] to before. We have taught them [children] what we know and they have taught us what they know. We tell them to do what they have learnt. During menstruation, we used to eat and sleep outside but now we don't." (Mother)

Adults described how children were being listened to, and how relationships had changed between children and adults. At the community mothers' group meeting, some mothers discussed sexual reproductive health after hearing their children talk about this at home. This has created space for Prayas to hold discussions on the topic during the meetings. For example:

"I myself was shy to talk openly about this issue but after the training, I can speak without shame." (Male, Prayas Staff)

"They [youth] have brought about and also learnt much more about changes [in their bodies] than we ever did. They take care of their own bodies themselves and teach us about how to take care of our bodies. If only we'd known earlier." (Mother)

Promotion of inclusion and equity, and reduction of marginalisation

Changes in adults' perceptions about inclusion and marginalisation were shared by children and youth. Strong examples of ways in which women and girls were no longer marginalised during menstruation were provided. For example, one young male shared:

"Previously my grandfather did not allow my mother to get involved in different programs; now he does." (Male, 14)

Changes in how the community treated women and girls were also shared by adults. These changes in ideas led to menstruating women and girls being able to enter places that they were previously excluded from. For example:

"There is a lot of change ... no abuse like there was in the past, thinking that they shouldn't marry early. They share their thinking with us and we share our learning with them. We allow them to do whatever they know. In the past, menstruating girls used to stay outside, but now there is no belief like that." (Mother)

"In the past, parents used to keep [menstruating girls and women] outside the house separately, give [them] food separately and behave differently [towards them] during menstruation. However, nowadays the situation is better. They don't give them permission to enter into the temple but allow them to stay together in the home. In the past, people used to think they had committed a sin if they touched menstruating girls/women but now this thinking has been lost and everyone's frank. In the past during menstruation, daughters used to stay far away from their fathers but now they stay, talk and eat together with their fathers and other family members" (Discussion with older brother and a mother about how family relationships have changed).

OBSERVATION

Child and youth participation in the ASRH program, and the related community discussions, have increased equity and reduced the marginalisation of women and girls during menstruation. It has also promoted the inclusion of more people in community development.

"Because they are no longer afraid to talk; they do not walk away and they are not afraid to walk in public during their periods. Instead they are more independent which in turn has helped the community." (Mother)

Setting development priorities

Two examples of how children and youth contributed to setting development priorities were provided by children and youth. After participating in ASRH training, children were invited to join the Village Development Committee (VDC) planning meeting:

"I was invited to join the planning meeting at VDC. Adults were talking about using the budget allocated for women and children for road construction. I disagreed. One person told me, 'children also walk on the road; it's therefore okay to invest children's budget in the road.' I said that the child-centred budget should be allocated to children. Children should be able to utilise the budget that comes for them. In the end, we claimed the budget. The budget is yet to come but we have it." (Female, 15)

This example also links to personal development (described above), given the confidence gained by children and youth in their participation in the initial activity. Another example of participation in setting development priorities was provided by a young male:

"Women are successful because they have become free and they get involved in developmental works. Before, grandfather did not allow different programs; now he does." (Male, 14)

The adults involved in the research didn't provide any examples of changes linked to children and youth setting development priorities.



OBSERVATION

Following their participation in the ASRH training, women and girls have had increased opportunities to participate in community decision-making.

How children and youth described their contribution to the development activities and related changes

To go deeper into the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness, the researchers asked children and youth to explore and discuss their roles in making the changes happen. They were asked to describe the type of participation they engaged in during the development activities which brought about the changes. Children and youth made judgements about whether they participated as **beneficiaries, partners or leaders**.

Most of the children and youth stated that they participated in the development activities as **partners**. For example:

"We have done things together. Not everyone knows everything. Small children take part in

programs and provide suggestions to the elders. The elders listen." (Male, 14)

"If only children lead, that will not make all things successful; if only adults lead some things will not be successful; the two working together will be successful." (Female, 16)

Some shared that they participated as **leaders** and none of the children and youth said they participated as **beneficiaries**. Children and youth acting as leaders was seen when child club members conducted a class on ASRH in school, after participating in the ASRH training. They did so to share the lessons they had learned more widely with their other peers:

"In our community, after receiving training students have taught their family members and they have changed together." (Male, 17)

"Children can learn quicker than parents. Children then teach their parents about their learning from different training. My mother also attended the ASRH training. She did not understand everything. After returning from the training I explained to my mother about how to help my sister during her period." (Male, 14)

All the children and youth agreed that children and youth made their most important contributions as **partners**.

OBSERVATION

Children and youth participated in development activities and community change as partners. This approach of working together with adults was most valued by children and youth.

"We could not have brought about that change alone. We learned from our teacher and Prayas. When we went to raise awareness among our family we were supported by them. Our families have changed now." (Female, 15)

How adults described the contribution of children and youth to the development activities and related changes

Adults were also asked to describe the type of child and youth participation in the development activities that they had witnessed. When

asked to choose whether children and youth participated as beneficiaries, partners or leaders, all the adults reported that the children and youth contributed as **leaders**. For example:

"Children took the initiative to share the message with the parents. They increased awareness about the use of sanitary pads, good washing of used cotton cloths [during menstruation] and drying them in the sun." (no source)

"Children have shared about ASRH in leisure periods with their friends, where each took the role of explaining the content to the class." (Male, NGO staff)

"My sisters talk about their problems with friends. They are more confident and have raised awareness within the family." (Male, brother)

Interestingly, adults said that children and youth made their most valuable contributions as **leaders** in development activities.

OBSERVATION

Adults saw the role of children and youth in the development activities and community change as one of leadership. Adults valued children and youth as leaders and active change agents in development.





6

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This Learning Paper described field-based research that explored the link between child and youth participation and development effectiveness in Fiji, Laos and Nepal.

This research found that strong links exist between child and youth participation and development effectiveness

This research provides evidence that children and youth participation can make a very valuable contribution to development effectiveness if the participation is done well. The case studies showed how changes described by research participants (both children and youth and adults) linked to the development effectiveness characteristics defined for the research. This fills a research gap and provides empirical evidence that firmly supports the practice of child and youth participation in development.

The research demonstrated that positive changes are experienced by children and youth as a result of their participation in development activities. It also showed how children and youth were able to contribute to positive changes to relationships within the family and in the wider community. Numerous examples of shifts in relationships were described by children, youth and adults. They included peer (child-to-child, youth-to-youth) changes, and child-to-adult or youth-to-adult changes and adult-to-adult relationships shifts.

The research demonstrated how child and youth participation in development projects can bring about far-reaching and interconnected changes. In all three countries, changes linked to the development characteristic of child and youth personal development triggered a broader set of changes in families and the wider community that were linked to the other development effectiveness characteristics. In Fiji, this was evident in all the case studies where personal development contributed to a range of positive socio-economic changes. These socio-economic changes triggered flow-on changes, including positive shifts in relationships between youth and their families. In combination, the changes that children and youth underwent increased their ability to effect positive change in their communities

This research provided firm evidence that when children and youth participate in development projects, they can help communities to learn more about, and respect, child rights.

The research provided examples of adults and community members listening to and considering children's and youths' voices, and showed how this could lead to better community collaboration and social cohesion. The changes that children, youth and adults described in the research included increased access to education through improved attendance at school. The research also found that projects which involved children and youth improved community knowledge about health promotion, and improved health and sanitation behaviours within communities. Examples of peer education, increased respect and support, and an increase in collective action were also described by children, youth and adults.

The children and youth involved in this research increased their skills, knowledge, interpersonal communication and self-confidence through their involvement in development projects. These changes were described by the research participants as having an effect on those around them. Their peers and the adults in their communities joined with them as partners to make positive changes in their family and community life, and in some cases contributed to changes at the provincial level.

The research provided evidence that the changes that happened because of child and youth participation matched with the three NGOs' stated development project outcomes.

This affirmed that the in-country partners had sound programming practices and suggests that it is useful to ensure that the project objectives align with the five development effectiveness characteristics.

The research provided evidence that child and youth participation in research is valued by participants and researchers, young and old, though it requires dedicated support and good research skills.

Meaningful ways to use the evidence and findings of this research

The evidence and findings of this research could be used in important and meaningful ways, including:

1. Include child and youth participation in monitoring and evaluation frameworks: Monitoring and evaluation frameworks could include outcome indicators relevant to development effectiveness (similar to the illustrated Change Cards and the Development Effectiveness Mapping Tool used in this research) to assess the contributions made by child and youth participation to the different characteristics of development effectiveness. This will provide an opportunity to document, share and celebrate the positive transformations that can be achieved through child and youth participation. These outcome indicators could also be used to assess how well an organisation is doing in their practice of child and youth participation more generally.

2. Use the research change story approach in project monitoring and evaluation: The change story approach used in this research is very useful for project-level monitoring and evaluation. Asking young people to describe changes they've experienced, and then to choose by vote a few change stories to explore more deeply with the wider community, is an effective qualitative data collection approach. In this research we learnt that speaking with other members in the community about the changes identified by children and youth can add an extra layer of detail and give additional perspectives. This process can confirm what changes have happened and add to the changes documented. The learning circles and the participative change story activities facilitated with children and youth in this research were largely enjoyed by the children and youth, and can be used and modified for future monitoring and evaluation.

3. Use research findings to advocate for the importance of child rights and child participation for increased accountability with duty bearers: Development practitioners could use the findings from this research to advocate for increased accountability of different stakeholders in communities to uphold child rights and particularly child and youth participation (Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child). Specifically, stakeholders in Nepal, Fiji and Laos could use the change stories generated by this research to celebrate the value of child participation and advocate to others locally, nationally and regionally to provide opportunities for child and youth participation. This would provide opportunities to achieve the realisation of child rights, and ensure duty bearers uphold their responsibility to ensure child participation.

4. Use the research findings to advocate about the value of (and funding for) child and youth participation in development programs as their participation has proven links to development effectiveness: The research findings prove there are links between child and youth participation and development effectiveness, or in other words, good development outcomes. The research findings provide an evidence base for NGOs to advocate to donors, governments and other NGOs about the value and contribution of child and youth participation to development effectiveness. The findings can be used to encourage investment in projects that involve child and youth participation as a means of achieving positive development changes.



7

ANNEXES

Additional country context details

Laos:

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos) is a landlocked country located in Asia bordering Vietnam, China, Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar. Laos is a one-party socialist republic which gained independence as a constitutional monarchy in 1953. Laos has a population of 6.77 million and is ranked 141 out of 188 countries on the UNDP's 2015 Human Development Index. Poverty levels are relatively high, with 30% of the population living below the income poverty line (USD\$1.25/day). Life expectancy at birth is 66.2 and expected years of schooling is 10.6 years.



Research locations:

The three research communities (Paka, Dindam and Houayzouang) are located in Nonghet District, a rural and mountainous area. Nonghet is 120km from Phonsavan, a small town which is the capital of Xieng Khouang Province (North-East of Laos). ChildFund Laos (the representative office of ChildFund Australia) has chosen to work in this district as it is considered not only one of the three poorest districts in Xieng Khouang Province, but also one of the poorest districts in all of Laos.

Dindam Village is 14 km from Nonghet, the district capital. Dindam Village has a population of 300 (consisting of 60 families). The only ethnic group in the village is the Khmu people. There is a primary school in Dindam village but no health clinic. There is piped water for communal use, and some houses have direct piped water access to their homes.

Paka Village is located 7 km from the district capital. Paka Village has a population of 423, all belonging to the Hmong ethnic minority. Paka Village has a primary school but no health clinic. People in Paka have access to communal water, and some houses have piped water access.

Houayzouang Village is 33 km from the capital and has a population of 369, consisting of 65 families, all belonging to the Hmong ethnic minority. Houayzouang Village has a primary school but no health clinic. People in Houayzouang have access to communal water, and some houses have piped water access.

About the people:

The populations of ChildFund Laos' target villages belong predominantly to the Khmu and Hmong ethnic groups. The total population of Nonghet district is 36,753 (2007) with 65% being Hmong.

Despite their high population in Nonghet, Hmong are particularly vulnerable and often excluded from development opportunities because of a range of factors including language barriers. Human development indicators for ethnic minority groups tend to be worse than for the dominant Lao-Tai ethnic group, particularly in the areas of education, literacy, child malnutrition and poverty

About the in-country partner NGO:

ChildFund Laos is the representative office of ChildFund Australia in Laos. ChildFund began work in Laos in 2010, implementing community development programs in Xieng Khouang Province, one of the poorest areas in the country. ChildFund Laos has a strong focus on improving access to quality education, and is expanding its work to include pre-primary education to ensure that children get the best possible start in life.

In partnership with communities, ChildFund Laos has also established projects to improve water, sanitation and hygiene, mother and child health, and food security and nutrition, and to provide opportunities for children and youth to participate in local decision-making. ChildFund Laos has a strong focus on protection, child rights and developing life-skills through tools including sport and multimedia. ChildFund Laos has recently begun work in Vientiane, the capital, in response to the increasing risks facing children in urban areas.

Child and youth participation activities:

Dindam Village:

- Children and youth join three Child Clubs: Child Protection, Green, and Information
- Child Clubs involve training in different skills depending on the club, e.g. media, child rights, respect for the environment, drama.
- Children raise awareness in the community through drama, and they make videos on different cultural events.
- Children monitor their own activities

The activity objectives are:

- To increase the capacity of communities, with a focus on children and youth, to understand child protection issues and duty bearers' obligations
- To increase opportunities for child- and youth-led initiatives and life-skills development
- To effectively monitor and evaluate project initiatives, and record and publish findings and recommendations.

Paka Village:

- The Pass it Back activity involves youth selected as coaches to become specialised trainers in one of six areas: 1) tag rugby coaching, 2) tag rugby refereeing, 3) first-aid, 4) administration and event management, 5) life-skills education and 6) monitoring and evaluation
- The program includes a life-skills and rugby curriculum

Pass it Back has the following aims and objectives:

Aim: To build the resilience and leadership skills of young people in the region, enabling them to overcome evolving challenges in their own lives and to "pass it back" to others in their communities whilst building a sustainable model for positive change

The objectives of "Pass it Back" are:

- To develop a framework for a regional Sport for Development initiative to promote gender equality and sustainable economic empowerment for girls, boys, young women and men
- To develop a group of young coaches who are role models in Laos and Vietnam who promote gender equality and sustainable economic empowerment through sport

- To build sports and life-skills in children and youth that promote gender equality and sustainable economic empowerment.
- To evaluate and develop the framework for replication and scale.

Houayzouang Village:

- The Global Community activity involves the youth volunteering to be 'ambassadors' of their community.
- They undergo capacity building training (use of media, monitoring, interview skills etc.).
- They create videos (filming and editing) around cultural events and issues facing their village.
- They discuss with supporters, through the ChildFund Global Community Officer, some solutions to implement.

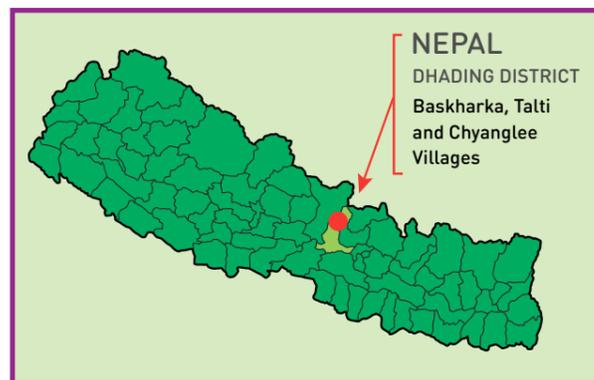
The aim and objective of the Global Community activity are:

Aim: To develop a two-way communication mechanism that builds knowledge and solidarity across communities in Laos and Australia (and potentially beyond), whilst successfully generating revenue for ChildFund Laos programs

Objective: To ensure that the engagement of both communities and supporters leads to development education.

Nepal:

Nepal is a landlocked country located in Asia bordering India and China. Nepal became a Federal Democratic Republic in 2008, when the 240-year-old monarchy was abolished. Nepal has a population of 27.8 million, and is ranked 145 out of 188 countries on the UNDP's 2015 Human Development Index. Life expectancy at birth for Nepalese is 69.6 and expected years of schooling is 12.4 years.



The earthquakes of 2015 affected many lives in the villages of Nepal. Nearly 9,000 lives were lost and 22,000 people were injured. Thousands of houses were destroyed and some villages were flattened, rendering hundreds of thousands of people homeless. The earthquake severely affected the country, with one million people pushed below the poverty line, increasing the overall poverty levels by 2.5-3.5%.

The earthquake affected the locations where this research took place. Water has been the most urgent need of the people in Pida. This has mostly affected women and children, given their responsibilities for providing water for their families. School buildings were damaged from the earthquake and the community are repairing cracked buildings and constructing new buildings for classrooms. After the earthquake, United Mission to Nepal (UMN – the local NGO) together with Transform Aid International (TAI) and other donors have been working to provide support by raising the number of skilled constructors and building temporary classrooms. Road widening has been undertaken in Baskharka, with support from the UMN, and in Pida with support from the government.

About the people:

The populations of UMN's programs include all people in the communities, which are made up of multiple ethnic groups. The first priority is given to the ethnic minority groups of Chepang, Dalit, Tamang, Gurung and Magar.

Traditional views amongst the Nepalese ethnic minorities participating in this research (in Chyanglee and Talti Villages) on women's menstruation were that it was a sinful time for women and girls. During menstruation, women and girls are forced to sleep and eat outside. This context is important given the specific activities undertaken by the local NGO.

Research locations:

UMNs activities are undertaken in Dhading District, in central Nepal. The three villages where research took place were: Baskharka, Talti and Chyanglee.

Baskharka is 35 km from Gajuri (the local market) and 57 km from Dhading Besi (the district capital). The population of Baskharka is approximately 640, with only the Tamang ethnic group living in the village. Baskharka Lower Secondary School is the only school in the village. Children study up to grade eight. From grade nine onwards the students either enrol in Dol Bhanjyang school in Pinda or another school in Gajuri. There is no health clinic in the village, hence they have to travel to Chyanglee or to Gajuri which takes 3-6 hours by foot. There is no piped water in the village.

Talti is 17 km from Malekhu (the local market) and 36 km from Dhading Besi. The population is approximately 1700 in Talti Village, which has different ethnic groups including Tamang, Chepang, Magar and Gurung. Talti has a secondary school (Pipal Bhanjyang) and other primary schools, as well as a local health clinic. There is no systematic piped water to all houses, however some houses have access to piped water. This lack of ready access to piped water has implications for menstrual hygiene and women's privacy, and is likely a challenging issue for women and girls in Talti Village.

Chyanglee is 17 km from Adhamghat (the local market) and 42 km from Dhading Besi. The road to Chyanglee is usable in the dry season, but gets muddy and inaccessible in the wet season (from June to September). The population of Chyanglee is approximately 550, with people from different ethnic groups (Tamang, Magar, Chepang etc.). Chyanglee has a higher secondary school (Dol Bhanjyang) and a health post. There is no piped water in the village.

About the in-country NGO and partners:

United Mission to Nepal (UMN) strives to address the root causes of poverty as it serves the people of Nepal in the name and spirit of Jesus Christ. Established in 1954, UMN is a cooperative effort between the people of Nepal and a large number of Christian organisations from nearly 20 countries on four continents. Multicultural teams of Nepali nationals and volunteer expatriate staff work alongside local organisations in less developed areas of the country, building partnerships that lead to healthy, strong and empowered individuals, families and communities.

UMN has a local partner, Prayas Nepal in Dhading District, so UMN and Prayas jointly implement project activities in the communities. Prayas Nepal has recruited social mobilisers and supervisors who stay in the villages and work closely with schools, child clubs, women's groups (self-reliance groups), cooperatives and local stakeholders such as Village Development Committees, and Village Child Protection Committees. UMN has a cluster office and a project officer in the district which ensures planning and effective implementation of project activities.

Child and youth participation activities:

UNM leads the Child Centred Community Development Program (CCCDP) which involves forming Child Clubs in schools and communities. Children meet monthly, discuss different issues and plan accordingly. They organise different activities and also participate in activities organised by other clubs or stakeholders (e.g. school self-assessment). Children are also involved in different forums or committees such as village child protection committees and child club networks.

More specifically, the activities in each village involved in this research are:

Chyanglee and Talti Villages:

- Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Training. This aims to strengthen community knowledge, skills, resources for acquiring quality health, sanitation, nutrition and lifesaving options for families and children.

Baskarkha Village:

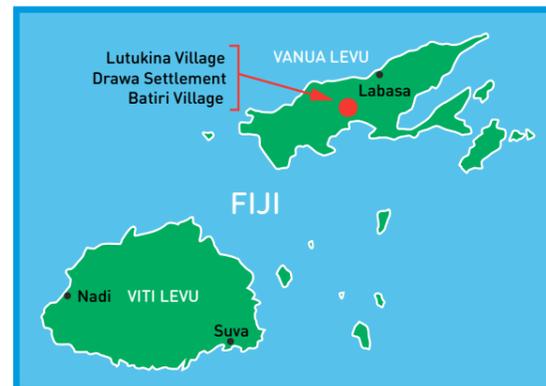
- Children participated in a quiz competition. This aimed to strengthen community awareness on child rights and non-discrimination.
- The competition also provided an opportunity for children to express their opinions and make decisions in accordance with their development abilities.

Both the quiz and ASRH activities come under the Child Centred Community Development Program (CCCDP).

The overall program aim is to create: enabled communities, where children are heard, protected, given opportunities for their development free from any type of discrimination (gender, caste etc.) and threats to survival, and where they are able to attain their full potential.

Fiji:

Fiji is located in the Pacific and is made up of 332 islands, 106 of which are inhabited. Viti Levu and Vanua Levu are the biggest islands, accounting for approximately 75% of the total land area. Fiji has a population of approximately 881,000, and is ranked 90 out of 188 countries on the UNDP's 2015 Human Development Index. Nearly 6% of the population lives below the income poverty line (USD\$1.25/day). Life expectancy at birth is 70 and expected years of schooling is 15.7 years.



There have been environmental challenges within the last two years in Fiji. In February 2016, Fiji experienced category 5 Tropical Cyclone Winston that devastated the whole of Fiji. Although the three target communities sat outside the high-damage-intensity zone, most of their root crops, food and livelihood sources were damaged. The country has also been affected by El Nino, meaning limited rain to sustain local crops.

The villages participating in the research have also faced economic challenges in recent times. The majority of members of the target communities have had to leave their villages/homes to seek casual jobs in sugar cane areas. This seasonal rural-to-urban drift of much of the adult and youth

population caused a lower than expected participation rate for the research. It is worth noting that female participation in the research was not as high as male participation. This is also reflective of their participation in the projects. Their lower participation is largely due to the work opportunities for many females in their late teenage years being located away from the villages especially Monday to Friday.

About the people:

The populations of villages participating in this research consisted of indigenous Fijians (iTaukei). The Fiji traditional system is a patrilineal society. In some cases male dominance during group discussions or activities is evident. However, due to the structure of the research process, it was possible to gain collective perspectives from women, youth and men on child and youth participation. It is important to note that culturally in Fiji, youth are considered youth until they are married. As such in the research Fijian youth ages spanned 16 years up to around 35 years.

Research locations:

Target communities for this research are located in the villages of Lutukina, Drawa and Batiri on the island of Vanua Levu.

Lutukina Village is located approximately 48 km south-west of Labasa (Vanua Levu's largest town) in Macuata Province. It has 27 households and approximately 145 people, consisting only of indigenous Fijians or iTaukei. There is a primary school located near Lutukina Village called Lutukina District School. Children from nearby villages such as Drawa Settlement and others attend the school. There is no health clinic in the village but some members of Lutukina Village have undergone emergency first aid training. The nearest health centre is located in Dreketi, approximately 11.5 km north-west of the village. There is piped water in the village, but during dry periods Lutukina Village faces water scarcity. People of Lutukina have little option but to revert to drinking and using the river water which is not ideal for drinking as it may be contaminated from settlements and livestock farms located up-river. About two-thirds of the houses have piped water, with the remainder relying on those who do have access to piped water.

Drawa Settlement is about 48 km south-west from Labasa Town in Cakaudrove Province on Vanua Levu island. It is a small settlement that has about nine households with approximately 60 people. Drawa Settlement consists only of indigenous Fijians or iTaukei. There is no school in the village, but there is a primary school located in the nearby village of Lutukina. There is no health clinic in the village but some members of Drawa have undergone emergency first aid training. The nearest health centre is located in Dreketi about 14 km away, around one hour's travel by a four-wheel drive vehicle due to the rough terrain. Drawa Settlement has piped water for communal use which is sourced from a spring near the village. The majority of the houses have access to piped water with only a couple of houses having to share piped water with their neighbours.

Batiri Village is about 41 km south-west from Labasa town in Cakaudrove Province, on Vanua Levu island. Batiri consists only of indigenous Fijians or iTaukei. There are schools located near Batiri village. East of the village along the main highway about five minutes' drive, is Batirilagi Primary School. West of the village along the main highway about 10 minutes' drive, is Ahmadiyya Secondary School. There is no health clinic in the village but some members of Batiri Village have undergone emergency first aid training. The nearest health centre is located in Seqaqa about 40 minutes' drive along the highway. Batiri Village was recently connected to a water supply from the main government reservoir in Seqaqa. About two-thirds of the village has access to water pipes because they are able to pay for water pipes and water meter installation. The other households are still saving up to pay for the installation fees.

About the in-country NGO partner:

Live & Learn Environmental Education (LLEE) Fiji was incorporated under the Charitable Trusts Act in 1999 as a local non-government organisation, and has been delivering environmental and sustainable development projects in Fiji since 2001. LLEE Fiji has a strong track record and well-established networks and partnerships with government, other development organisations and communities.

Since established, LLEE Fiji has implemented a broad range of sustainable development projects within sectors including environment, water, sanitation and hygiene, governance and democracy, education and forestry. Currently, LLEE Fiji has around 20 staff. LLEE's mission is to educate, mobilise communities and facilitate supportive partnerships in order to foster a greater understanding of sustainability, and to help move towards a sustainable future.

Child and youth participation activities:

Drawa Settlement and Batiri Village:

- Youth participated in the program called 'Pilot effective models for governance and implementation of *REDD in Small Islands Developing States to provide equitable benefits for forest dependent local and indigenous people*'
- The REDD+ Project (EU funded) has been active since 2010, focusing on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and fostering conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
- The project involved participation of all community members i.e. clan (mataqali) members and 'forest-dependent-locals' to protect the forest.
- Youth participated in the following activities:
 - Consultations and participatory trainings
 - GPS mapping of farm lands with the forest protection zones
 - Setting up a steering committee to formulate a cooperative business that is currently operational. The cooperative's main objective is forest conservation with income that is to be sourced from carbon trading.

Project aim: Pilot effective models for governance and implementation of REDD in Small Island Developing States to provide equitable benefits for forest dependent local & indigenous people.

High level objectives:

1. Develop local capacity and mobilise communities
2. Pilot REDD projects owned by forest-dependent local and indigenous people
3. Draw from practical local level experience and seek to influence national, regional and international policy responses
4. Demonstrate a practical mechanism to reverse negative trends in degradation and deforestation

Lutukina Village:

- Youth participated in the program entitled 'Rural Bee Keeping Livelihoods Project'
- the program is running for three years (2015 – 2018) and is funded by NZAID

- The main beneficiaries are women and youth, however, in a Fijian iTaukei society, all works undertaken with the community are communally operated and as such the involvement of men and male leaders is also encouraged.
- Youth participated in the following activities:
 - Beekeeping husbandry trainings
 - Beekeeping practical and monitoring
 - Beekeeping business plan development
 - Consultations and participatory trainings with LLEE.
 - The beekeeping project works in partnership with multiple groups: the Fiji Government (Ministry of Agriculture, Dept. of Cooperatives, Integrated Human Resource Development Program); commercial honey suppliers and community members of the target community.

Project aim: To reduce poverty, and increase economic participation and food security in rural and remote Fiji.

Overall desired outcome: Sustained increase in number of women and youth undertaking entrepreneurial agribusiness (through beekeeping) in Vanua Levu, Fiji.

Additional methodology details

Research participants

The age ranges for children and youth varied between the three contexts to suit local definitions. A gender breakdown of the numbers of girls and boys, women and men participating in the research is provided below.

Case study location	Child and youth participants		Adult participants	
	Girls	Boys	Men	Women
Fiji	7 (Choosing your story)	16 (Choosing your story)	13	2
	8 (Exploring your story)	15 (Exploring your story)		
Laos	18 (Choosing your story)	16 (Choosing your story)	7	11
	15 (Exploring your story)	11 (Exploring your story)		
Nepal	19 (Choosing your story)	6 (Choosing your story)	4	6
	15 (Exploring your story)	4 (Exploring your story)		

Program activities in research sites

While most activities identified by children and youth related to the projects described in Table 3, some additional activities were also described. For example in Fiji, youth were also involved in river care. In Laos, children were also involved in disaster risk reduction awareness raising; International Children's Day (dancing and role plays); video making and editing and a young writers' club. In Nepal, children were involved in an awareness rally against the use of pesticides; Street Drama against Child Marriage and the 16 days Campaign on Violence Against Women. These projects came up as stories shared using Tool 1 before one focal story was chosen by children and youth for further exploration.

Ethical research

Engaging in ethical research with children presents a number of challenges (e.g. informed consent and the developmental age of the child participants) and as such, research activities were informed by ethical research practice. At the outset of the research, the ANGO partnership, ISF and the PRG collectively developed 'Guidelines for Ethical Research' which provided principles, practical steps and an ethical research checklist to guide researchers through the conduct of ethical research with children and youth.

Beginning in Phase 1 of the research, in-country partners documented how they would ensure ethical practices through the research process, including ensuring appropriate informed consent from research participants. Appropriate methods were developed for children and youth which ensured equitable opportunities to participate in the research. Research activities were informed by the ACFID and the Research for Development Impact (RDI) Network Principles and Guidelines for

Ethical Research and Evaluation in Development. Based on the experience of Phase 1, guidance to carry out ethical research was included in training workshops for in-country researchers.

Child rights-based approach to research

The research partners sought to apply a child rights-based approach to the research, in particular through respecting Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Article 12 is focused on children and youth expressing their views, having the right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, and ensuring that their views are given due weight. This research is centred around the opinions and expressions of children and youth.

The research approach of storytelling, learning circles, games and group discussions was developed to encourage children and youth to express themselves freely and comfortably. Child friendly ethical practice tools were also developed to support researchers in working with children and youth.

Although the research partners aimed to include children and youth in the design of the research itself, due to timeframe and budget constraints this was not possible. However, youth were involved as researchers and were responsible for running the learning circles in several of the research sites.

Direct quotes have been used as much as possible in presenting the data to give the voice of the children and youth due weight and to reduce the risk of misinterpretation.

In addition to research partners and PRG members who specialise in child and youth programming, the research partners in Australia received training from a child rights consultant during the design phase of the research project. Following this the Lundy (2007) model was applied to the research. See also Section 3.

Also noted are limitations within the research and opportunities to strengthen child rights within future research activities.

Research limitations

Research limitations are inherent in any research project, and as is standard practice, they were identified by the research partnership and addressed as well as possible. Limitations included:

Aiming for child-led research: Phase 1 noted that children's participation from project inception can lead to multiple benefits to their wellbeing.²⁰ In Phase 2, the research partnership ensured greater participation of children and youth. This resulted in children identifying the focus of the research (Choosing Your Story) and linking the individual stories of change to the development effectiveness characteristics. Whilst efforts were made to promote child-led research, the research partners recognise the limitation that children and youth were not involved in the conception and design of the research.

Translation challenges: Research activities and data collection were undertaken in local languages. Data therefore required translation into English which was not only time-consuming, but also a challenge in conveying appropriate contextual factors that only exist within specific languages. This limitation was minimised by in-country researchers providing additional explanations of translated materials where required.

20. Hinton, R. (2008) *Children's participation and good governance: limitations of the theoretical literature*. International Journal of Children's Rights, 16: 285-300.

Skills and capacity of in-country researchers: In some cases, limited skills and capacity challenges were acknowledged by the research partnership. This was addressed through the development of user-friendly data collection methods and tools, including providing guidance materials and note-taking templates.

Attribution of change: The inherent difficulty of proving causality in qualitative research is a common challenge for researchers. The research partnership sought to overcome this by focusing on unprompted/ open-ended questions. This allowed participants to identify a range of changes resulting from child and youth participation. The in-depth approach also provided an opportunity to strengthen research learnings about how child and youth participation contributed to change.

Layers of analysis: Data analysis occurred in stages (see Figure 7). This staged approach has some potential for data to become dislocated from its original context and lose meaning. This was overcome by providing guidance to ensure that raw data (quotes from research participants) was used to respond to the research question in the early stages of analysis. Furthermore, the research partnership considered the staged analysis approach as a strength, as it ensured in-country researchers were the first to make sense of the learnings and situate them appropriately.

Positive and negative changes: All changes reported within the research were positive changes resulting from child and youth participation. The research asked open-ended questions, rather than specifically asking for positive and negative changes. Whilst all changes reported were positive, this may not provide a complete picture of development, where change in relationships, social norms and practices are not simply a result of 'cause and effect', and nor are they necessarily positive for all actors in a community.

Inconsistent note-taking methods: As the research was conducted in 3 different locations in 3 different countries with a variety of people taking notes there were some inconsistencies in what was recorded. Some note-takers recorded the age and gender of each research participant next to their quote, others simply recorded the gender or the age or if they were a child, youth or adult. Despite researcher trainers encouraging note-takers to record both age and gender the note-taking still was inconsistent. This Learning Paper presents the quotes, and the details of the research participant who made the comment, as it was recorded in the field.

Example of analysis for Learning Area 2: Fiji

Table 7: Fiji links between program outcomes (for REDD project) and changes resulting from child and youth participation which were described as part of Learning Area 1.

Program outcomes	Ranking	In-country partner defined evidence of links
<p>Outcome 1: Assess local understanding of climate change and REDD. Educational activities will address knowledge gaps, and build upon local strengths and capacity to develop an inclusive and enabling environment for forest-dependent local and indigenous people to participate and benefit from REDD.</p>	4	<p>Development of local capacity to participate and benefit from REDD, through enhanced education and knowledge and mobilisation of communities to care for the environment.</p> <p>Through family participation in trainings, community members have broadened their understanding of forest conservation and refrained from commercially logging their forest.</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Establish innovative and experimental pilot REDD+ projects managed by community cooperatives. Activities will be implemented through an adaptive 'action research' approach to build capacity of forest-dependent local and indigenous people in governance, planning and financial management of REDD+ projects.</p>	4	<p>Capacity is being built in forest governance, planning and management.</p> <p>There is growing cooperation within the community to manage local forests.</p> <p>Youth and also the broader community are active in developing community plans</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Ensure that economic incentives for forest protection lead to practical and sustainable social, economic and environmental outcomes for local people. The activities will target financial management, investment in sustainable development, and avoidance of potential negative social and cultural impacts from economic growth. This component is of particular importance to ensure that economic incentives lead to sustainable development and to poverty alleviation, and support achievement of the MDGs. Sustaining long term local social and economic benefits is also central to ensure permanence of forest areas protected for REDD.</p>	3	<p>So far, the project has collected baseline data in 2015. 'Carbon Trading' levels have not been reached yet. Therefore it is difficult to measure the socio-economic impacts of incentives from the REDD project.</p> <p>The project is yet to fully realise its economic benefits (due to the time it takes to register for carbon credits and for income to start flowing).</p> <p>At this time there is community commitment to protect the forest resources, which is essential to secure carbon trading.</p>

Program outcomes	Ranking	In-country partner defined evidence of links
<p>Outcome 4: Draw from practical local level experience and seek to contribute to national, regional and international policy responses to REDD+, with particular emphasis on enabling equitable participation and flow of benefits to forest-dependent local and indigenous people.</p> <p>The communication strategy will foster cross border collaboration between government departments, development organisations, conservation organisations and research institutions on development of REDD+ policy mechanisms and support systems.</p>	3	<p>The project is not yet at a stage to fully contribute to national, regional and international policy responses to REDD, in part because carbon-trading arrangements are not yet in place. Requirements to meet eligibility for carbon trading at an international level, as advised by Fiji's Department of Forests, are not yet met.</p>

