

# Youth Education Pack DR Congo

*An Evaluation Study - 2014*

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## **Abstract**

The following report presents an overview of youth's needs in the areas of NRC's youth programming, assesses the appropriateness of its Youth Education Pack and highlights some of its outcomes. Some key findings have been drawn and recommendations are made to enhance NRC's approach in enabling youth's integration into Congolese society. The views presented in this evaluation are the author's alone and do not necessarily represent the views of NRC.

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

COLEMA	Collectif Lève-Toi et Marche
CF	Congolese Franc
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection Department
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EPSP	Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Professional Education (Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel)
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
GNK	Grand North Kivu
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGA	Income Generating Activity
ISSS	International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PNK	Petit North Kivu
PRM	United States Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SK	South Kivu
TLS	Temporary Learning Space
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YEP	Youth Education Pack

# 1. Executive Summary

The following study was commissioned by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and funded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) under the Dutch government's support to the stabilization process in eastern DRC. It was undertaken in November 2014 through field visits to Masisi in North Kivu, and Bunyakiri and Kitutu in South Kivu. The study aimed to understand: 1) the relevance of the Youth Education Pack (YEP) by exploring the needs of youth and the support necessary for them to become productive, contributing members of their society; 2) the appropriateness of YEP by examining which of the needs the traditional YEP addresses and how well it does so and; 3) the effectiveness of YEP by assessing how well these needs have actually been met and what broader outcomes have been achieved. Research methodology included key informant interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions. The following are some of the key findings and recommendations.

## Findings

The following key findings were found in relation to the relevance of YEP:

- Due to conflict and poverty, limited structures are in place to integrate youth into society in a meaningful way. Their education has been undercut by factors such as the inability to pay school fees, displacement, participation in armed groups or a combination of these. In addition, there are very few employment opportunities and agriculture, in its current status, is not seen as a viable solution to youth unemployment. Last of all, there are limited recreational spaces for youth.
- Given these circumstances, youth become marginalized and are pushed into practicing harmful behaviors for society at large as well as for their own lives and future such as: theft, prostitution, abuse of illegal substances and participation in armed groups.
- Some factors within the broader environment are not conducive for youth: association of youth with armed groups and ensuing discrimination and reduction of freedom to associate amongst themselves, discrimination because of one's past, and, specifically in Bunyakiri, a high level of trauma.
- The traditional YEP is relevant to the needs of youth as it provides free education which includes basic numeracy and literacy, vocational skills, and life skills to the most vulnerable that need to be integrated into society. It also offers support for their re-insertion into the labor market.
- By providing youth with a meaningful activity aimed towards their integration into society, YEP provides them an alternative to the negative lifestyles they are currently engaged in. This has been seen to reduce negative behaviors in the community such as thefts and prostitution.

Regarding the appropriateness; the following key findings were drawn:

- The YEP “light” approach<sup>1</sup> was appropriate in providing protection for youth in the context of emergency but does not seem appropriate enough for their integration into society as productive members. This should be considered if NRC plans to implement this model outside of emergency situations.
- It is unclear as to whether both the traditional and the “light” YEP approaches can be sustained by implementing partners once NRC exits from the project. Currently, it appears that local partners and the Ministry of Youth and Social affairs are unable to guarantee the continuation of free training.
- The pedagogical effectiveness of the vocational training within the traditional YEP could be questioned, as students receive much theoretical knowledge but not enough practice.
- During the ongoing traditional YEP training, many youth struggle to support their families as the foreseen benefits are more long-term and no assistance is given to the families during the training period.
- The support and follow-up youth receive when they are re-inserted through working groups are seen as limited.
- Broader issues that affect youth such as their association with armed groups or the large number of traumatized youth in Bunyakiri are not addressed on a larger scale.

Findings regarding the effectiveness of the YEP program are as follows:

- There is an indicative estimate of 65% of youth being successfully re-inserted in Kitutu. Among the youth who do manage such success, incomes have increased.
- Youth with increased income (in some cases absolute) are able to take care of personal needs with greater ease, and those with children are able to pay for expenses such as health care and education. They are likewise able to invest in housing or other income generating activities (IGA) and help their families.
- Youth are no longer a burden to parents, they contribute to the community with necessary goods and services, and they have improved their social standing.

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<sup>1</sup> As will be highlighted in the introduction, NRC has piloted in Masisi a modified version of the traditional YEP. Instead of providing a formal, one year training for a limited amount of students, this approach offers a drop-in center for an unlimited amount of youth who would like to learn a skill. The center works for two hours in the afternoon and does not offer basic literacy, numeracy, life skills and a reinsertion kit. Instead it aims to train youth for simpler activities within a vocation.

## Recommendations

- As NRC plans to implement the YEP light approach in conjunction with the traditional model, its pedagogical effectiveness must be considered. A more structured approach must be in place to guarantee youth have adequate and sufficiently sequential time with tools, materials and teachers.
- In implementing YEP light<sup>2</sup>, if its purpose is not merely to increase skills of youth who are already engaged in the market, consider adapting it to facilitate entry of youth into work; particularly as its original design was primarily for protection and not reinsertion. Given the high number of youth and the high costs of providing tool kits, consider the approach of Lushebere that opened a small shop where youth learn in the market and gradually make an income.
- If local partners and government bodies such as the Ministry of Youth are unable to guarantee a free center for youth, perhaps an alternative model or approach to training youth should be considered in these contexts – unlike the case of Beni.<sup>3</sup>
- Consider ways to increase the level of practical skills youth gain at the center. The pedagogical effectiveness of the skills training at the YEP center should be studied, compared to traditional apprenticeships so as to evaluate in which scenario youth would learn a vocation more effectively.
- Consider some alternative models that can tackle the problem of sustainability, better equip youth with practical skills and allow them to meet their needs. One example has been suggested throughout the study: create self-sustaining shops where youth learn in the morning and advanced youth practice in the afternoon for an income, or vice versa.
- Consider partnership with stakeholders engaged in development projects that could assist in creation of employment for NRC-trained youth.
- Consider how to create a community environment that is conducive for youth. Perhaps this could be done by finding local partners who can help advocate with the community on the importance of integrating youth and not discriminating based on associations with armed groups.
- If feasible, consider implementing information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool to better monitor the working groups.
- Consider tracking the 35% of former YEP students who were not successfully re-inserted in Kitutu so as to be able to better understand how effective YEP has been, to get an overview of what these youth are currently doing and how they could have been better supported.

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1 for the difference between this approach and the traditional YEP.

<sup>3</sup> Due to time and security constraints, the project in the city of Beni could not be assessed. The project has large cooperatives instead of small working-groups. It seems that this helps with revenue to sustain the center. If so, this model should further explored.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Background of YEP DRC

While youth form a high proportion of the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo<sup>4</sup> and represent a large potential for the socio-economic development of the nation, current circumstances are unfavorable for their participation and contribution. In the formal labor market, 32.2% of youth are officially unemployed while if one takes into consideration the informal market, estimates suggest that 70% of youth are underemployed or unemployed.<sup>5</sup> Some of the barriers youth face in becoming productive members of society are: low levels of education, high levels of illiteracy, lack of relevant technical and life skills, lack of access to credit and limited professional mentoring.<sup>6</sup> These aspects can be tied to both the lack of relevance of educational opportunities but also to the low levels of participation in schooling. Estimates suggest that around 7.3 million of those between the age of 5 and 17 were out of school (52% girls) and 1.2 million of these were between 14-17 years (64% girls). Besides poverty and parents' inability to pay school fees, decades of conflict have also led many children, through displacement, increased vulnerability and association with armed groups, to constitute a large bulk of the currently unskilled youth labor force.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, the state could be considered as minimally involved in the plight of youth: lacking a national policy for the development of youth until 2009, having weak educational planning and provision of educational infrastructure, lack of adequate teacher salaries and limited or no control over the expansion of private provision.<sup>8</sup>

In eastern DRC, where conflict has been protracted, a recent study has noted that barriers youth face to pursuing educational opportunities include: school fees, poverty, insecurity, pregnancy, orphan-hood and their responsibility to support themselves and their family. The study suggested that while youth recognized the importance of skills training, literacy and numeracy, there was a lack of availability of non-formal education opportunities. It also noted that programs implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGO) had been either too brief, inadequate in their follow-up, or unable to provide sufficient capacity for youth to earn a living effectively.<sup>9</sup>

In recognition of the gap in the humanitarian response to the needs of youth (ages 15-24) in the Eastern part of DRC, the Norwegian Refugee Council has responded with both its traditional Youth Education Pack and a "light" version which has been recently piloted in the context of emergencies (2013). The former has been implemented since 2004-05 - when it was first piloted - in Grand North Kivu (GNK), Petit North Kivu (PNK) and South Kivu (SK). For the period of 2012-2014 it has been implemented in the cities of Goma (PNK) and Beni (GNK), and the towns of Kitutu, Baraka, Kando and Hombo Sud (SK). The

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<sup>4</sup>Estimates for 2010 suggested 33% of the population was between the ages of 10-24. UNFPA, Status Report: Youth Sub-Saharan Africa (2013), 40. Cited in: Youth Map, *Congolese Youth: Assets and Opportunities* (2013).

<sup>5</sup>African Development Bank, *2012 Africa Economic Outlook* (2012), 2. Cited in: Youth Map, *Congolese Youth: Assets and Opportunities* (2013).

<sup>6</sup>Youth Map, *Congolese Youth: Assets and Opportunities* (2013)

<sup>7</sup>Idem

<sup>8</sup>République Démocratique du Congo, *Politique nationale de la Jeunesse* (2009)

<sup>9</sup>Save The Children, *Gaps in accessing formal and non-formal education opportunities for youth in DRC* (2011).

“light” version has been piloted in the internally displaced person’s (IDP) camps of Lushebere and Bukombo in Masisi territory (PNK).

The traditional YEP approach is designed with the purpose of assisting conflict-affected youth who have had educational opportunities undercut and therefore lack the knowledge and skills necessary for the development of their livelihood and employment opportunities. It offers three main components: basic literacy and numeracy, life skills and vocational skills training. The vocations are chosen based on a market analysis undertaken in cooperation with youth. The life skills include, amongst others, health (illness prevention and hygiene), peace education, conflict resolution and civic education.

YEP additionally facilitates a one-month internship, offers business training and then organizes students into working groups; providing them with start-up kits and follow-up assistance to support their entry into the market.

The newly piloted approach is instead a “light” version that does not have the same 10-month cycle with formal classes from 8:00 to 16:00. It is envisioned instead as a drop-in center open to all the youth from the community who can come for two hours in the afternoon - from 16:00 to 18:00 - to learn some vocational skills. It does not offer the full package of basic numeracy and literacy, life skills, internship opportunities, start-up kits and the creation of working groups. YEP “light” was in fact envisioned as a way to protect youth during emergencies by providing a meaningful activity where they could also learn basic skills within a vocation.

In addition to the diversity of these approaches, during 2012-2014, YEP projects have been implemented through different donors, overall logical frameworks and within different contexts. The YEP “light” approach was piloted in Masisi as part of the broader European Commission’s Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO) funded *Supporting Education in Emergencies (EiE) for Children Affected by Conflict* Action. This aimed at strengthening access to quality education in emergencies for children and, in DRC, responded to the massive displacements caused by the escalation of violence in North Kivu in 2012. Against this backdrop, temporary learning spaces (TLS) were created to provide safe learning environments for children, recreational activities and host a light version of YEP.

In Bunyakiri, two traditional YEP centers are being implemented. One is financed by the Dutch government through the UNDP and the other by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). One center is part of the UNICEF-funded *Project to support an empowering & resilient environment for human development in the zone de santé of Bunyakiri* which is integrated into UNICEF’S *Child-Friendly Cities Initiative* and the *DRC Community Peace Building, Transition and Stabilization Program Strategy*. The project’s objective is to assist in building child-friendly communities by, amongst other things, improving access to and quality of social services. This aims to reduce the vulnerability of children and youth and to contribute with maintaining social cohesion. Within this frame, YEP seeks to not only provide skills and knowledge necessary for youth to become employable or productive, but to further enable them to support the development, protection and education of siblings or their own children.

The second YEP center is part of the *Restoration of Social and Economic Linkages to Facilitate and Promote Durable Solutions for Vulnerable, IDPs, Returnees and Refugees in North and South Kivu Provinces* project. This integrates the *International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy’s (ISSS)*



strategic objective number four: Return, Reintegration, Recovery. The YEP component of the intervention is implemented in South Kivu and aims to assist youth with their economic re-integration through income generation and employment opportunities, while preventing their re-entry into the conflict economy.

The traditional YEP approach was also implemented in Kitutu with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) funded *Fostering Youth Education to Combat Poverty in Eastern DRC*. This project had two primary objectives: 1) increase civil society capacity to provide youth with quality education; and 2) enhance the skills and knowledge of youth so as to improve their livelihoods and enable them to become productive members of their communities. The traditional YEP was implemented through local partners in Beni (the NGO *Collectif Lève-Toi et Marche* (COLEMA)), Kitutu (Kitutu General Hospital) and Goma (Don Bosco) who were trained in financial and project cycle management, resource mobilization and the YEP approach to working with youth.

Lastly, the United States Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) funded project *Promoting re-integration of returnees through youth education and livelihood activities* used the traditional YEP approach in the town of Baraka, Fizi territory (SK). The overall goal of the project was to enable returnees to successfully re-integrate and participate in the economic life of their new home community while providing for themselves and their families. For youth, this entailed the objective of improving their livelihood opportunities - through basic education and vocational training - and increased participation in the local economy - through the organization of small working groups.

## 2.2 Rational and Problem Statement

The purpose of this study, established by its terms of reference,<sup>10</sup> was to learn from what is being done and to improve performance. Within the above mentioned variations, NRC's interventions have been based on meeting the needs of youth so that female and male youth play an active role in the peaceful development of their communities.

The study therefore explores whether the YEP approach meets the existing needs of the targeted youth in eastern DRC; identifying the strengths and gaps in this approach. In doing so, it will try to understand:

1. The relevance of YEP: by researching the needs of youth in eastern DRC, and the support they need to become productive, contributing members of their society;
2. The appropriateness of YEP: by examining which of the needs the traditional YEP address and how well it does so;
3. The effectiveness of YEP: by assessing how well these needs have actually been met and what broader outcomes have been achieved.

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<sup>10</sup> See annex 1

### **3. Evaluation Design and Methodology**

#### **3.1 Approaches and Data Collection Tools**

The study used an evaluation matrix that primarily included a qualitative approach, with a limited quantitative component.<sup>11</sup> The original design included a more robust quantitative approach, however, given some limitations that will be highlighted below this was greatly reduced in favor of the qualitative. For the first line of inquiry, a qualitative needs assessment was undertaken through focus group discussions and key-informant interviews. This sought to address the following questions:

- i. How does youth's current condition affect whether they are contributing members of their communities?
- ii. What improvements are desired by/for youth and what assistance is understood as necessary for such changes?
- iii. What factors inhibit youth's broader participation/contribution to society?
- iv. What types/levels of assistance are necessary for improved participation of youth in society?

For the second line of inquiry, a qualitative approach was used to shed light on which needs were understood as being met by YEP. This was likewise done through focus group discussions, interviews, semi-structured interviews and a desk review, which tackled the following sub-questions:

- i. How do NRC and partner staff understand the role YEP has had in enabling youth to enhance their participation/contribution in society?
- ii. How do beneficiaries and former beneficiaries understand the role YEP has in meeting the needs of youth? It is important to note, that beneficiaries can be considered not only students, former students and their parents, but also leaders of the communities that were benefitting from YEP.

Lastly, for the third line of inquiry, interviews, outcome-focused surveys, qualitative surveys and in-depth case studies were used to understand how and to what extent YEP has assisted youth. This aimed to address these questions:

- i. Has YEP assisted former students to provide for themselves and their families?
- ii. How do beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders evaluate the assistance youth have received in terms of enabling their contribution to society?

#### **3.2 Sampling**

In terms of sampling, three sites were defined by the terms of reference: Masisi (Bukombo and Lushebere), Bunyakiri (Kando and Hombo Sud) and Kitutu. For the first two research sites, only the first two evaluation questions were addressed, given the fact that former students were not traceable in

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<sup>11</sup> See annex 2 for an overview of the evaluation matrix.

Masisi, while in Bunyakiri the first group of students have just finished and are currently being inserted into the labor market.

The following respondents were selected for these sites: community leaders and local partners (these were for the most part the same group), parents of current students, parents of former students, youth from the community, youth studying at the center, former students, employers, and the presidents of the YEP managing committees (only in Masisi).<sup>12</sup> In depth interviews were undertaken with NRC's Project Coordinator for Education in Emergencies in Petit Nord Kivu, a South Kivu Education Officer, the South Kivu Education Project Coordinator, the National Education Project Coordinator and the Education Program Manager. One donor representative and two representatives from the Ministry of Youth and Social Affairs were also interviewed.

### 3.3 Triangulation

For each line of inquiry, diverse sources of information were used allowing the comparison of data from different qualitative methods and different categories of respondents. This allowed controlling for biases in views of certain groups and those that can emerge from using a particular method. For almost all sub-questions, different respondent types were also sampled. Lastly, for the third line of inquiry, data from quantitative and qualitative methods were compared.

### 3.4 Analysis

For inquiry lines one and two, a cross-case analysis was used to compare different perspectives on similar issues. For the focus group discussions in particular, a participant-based group analysis was done focusing on individual contributions. A generic inductive approach was used allowing for the emergence of themes and patterns.

For the third line of inquiry, the same approach was used for analyzing the qualitative strand except for the typical case analysis. For the quantitative strand, given some limitations that will be noted below, basic descriptive statistics was used.

### 3.5 Limitations

The study has various limitations that are important to highlight. First and foremost, sampling criteria was not followed rigorously as access to respondents was mediated by local partners and was contingent on the availability of respondents. While 16 focus group discussions were planned, for two groups not enough respondents were available and, though the same guide was used these are best considered as group interviews. Due to a security meeting, local leaders were also unable to attend the focus group discussions at Hombo Sud. However, this provided additional time and allowed for some opportunistic sampling with the aim of enriching the data: namely, that of teachers at the center for group interviews. Second of all, female respondents were often fewer and participated less actively in the focus group discussions than male respondents. To try to overcome this limitation, questions for

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<sup>12</sup> See annex 2 for an overview of respondents sampled per site.

discussion were integrated that focused specifically on issues and challenges that female youth face and female respondents were continuously engaged by the consultant throughout discussions.

The most important limitation, however, was in regard to the original quantitative approach. To assess to what degree YEP was responsible for outcomes (such as increased income), a comparison group was needed to control for various possible factors. However, given the short amount of time allotted to the visit in Kitutu, administering enough surveys to two groups that could have statistical significance was unfeasible. There was also no previous baseline that could allow for the random selection of a comparison group. Since a more robust approach would be necessary, and would move more in the direction of an impact assessment, the comparison group was dropped. Current partners were also unable to track most of the former students who no longer work in the region, and they could only mediate access to those who were in working groups; making it impossible to randomly sample youth who have received treatment. Furthermore, no pre-tests were done before administering the survey, which made some questions extremely time-consuming for respondents to answer. These were therefore removed. The survey therefore presents a snapshot of the outcomes that YEP has likely enabled for those who have succeeded. The qualitative dimension sheds further light on these.

Last of all, the study has covered various regions within a limited time span. This has generated a breadth of information which would require much more depth to fully assess. Issues that have emerged and warrant further investigation have therefore been highlighted throughout the study.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

The following study has been undertaken with utmost precaution so as to protect respondents, ensuring that informed consent was granted and that respondents understood they could choose not to answer questions and also stop participating at any time. All interviews were under verbal consent whereby the purpose of the study was explained and all personal details were anonymized. For those who participated in in-depth case studies and had their pictures taken, a written consent form was signed.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> See annex 5.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1 Needs

In general, the needs of youth are tied to poverty, limited educational and work opportunities and factors of the social environment, which seem to keep a large number of them outside of the economic life of the community. The youth instead engage in negative social behaviors that are harmful to society at large, as well as to themselves and their future. The fact that youth are for the most part characterized as those who vagabond, wander around without purpose, commit petty crimes and use illegal substances, points to the lack of opportunities for them to contribute to their society. In Bunyakiri for example, the representative from the Ministry of Youth and Social Affairs suggested that, because of war, only 30 to 35% of youth could currently sustain themselves economically. More important was his observation that the rest are in conditions of poverty and ignorance, which pushes them into these negative social behaviors; something to which youth concurred.

On the whole, youth have not had much of an education. In Bunyakiri, many were involved in the armed groups in the region and have missed out on their education, not only during the conflict but also after. Parents in Hombo Sud noted that for some, shame of old age or of having been in armed groups kept them out of schools. War left several youth orphaned and traumatized, and in many cases it pushed them away from their homes and into the woods to live. These factors were seen as slowing down their process of re-entry into schools until they were too old to do so. Poverty and a lack of means to pay school fees also created barriers in accessing education in all three sites. Last of all, the fact that some youth who do have an education are unable to find work was seen by parents and teachers at Hombo Sud and leaders at Bukombo as something that discouraged youth from studying.

Leaders, parents and youth in all three sites linked youth unemployment to a lack of education. However, this was also connected to the general scarcity of employment opportunities in the region and specific factors that affect youth. There is the overall structural problem whereby the labor market is limited; with little job creation by the government and lack of large enterprises. For Lushebere, as the president of the TLS suggested, the market is also limited because it has not accompanied the population increase through the continued influx of displaced persons and returnees. In Bukombo, leaders also realized that the development of the village was small as compared to surrounding towns. Unlike Masisi,<sup>14</sup> and the adjacent towns such as Lushebere, Bukombo's roadside lacks bustling shops, restaurants, hair salons, etc.

Moreover, jobs in the local labor market, at least in Bunyakiri, were seen as being distributed among acquaintances or through corruption; something which was highlighted by youth in Hombo Sud and by the representative from the Ministry of Youth. For example, one of the female graduates working with masonry complained that to be hired for construction work, her working group was being asked to give a goat (worth 70 USD) to contractors. Male youth have the additional barrier of being associated with or identified as former combatants, as some respondents from Hombo noted. According to them, this

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<sup>14</sup> Masisi is both a town and the region.

creates barriers because such youth are seen as being rebellious and having questionable lifestyles which could create problems at work.

In terms of smaller shops or activities which could provide youth with work, employers we spoke to in Kando (Bunyakiri) also made an important observation that in general the simple lack of financial means creates additional difficulties for youth to insert and maintain themselves in the labor market. The fact that youth are unable to provide food for themselves makes apprenticeships unattractive, as employers are unable to provide them with an income at the beginning. A similar point was also made in Kitutu where employers highlighted that, since youth are not generally given an income when doing apprenticeships, this can lead them to fall back into thievery:

*“The issue is that, for one, there is a lack of financial means. So [the youth] go and steal...We can take a youth on and employ him, but it is hard for them to stay for more than two weeks. Because they have the habit of stealing. When they have some means, they can come to the atelier and work well. But once he lacks means, he is obliged to start doing other things to manage [stealing]...”*

It should be added that employers both in Bunyakiri and Kitutu felt limited in their capacity not only in providing pay, but also actual work in terms of the amount of tasks and materials they had.

The possibility of youth setting up their own activity or shop would require that they have the skills, knowledge and financial means to do so. In all three sites youth were seen as lacking all of these. In Masisi the lack of tools, materials and credit were a point continuously reiterated by leaders from both communities. Parents in Bunyakiri and Kitutu instead highlighted the barrier that government taxes can create for youth; as the following parent from Kando (Bunyakiri) noted:

*“These youth can try to do something to develop but the state can also tax them. The state can make them pay taxes that go largely beyond his earnings. This leads him to stop working and encourages him to wander around aimlessly.”*

Given this reality, community leaders from all three sites and youth and teachers from Bunyakiri recognized the creation of jobs as being essential. NGOs (including NRC) are seen in both Masisi and Bunyakiri as important providers of employment, although they were criticized for not hiring local youth. NRC was criticized for not hiring graduated masons from Kando to build the YEP center at Hombo Sud. However, construction was not yet underway and NRC staff currently plan to hire graduates. Leaders from Bunyakiri also added that job creation could be tied to broader development initiatives that could benefit the community at large. This could include things such as electrification of the region or infrastructural improvement of roads. The former would create work not only through the process of electrification but also later as electricians. Likewise, improved roads were seen as a way to not only provide work immediately but to also boost agriculture by increasing access to fields. In fact, given the lack of employment, one could consider agriculture as a viable option for youth; particularly in Bukombo (Masisi) given the very rural context with a low level of development. However youth, particularly male, shy away from agriculture. This could be tied to the lack of an accessible market and the low results crops produce, as was noted by community leaders in Masisi:

*“The difficulties youth have are this: they are here and they do not have employment. They do agriculture, but for them to have earnings, there is no market, the roads are in bad condition and even if they have seeds, they won’t get good enough results. They will be discouraged.”*

In Lushebere, community leaders stressed instead the issue of inequality in land distribution. For them, the concentration of land in the hands of few farmers meant youth were unable to have access to these. Community leaders went on to suggest that land reforms would be necessary in order to provide youth opportunities within agriculture. In Bunyakiri, however, the issue at hand was the way conflict pushed the population towards the main road. This was seen as taking away the possibility of youth’s participation in agricultural activities, which also aggravated poverty as agriculture could have been an activity that could compensate youth or assist them through unemployment. The distance to fields was further aggravated by low productivity and lack of basic infrastructure as a female parent highlighted:

*“There is also the problem of work. For agriculture, you have to go to the interior to have access to land. It is hard to develop crops, because you need something that is easy to grow, and we don’t have a place to store it”.*

Besides the limited opportunities for education and employment, there is a general sense, particularly in Bukombo Masisi, that youth do not have support or guidance, particularly of positive role models. Youth are at loss and as one male youth in Bukombo put it:

*“We have no support and guidance, and as we don’t have this we find that life is hard. The youth vagabond around because there is no work. This means that many become robbers because they don’t [work].”*

Leaders and parents in Masisi likewise pointed to the fact that unless youth have employment or support and guidance, they are pushed to robbing and vagabonding aimlessly. As one mother noted:

*“Our youth have no support and guidance. They can have some work, but as they don’t have any support or guidance, they start robbing, going to armed groups, and others can be hunters in the bush. Others can be rapists. So help us to get support and guidance for our youth.”*

Parents and the leaders of the Lushebere YEP center also concurred that being displaced and forced to stay in the camp led youth to wander the streets, get into fights and steal. For girls specifically, it also led to prostitution. This was also attested by youth at Lushebere who pointed out that without work, not only were they unable to meet own needs, but they were pushed into these bad practices.

To provide support for youth, community leaders and youth themselves in Masisi suggested that this needs to be done through work, particularly manual labor and, as highlighted above, through the creation of employment. Some youth in Bukombo also noted the importance for a space to learn not only vocational skills but also to receive broader guidance in life. As one youth from the community noted:

*“A lot of youth wander around without anything to do. Perhaps to help them it would be necessary to put them together in a place to spend time together. Teach them how to become good youth. Because when we have no one to teach us, some of us rob, some of us join the armed forces. But when we are taught to become hairdressers, when we are taught football; that will help us.”*

This desire was also backed by leaders who saw the importance of creating youth associations as a means whereby youth could find ways to take care of themselves in Bukombo. Leaders in Lushebere saw the importance of having cooperatives for youth accompanied by microcredit opportunities, but they added the importance that only youth without a “dark past” be included. This, however, could potentially discriminate youth who are former combatants, prostitutes, youth wandering the streets, etc. As the president of the YEP center noted, jobs are distributed to those who are known to employers while youth who have a past, such as prostitution or armed groups, are purposefully neglected. It should be added that community leaders from Lushebere did not seem keen to speak of NRC’s project, and held that they did not really know what the center was doing or what results it was possibly having. If anything, they suggested, it only helped displaced youth and none of the local population. However, according to the partners, the center is open to all.

In Masisi, community leaders, parents and youth also highlighted the importance of literacy and the need for an accelerated learning program. Male youth in Bukombo stressed the importance of qualified teachers. This point was highlighted by a youth who had gone to an accelerated program for nearly a year without having learned much of what was taught. This also raised the issue of the lack of quality present at the YEP center which will be highlighted below. In any case, male respondents in Bukombo were well aware of the importance that education and teaching quality must be good. With regard to literacy, parents, the President of the managing committee and youth in Lushebere also tied its importance to a dimension of protection: the ability to read arrest warrants or certificates before signing them.

Respondents in all sites agreed on the importance of learning the usual vocations of carpentry, masonry, mechanics, tailoring, baking etc. with female respondents often adding the importance of knowing how to do small trade and receiving the means to do so, especially in Bukombo. Other skills were also suggested such as computers and French. There was also a recognized need of better recreational opportunities in Masisi and Bunyakiri. This seemed even more pressing in Bukombo given its lower level of development as this male respondent highlighted:

*“The youth who play football, watch movies, take care of hair salons, we here at Bukombo, we don’t have all that.”*

In Bunyakiri, though the importance of supporting youth by providing skills and improving recreational opportunities was duly stressed, respondents focused more on the particular issue of de-traumatization and the association of youth with armed groups. These two factors seem to create particular barriers for youth. In terms of the former, parents and teachers alike suggested that trauma affected a large number of youth and can block many from seeking work and education; suggesting that de-traumatization would be essential in assisting youth to aspire more for their lives. A female teacher also from Kando suggested that not dealing with traumas can cause youth to continue their harmful lifestyles:

*“They don’t have the ambition to go study, even if they have the occasion to do so. Some continue in this lifestyle because they don’t have an occupation... As they find there are no solutions to these*



*problems, they want to go back to what they were doing before. As they notice there is nothing else to do to help de-traumatize them, they are obliged to go back to their previous ways.”*

There are additional risks for youth who were associated with armed groups. The military is seen as increasing insecurity by forcing youth to do tasks for them, to pay small fees and by arresting those who were asked to demobilize. Teachers suggest that this destabilizes youth and gives them a pretext to return to armed groups or to simply stay home. As one male teacher explained:

*“Yesterday and before yesterday, youth were arrested by the FARDC (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo) under the pretext that they were seen during the war... While the government asked youth to quit the armed groups, they did stop. They started taxing them. They [youth] had to give their guns back. They were arrested. Why arrest [youth] if we don’t have arms anymore. This destabilizes youth who wonder if they should go back into armed groups.”*

This was followed by observations of a young female teacher on the effects this has on the youth population in general; namely the reduction of freedom:

*“Youth in the community here, they don’t have freedom. Because we confound (associate) them with armed groups. Youth did belong to these, it is true. But nothing in their appearance could distinguish them from others. So this creates insecurity. If they simply argue with a military, it is enough to arrest them... We (the youth) cannot move around as we wish. If not, once you run into a military, they can say you are part of [the armed groups]. So youth feel limited. He [a youth] can’t walk after 18. He is afraid. Very much so”*

Male youth from Hombo Sud also complained that youth were barred from meeting together for various recreational activities by the army on the pretext that they were forming armed groups. They considered this as hampering their development.

This issue of security and association with armed groups also emerged in Masisi. Female youth face both the risk of rape and robbery when going to the fields, which they attributed to the FARDC. Leaders at Bukombo further highlighted that youth have limited mobility in the region given their association with armed groups. This association could influence possibilities youth could have in searching for employment in surrounding areas. They also reported that youth were barred from the football pitch, the only recreational opportunity available and often suffered beatings by the FARDC. The leaders further suggested that youth were pushed back into the bush given their fear of being associated with armed groups. Others commented that some youth from the community were singled out by the army based on their ethnicity; this is an act that could foster conflict and lead youth back into armed groups. One respondent went so far as to suggest that this hindered the organization of youth associations:

*“We had an association (union for the development of youth), but we had to change it because of the concept of youth. Because all soldiers in Bukombo find that everything that goes by the name of youth is associated with armed groups. We even removed the posters that we put on the wall, because if they hear the concept youth, there will be problems.”*

A similar issue was raised by youth at the YEP center in Lushebere. Before joining its activities, many of them had been forced by local authorities to work for free on their lands and felt they had no one to take up their cause in this matter. The President of the center confirmed that such practices were happening but suggested they had reduced in frequency since the beginning of the center’s activities.

He also suggested that sensitization of the host community on forcing children into labor had been undertaken by the center's staff. This was not corroborated during the fieldwork. However, youth suggested that since joining the TLS, they had no longer suffered this experience.

In addition to these broader issues that youth face, it is important to note that they also have basic needs with which they struggle to meet, as highlighted by youth we interviewed who have finished YEP and those from focus group discussions. Youth lack proper food, clothing and in many cases a proper place to live. Those who have children also lack the means of supplying these things for them. In this regard, it is important to add how this particularly plays out in relation to female youth. Many took up prostitution to meet needs that were not met by their families; which led in many cases to pregnancies. These girls were often neglected by both their families as well as wider society, a fate shared by other young women who became pregnant after being raped. Another group was identified as becoming single mothers because they had nothing else to do and engaged in unhealthy sexual behavior. The fathers, however, have not assumed responsibility of the children.

Having missed out on education and currently lacking employment, support and guidance, youth ultimately lack something meaningful to do. Instead, they are engaged in negative social behaviors which harm their communities. Youth are therefore in need of education as a means to find work. Not only will this allow youth to contribute to their communities, but it will also enable them to meet their basic needs and those of their children.

Moreover, it appears that broader issues such as lack of employment creation, market discrimination based on association with armed groups, trauma and insecurity caused by army officials might also be important issues to tackle in order to enable an environment that is conducive for the development of youth. A space where youth can be together and engage in positive activities could be a positive step in enabling such an environment. This includes not only centers for learning, but also recreational opportunities such as sports. Other games, such as board games, were also considered important, as well as theatre and music. Another suggestion was the creation of a place where youth could be informed about their world; a place to read and access internet.

Within this context, NRC's YEP approach is seen and appears in all effects as relevant. It for one targets many vulnerable youth including young mothers, former combatants and those that wander aimlessly on the streets. YEP "light" aims at providing vocational skills and a safe place where youth can be engaged in something meaningful. However, as will be better discussed below, the relevance of the "light" approach is also tied to its appropriateness. One thing that can already be highlighted is that this approach does not offer literacy and numeracy, life skills, creation of working groups and increased recreational activities. Instead, much of what the community and youth need, appears to be tied to the traditional YEP package. This does not mean that a YEP light model cannot be offered, but that perhaps it could find ways to integrate these other elements.

The traditional YEP aims at reinserting youth into society by providing an educational opportunity which not only teaches them vocational skills and life skills but also offers an apprenticeship opportunity. This is followed by the formation of working groups with toolkits that should enable them to provide for

their own needs. The center is seen as currently giving youth an occupation, reducing the negative behavior they were involved in, giving them perspective for their future and helping them feel integrated. This quote from a parent, which reflects views across all respondents, in part highlights this point:

*“Because many youth don’t have work, they don’t have anything to do. With this center the number of thefts is decreasing, because the youth were committing thefts and robberies. Now they are studying and this gives courage.”*

Another example is this male youth who sees the value of YEP in protecting youth from joining armed groups:

*“For me, I was a soldier. Now in the morning, I think instead of my notebook. When I am here, it is to study, it is not the same thing I was doing before [...] I now have no other friends other than those I study with. This allows me to not be in touch with ex-combatants. So I spend my time with teachers, and I have left ideas of war behind.”*

YEP is also understood as helping girls in increasing their social value by changing society’s perception: instead of just being child bearers, they are contributing members of their society. Teachers at Hombo Sud and leaders at Kando added that much continued support would be needed for girls in this regard; as this leader put it:

*“Young girls are underestimated, and we are trying to show them they have the same capacities as us [men] in the community. But as they are not at the same level, it would be desirable if they had additional sessions on capacity building, to show them their place in society.”*

## 4.2 Appropriateness

### Yep “Light”

One of the key issues with the appropriateness, and therefore relevance, of the YEP “light” is tied to the approach itself and how it was implemented. In providing youth with something to do, keeping them safe and away from harmful behavior such as robbing, prostitution and joining armed groups, the approach was deemed extremely important particularly within an emergency setting. However, some factors limited the extent to which this approach could meet broader needs of youth and their families that went beyond immediate protection.

A key issue brought up by all respondent groups from both communities (except youth) regarded the fact that the reinsertion kits were not provided at the end of the training. While respondents suggested that these were promised, NRC staff explained that this was never the case. Instead, NRC staff noted that most youth trainings in the region offer these and that adults in the communities came to know that they were also offered in other YEP centers.

Adult respondents, in any case, perceived these kits as providing a direct way of being inserted into the market which enables youth to work on their own, to exercise immediately what they have learned and to find a way to help families. Conversely, without kits, youth were seen as either unable to apply what

they had learned or as having to work with others who owned tools. Teachers in Bukombo suggested that working in such a manner resulted in little income; for every 100 dollars the employer could make, only 2 dollars would be made by a youth.

The President of the YEP managing committee in Lushebere estimated that of the youth who had been through the Lushebere center, around 56 were able to work as apprentices to others or by borrowing tools to work on their own. This did not allow them to sustain themselves or provide much help at home. As he went on to suggest, youth were unable to manage on their own, which limited their capacity to leave negative social behaviors and reintegrate into society:

*“For NRC, the issue is that youth have a problem of social reintegration; it is on this level that it is hard to help them. Every time youth are about to leave the life of prostitution, drugs; once they attempt to reintegrate into society, it is hard for them because they don’t have an activity, they don’t have tools and means to develop their knowledge to be able to stand on their own in society”*

Nonetheless, working with others was seen as giving youth an opportunity to continue practicing their skills and to increase their knowledge. This was, however, tied to what could be considered a further weakness of the approach, at least in Bukombo: youth were seen by parents and leaders alike as not having developed much of their skills at the center. This meant that they could only be hired as apprentices for low wages because their skill level was not good enough to work independently. This was ascribed to the low quality of teachers, to the manager of the center and to the insufficient amount of materials available during the training. As one leader put it:

*“The trainers did not have a lot of materials, and didn’t know much about the problems of the local youth. They knew youth have problems but did not have a lot of capacity to help youth. They were underqualified and didn’t have a lot of knowledge to teach the youth.”*

According to the community leaders, this was due to the hasty selection of the center’s managing committee, its President and lack of community involvement:

*“The beginning of the project was good, ok. There were some sport activities. But when the project was about to end, we saw darkness. We saw certain things that were wrong with the partners, the leaders. When NRC came to implement the project they didn’t work with the local community. They didn’t call the local structures to talk about how the project would be. They just said they would install a CFS and work with the schools. They didn’t involve local chiefs and notables. If you notice that at the CFS there are no activities, it is because the community was not involved 100 percent.”*

In conversation with NRC staff, it seems that the process of facilitating the community’s choice of a management committee and president was hurried. Shortly after the beginning of the project, the donor expected to see activities on the ground during a visit, and although a couple of community meetings had been held, the set-up process was hurried to meet the request of the donor.

A leader further pointed out that activities at the center were badly organized because an uncontrolled number of youth would come. Parents noted that this led to the amount of tools and number of teachers to be insufficient for all students. In their judgment, students would need another year before gaining an adequate level of knowledge. This was further exacerbated by the shortage of materials given the large number of beneficiaries and later on due to partners’ inability to sustain activities when

NRC pulled out. NRC staff corroborated this by commenting that the unplanned number of students did in fact create such problems: youth could wait almost a week before being able to use tools or wait the same amount of time for materials.

NRC staff also realized that partners were not adequately prepared in terms of their capacity to sustain activities once they exited from the project. An NRC staff member suggested this was due, in part, to NRC planning its exit towards the end of the project and that partners were not given enough time to understand all that was entailed by its exit. It was also suggested that local partners were likely given hope that NRC would extend its assistance.

While NRC did take on the project for another four months in September 2014, in early November additional material had still not reached the YEP centers. While management in Lushebere seemed to find ways to continue activities nonetheless, Bukombo seemed to have shut down most of its activities. Speaking with youth who had gone to the YEP center at Bukombo, they highlighted that they were no longer able to continue practicing what they learned and feared their skill level would decrease.

Some important points should be stressed: while YEP light is seen as a potential way to reach a higher number of beneficiaries, the degree to which it meets the needs of youth and their communities can be limited. For one, the pedagogical effectiveness has to be studied, and more structure would be needed to ensure youth have enough time with machines, access to tools and a sufficient number of teachers. Furthermore, a point to bear in mind is that youth need adequate support for reinsertion so that they can continue to develop what they learned and begin sustaining themselves on their own. As mentioned above, the current YEP “light” enabled apprenticeships for some youth or the ability to work with those who have tools. While this is a positive step in the direction of reinsertion, it is likely limited and youth could use additional support, especially if they still have low skill levels.

NRC staff members are aware of these limitations, as they have noted that the approach itself did not envision reinsertion after the training, did not track students who went through the center, turned out to be unsustainable and that finding employment through this approach is unlikely. As one member put it:

*“Find work through this YEP we organized? I doubt it. It can help them only to do a little something to have money. But to say that this will help them find work, I don’t think so.”*

The management at Lushebere has tried to tackle some of these issues, particularly that of reinsertion and sustainability. It does so by producing goods ordered by members of the wider community, particularly in carpentry, and by hiring trained youth to work with teachers. More importantly is their approach in opening a hair salon. NRC provided the money to rent it for the first year and for a generator. In one year, the salon hopes to be self-sustained through the income generated there. This can be done in part through phone charging services they provide thanks to the generator.

The hair salon itself is comprised of a teacher and students who come in the morning to learn. In the afternoon other youth who had training earlier work in shifts of around 3 youth per two weeks. This gives them time to practice and improve their skills while allowing them to make some income. The

following case study highlights the assistance it has provided youth with. This male respondent, displaced since 2005, had quit school for a year and wandered aimlessly in the streets before attending YEP. This is his story:

*“I was born in Kinuka, before coming to Lushebere. When I arrived here, I had my parents. I don’t know how it happened, but my father left, so I stayed with my mother and my sisters. When I was here, my mom was paying the school fees for us. I studied. Up till now my mom has been paying. I had no one else to pay them for me. Then I was just wandering around the neighborhood without work, I met other students who were coming here. I did not know NRC was here. The one who told me, he said ‘we were learning carpentry, tailoring and basketry. Instead of staying in the neighborhood without doing anything, we can come here and work on something. This can help us in our future life.’... We were taught to do haircutting even if we were not making money. [We thought] ‘When we will finish, we can have work somewhere else’. They taught us, but in teaching us, they didn’t have money to rent a room for us to work as hairdressers they said as we were learning our work, you can go home and try to help your friends, cutting their hair. When I went home, I had a friend in the neighborhood who was a hairdresser, so I could go either at his house or here at the center. He would ask me to cut someone’s hair, and would give some money that could help... When the center got the money, they went and rented the room ... I found that this helped me a lot, because I only had my mother. My sister was already married. My mother is old and she did not have the means to buy all I wanted. At my age I need a lot of things, but I can’t ask my mother. When I go to the hair salon, I make money. I buy my soap, I buy my clothes, and I see it helps me a lot. Today, I am very thankful because I don’t ask mom for soap, I don’t ask her for clothes. I buy for myself, and when I have extra money, since my father is not here, I give some to my mother. “*

Perhaps the approach of the hair salon should be closely studied by NRC and considered as an alternative to the traditional YEP. For one, it aims at being sustainable by generating income for costs such as rent and the salary of the teacher who is responsible for the salon (shop). It also allows students who have more experience to improve their capacity in the afternoon and make a small income before being able to fully insert themselves into the market. The President of the Lushebere TLS plans to do the same with carpentry by opening a shop in the market. Another positive aspect of this model is the potential it has in terms of pedagogical effectiveness. Students come to learn directly through work experience in the market. Those who are more advanced also manage to satisfy their needs and improve their skills. Given the size of a shop and the amount of work available this approach most likely cannot reach a large number of youth at the same time. This can be overcome by opening more than one shop per vocation in different villages or towns based on market analysis. This approach could also ensure adequate time with a teacher and tools and opportunities to practice learned skills. If youth spend sufficient time training, perhaps they will be able to learn a vocational skill in a shorter amount of time and with more depth. Faster learning could ensure a quicker rotation of those students, resulting in a larger number of students trained at a more efficient skill level over the year despite the smaller number of youth trained at the same time. It would also be interesting to see if those who are more advanced could reinvest their income into tools and materials to begin their own enterprises. In this case, it could be important to re-inforce their skills with entrepreneurship training and also include literacy and life skills training. This could be a decentralized model for learning the vocation “on the job”, while centralizing the training of “soft” aspects such as literacy by making use of structures that are in place such as schools.

Lastly, for the YEP “light” to be effective, more structure needs to be added, although in a flexible way. Given that it draws large numbers of youth, perhaps shifts could be organized so as to ensure youth have access to tools and teachers twice a week for two to three hours. The other two days could provide shifts of literacy and numeracy and one day could be designated for recreational activities. This would enable the program to meet some of the broader needs that were expressed.

### Traditional YEP

Having highlighted the needs of the context and the relevance of the traditional YEP, one could nonetheless suggest that the latter will be tempered by the degree to which this approach or its implementation is “appropriate”. The positive effects that are currently experienced by the community are also understood as contingent upon the extent to which they will last. This is tied to the fact that YEP currently reaches few students and its sustainability and capacity to reach additional youth seems uncertain. For example, leaders in Kando highlighted that after the recruitment period and while the first cycle was underway many youth were still leaving the armed groups:

*“There are youth who were in the armed groups during the recruitment period, and after it. These youth (from the community) have left the armed groups. These youth have nothing to do, and as they have left the armed groups, we find that this is a permanent danger we need to try to tackle.”*

Similarly, teachers suggested that a broader number of youth needs to be reached so as to guarantee stability in the community. One teacher in Kando noticed the fragility of the situation where many youth are unemployed, they rob and they have their guns hidden in the forest. He went on to add:

*“The youth around here, there are still many more in the forest. There is still no way to reach them. If we assist only a small number of youth, but the rest are a large number, then this won’t give results in the long run, because those youth will intoxicate the others so as to join them in the woods.”*

The need to integrate youth into the community through YEP or similar programs is a priority for the community. However, their current concern is precisely on how to do so particularly when NRC leaves the project. As a leader put it:

*“[As a community] we are thinking about how to make [YEP activities] sustainable. When the center is passed to us, will we be able to pay personnel as NRC has been paying? Will we have to reduce things?”*

The representative from the Ministry of Youth and Social Affairs added:

*“They are now working. It is working. But with following up, and keeping it sustainable without those who conceived it (NRC) will we be able to do so? If we have to pay teachers, give them food, the nursery; the project will end. How will we do it? Will it be free?”*

Some of the strengths of the YEP approach are that it is free, has a nursery, offers food during the training and provides insertion kits at the end. As an NRC staff member noticed, it is somewhat of a privilege to partake in YEP while NRC is present given the guaranteed benefits as compared to what partners can offer on their own. Furthermore, being able to sustain the center free of cost is worth highlighting as many youth are uneducated precisely because they lack financial means. In Kitutu, where NRC’s project ended in 2012, partners are not only unable to provide reinsertion kits and food for

students, but they have also introduced fees at 5 dollars a month; this has resulted in a decrease in the number of student from 100 per cycle to around 26 per cycle.

The lack of sustainability has led the managing committee at the Kitutu YEP center to currently seek another partner that can assist not only the center but also those who have been reinserted. As both the current President of the center and a staff from NRC noticed, once partners are on their own, they do not have the means to follow-up with and support youth in the working groups. While the Ministry of Youth and Social Affairs is a partner for some of the activities, such as providing certificates, and is seen by NRC staff as potentially assuming the costs of teachers, there appears to have been a breakdown in communication with the local partner for the past four months in Kitutu. Furthermore, the Ministry has apparently begun its own new training center. The local partner has considered working with the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Professional Education (*Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel* (EPSP)), which however would mean nonetheless the presence of school fees. Apparently, a YEP project implemented in Fizi which was under the Ministry of Youth and Social Affairs had been abandoned for a while, but has now been taken up by the EPSP and the center offers training for a fee.

In Kando Bunyakiri, NRC aims to provide three months of funding in February to partners as a buffer until the IGAs start generating enough money to pay teachers. This would guarantee teacher's salary for a whole year. Something similar was done in Kitutu, but ultimately did not enable them to achieve sustainability as not enough income was generated. In a key informant interview, a respondent suggested that February was too late of a date to begin working on an exit strategy; something that, as noted earlier, also seemed to create problems in Masisi.

In addition to sustainability and the relatively small number of youth reached, a specific issue to Bunyakiri was also raised by respondents: is trauma adequately dealt with and to what extent can it influence the results the center will have? As a leader from Kando said:

*"There is a need of a program that helps with de-traumatization. Someone who is traumatized, even if trained, can have difficulties in orienting what he or she has learned. So we would need some workshops where we can help change behaviors. This could help [traumatized youth] take charge of their lives. NRC has given tools and materials but has not dealt with this problem. [The youth] could simply sell this material."*

NRC does provide teachers with training on psychosocial support, but the staff acknowledges that the centers lack capacity in this regard. Leaders and teachers from Kando also concurred that they were unable to provide sufficient support to traumatized youth who have been to the center; much less address the trauma of those who don't come.

Parents in Kando highlighted that local NGOs were present, but lacked means and capacity to assist the large number of youth. It is important to note, however, that in Kando, NRC worked with the NGO War Child UK, which organized weekly sessions on de-traumatization and sensitization through animators. Extreme cases of traumas at the YEP center were also referred to the NGO.



This study did not have in its scope the assessment of to what extent YEP centers de-traumatize, or what possible effects traumas could have on student's learning achievements or future employability. This might be important to bear in mind as is the point made by teachers, parents and leaders: to what extent is training and insertion into working groups sufficient in guaranteeing long-term stability and integration if there is deeper, unresolved trauma? To what extent does the latter present a risk as mentioned earlier; in the face of adversity and lack of proper follow-up, will youth sell materials or quickly rejoin armed groups? One could further question if youth who suffer most from trauma aspire to study and sign up for YEP?

Some issues regarding the appropriateness of YEP were also raised in regard to those who have specifically benefitted from the program, and not just the general youth population. First of all, the amount of time youth spend at the center precludes the possibility for them to seek a way to meet their short-term needs – and that of their families in many cases. This is something that youth who currently study at Hombo Sud and those that finished at Kando continuously stressed. As a former student from Kando noted:

*"I had many problems, because YEP could not help support my child. And I had to leave the center often, I got into problems. It was complicated to provide food. Life was really hard."*

Likewise, a current student from Hombo Sud observed:

*"Now that we are in town, we no longer have means to take care of the kids we have. When we don't have the means, we have to skip classes, go back into the woods and bother people to get something. If we are taken care of properly, youth who are in the woods, can leave that and come here."*

This issue was also brought up in a couple of key interviews with NRC staff members who concurred that this was a problem for many. While they tried to address this by giving Saturday as a free day for students to find some form of work, they realized that this was insufficient. Many students were worried during class about how they would provide for their family, and some of them dropped out. Others, once they began learning their vocations, found some days in the week to work and earn some money. A staff member also pointed out that because of poverty, health needs, such as treatment, of many students or their babies that stayed at the nursery could not be met. This meant that many students who were ill stayed home and were unable to attend classes for a prolonged period of time.

While students spend these months in training, for the most part unable to adequately meet these immediate needs, at the end of a year however, they were in general seen as not being adequately prepared to work independently. Respondents presented concerns regarding both the level of practical skills acquired during the year and the support current students will receive once inserted into the working groups. In their view, youth either needed more preparation or additional training as an aspect of support once inserted in the working groups.

Employers with whom youth did their apprenticeships in Bunyakiri and Kitutu suggested that youth still needed support to have their knowledge increased and developed. Overall, they insisted that youth had a good grasp of theory but did not have enough practice; needing to develop their basic notions. Employers in Kitutu added that youth appeared to not have had much contact with tools or machines:

*“Youth knew a lot of theory. For many, [during the apprenticeship] it was the first time they touched a machine. When they did the apprenticeship, it seemed like it was the first time they touched a machine. We noticed that one month seemed very little. ”*

They went on to suggest that one month of internship was very little, highlighting also that the amount of tools given for the apprenticeship were too few and of bad quality. According to employers from Bunyakiri, youth would need in general somewhere between six months to one year of practice before being equipped with sufficient knowledge and practice to be able to sustain themselves financially. On the whole, they found it important that youth continue to find ways to work and apply what they already learned at YEP and at the apprenticeship. One employer made a very important observation:

*“It would be very important that [the youth] have really effective teachers that can help them to have a lot of knowledge in such a short period of time.”*

Teachers and parents in Bunyakiri were likewise unsure if youth had an adequate enough capacity to work independently and insisted on the importance of supporting youth as they were integrated into the working groups. One parent suggested:

*“As NRC comes to assist, it should think of strengthening [youth], because we can give youth tools at the end of training, but this will not help them to evolve. Their capacity to undertake an activity is weak. After, it will come to nothing.”*

In addition to the lack of practical skills obtained during the YEP, respondents also raised issues regarding their integration into the labor market. A point made by one of the leaders in Kitutu was the lack of help in integrating youth into the labor market. Much in the direction with the approach used by the center in Lushebere, he also suggests creating opportunities within the markets:

*“What YEP did for graduates did not help them to find work in the labor market. Why do I say this? It would be better if YEP besides the buildings here at the center, that it have workshops in the community. Having these in the community could facilitate work for the learners. It can help graduates find clients. So they work in the workshops that NRC installs in the community.”*

One of the worries presented by parents in Kando is the inadequate amount of work youth have in the working groups because they share tools, materials and few requests for their services. This is seen as something that hampers the possibility of practicing skills and fully developing what they have learned. Youth from Kando, who had just begun their activities in micro-cooperatives, found it hard to have enough opportunities to work. They also suggested that the material they were given was insufficient for them to develop, as this youth who works as a carpenter stated:

*“[NRC] gave us some wood planks to work with, and currently we have started a shop. So it is hard for us to develop because the amount of wood planks we were given, is not enough”*

It appears that although they are given little, they have enough to begin working. However, this does not provide them with much of a margin; youth need to be able to sell what they produce in order to procure additional materials as they are not given capital or funds. In addition to this, some also noted and showed the low quality of the tools they were given which could break easily.

Community leaders in Kando also spoke of the importance that an experienced person be put in charge of the working groups to guide them in the beginning and to strengthen their capacity through ongoing training. While they suggested employers who had overseen apprenticeships to be involved in this, NRC staff and employers themselves noted that this would require additional costs. An NRC staff suggested that the center instead encouraged youth to create working groups near former employers and collaborate with them through a trade-off: former employers provide assistance while youth allow them to use tools they lack in their shops.

In relation to integrating youth into the labor market, parents raised the issue of taxes which weigh heavily on those who bake as a profession. In particular, this affects single individuals who leave the working groups to work on their own. The DRC government provides tax exemptions to the youth working groups for one year. When youth leave micro-cooperatives to work on their own, they no longer qualify for the tax exemption, and they often are unable to pay these taxes.

This raises the issue as to why some youth leave the working groups. Parents find that some youth fare better than others within these, because the tools are not enough for everyone, the initial capital is insufficient and the income produced is not high enough for the whole group. There is also the fact that groups fail as a whole, forcing youth to have to work on their own. These were also seen as related to insufficient capital and low income. The following are some of parents' views:

*"They cannot continue in a micro-cooperative because tools are not enough. Within groups, there are those who don't work as much. He who works more, uses more energy, and gets discouraged."*

*"The money they were given in the beginning to start their activities was not significant and that is why many groups failed in the beginning"*

In an internal evaluation done by NRC, it was noted that 16 of 31 working groups in Kitutu were no longer functioning, while of the remaining 15, some appeared to be only partly functioning. According to the report, the main reasons for this were the distances between home and the work place, insufficient income and conflicts within the group. An NRC staff stated that although the groups are organized at the beginning of the training, there is not enough time to study individuals adequately so as to best place them in groups. The center nonetheless tries to place them within the same vocation based on personal affinity and geographical proximity.

Last of all, for some youth, particularly those who work with bakery, the initial kit provided appears to provide insufficient "capital". As an NRC staff explained, the start-up kit contains tools and materials but no cash. This can leave very little room for groups in case tools break, additional material is needed, etc. He further suggested a possible voucher system where groups are provided with vouchers in shops for tools and materials up to 100 USD; providing them with a buffer. This, however, is a cost-based solution that would need to be adequately assessed, particularly the possibility for it to be sustainable for partners.

Youth are therefore seen as leaving YEP centers with insufficient practical capacity to work adequately on their own, and in many cases in working groups. However, it was unclear as to what extent YEP centers in following-up the working groups, actually provide additional support, such as training. More

importantly perhaps is the issue raised by one of the employers mentioned earlier: is there a more effective way for students to learn and practice skills while at the YEP center? Unfortunately, given the limitations of this study, the pedagogical effectiveness of the traditional YEP was not explored. However, one could question if 40 students have adequate time with tools and their two teachers to practice their skills as compared to learning as an apprentice in a workshop. The YEP center in Kando has a workshop hangar made for youth to practice their skills in motorcycle mechanics and carpentry. Further optimizing the use of such facilities could enable youth to further practice their skills and offer services to members of their community as noted during a key informant interview.

In summary, the following case study of a female respondent is a good example of the needs of youth and the appropriateness of the traditional YEP:

*“I was married before YEP, but my life was not a very good one. I was constantly sick, and it was hard for me to even buy soap for myself. I had a family, but I did not have the capacity to sustain them. I stayed home. I had no land, nothing. I had nothing to do. I had not studied. I heard the YEP center was coming, and that I could study for free. I thought it would be a good idea as I would gain some knowledge. So I went and I studied. From morning to evening we would go. We suffered a lot because we were not making any money. We would spend the whole day there without making any money. We were able to gain knowledge. I learned to read and write. We learned how to live together in society. We were taught how to be in a cooperative, how to work in a cooperative. We got certificates at the end of the year. We are now looking for a way to get work. We have sufficient knowledge. We had small means until now but it is not enough. We hope NGOs will come and introduce a need for work. I hope having finished YEP will help to change my lifestyle from what it was before. So for now we are still home, waiting to get work.”*

The traditional YEP offers the possibility to gain knowledge for work and to live peacefully in society, assisting youth to become contributing members to their communities. However, the time at YEP can be demanding as it is hard to sustain oneself and one’s family during that period. Inserting oneself into the market also has its challenges as youth are likely to be insufficiently prepared to work on their own and face various difficulties in the working groups.

### **Enabling Youth**

In order to enable the development of youth and their participation in society, there appear to be broader issues in their environment that require attention. While these go beyond the scope of NRCs youth programming, perhaps broader partnerships could be sought to tackle them. For example, the lack of security for youth, their association with armed groups and possible abuses by the army are things that should be addressed in order to create more stability in the community. Youth should be free to move and associate with each other for recreational and other activities. One can question if youth will aim to reintegrate into society if they do not feel welcome or safe. This could include NRC or partners engaging broader society to address labor market discriminations: communities need to be welcoming to youth instead of creating barriers for their socio-economic integration. Marginalizing youth might not pay off for communities in the long run.

Although outside the traditional scope of YEP, understanding how trauma can hamper youth from developing and desiring to reintegrate into society, might be a worthy line of inquiry for NRC. Although NRC provides basic support to trauma-affected YEP students, it should look into ways, through

partnerships with NGOs which have this technical expertise for example, to provide additional assistance to traumatized youth, both those who participate in YEP as well as other youth in the community. Dialoguing with local NGOs who aim to assist such youth, other international NGOs and civil society could be a start to this. Safe recreational opportunities such as sports, music and theatre might create a space where traumatized youth (both YEP and non-YEP) could be engaged.

There is a recognized need for employment creation. Though the YEP approach uses a market assessment tool based on a methodology developed by Women's Refugee Council, one can question what the saturation point is for additional masons, motorcycle mechanics, soap makers, etc. Although NRC has the capacity to change the offered vocational skills from year to year, partners likely do not have the same flexibility. Some NRC staff also questioned the depth of the findings produced by these market assessments. They noted that these were usually done in a very short span of time (2 days) and always produced the same results. They suggested that these have become routine for staff and were unsure if a more in-depth knowledge of markets was even the aim of the assessment. Besides training youth for these traditional vocations, there are certain development needs that could not only offer employment opportunities to youth but also engage them in projects that benefit communities at large. Perhaps a strategic approach for NRC would be to find development partners who work with broader projects such as electrification and include skills related to these projects as vocations to be taught.

Lastly, in relation to the current training approach YEP offers there are perhaps two issues that could be addressed simultaneously. For one, youth do not seem to be adequately trained –with regard to practical skills - during the 10 months at the YEP center. At the same time, they are unable to provide for their own needs or that of their families. One solution suggested by NRC staff is the YEP “light” approach since youth are free to work or look for work and drop-in at the center when they are able to. As mentioned earlier, some elements must be in place for a “drop-in center” to provide adequate training to youth: structures that permit sufficient time with teachers and tools and enough materials to be used. One could also consider a study to understand how effective the current YEP model is in training for vocations compared to traditional apprenticeships. One option could be to have students study literacy, life skills, and entrepreneurship in the morning at a center and learn vocational skills in an apprenticeship setting in the afternoons. This could be setup so that as soon as youth are able to adequately contribute to their employer, they begin to receive a small income. This could be done either through partnerships with employers or using the model presented earlier where small shops are set up by YEP in the market for youth to learn and improve skills while making a small income. For the former option however, the capacity employers have to offer sufficient work would need to be assessed. The latter option would instead consist of reducing the physical infrastructure of YEP centers to prioritize the investment in an array of shops that aim to be self-sustaining and provide youth with an opportunity to learn with a teacher on site. For one, this could permit YEP to train youth in more than four vocations at a time, which would increase their range of options and reduce the risk of market saturation. If feasible, the income of the shop would be used to sustain the shop in terms of rent, materials, the income of the teacher and a small income for students who are more advanced. Although a smaller number of youth would be trained at a given time, youth could potentially finish their training in a shorter period of time and reach perhaps a more adequate level. Furthermore, if such shops were

sustainable, in the long run, they will most likely train more youth than traditional YEP centers as they struggle to sustain themselves once NRC leaves. To see if such an approach is feasible, NRC should look into the center in Lushebere mentioned earlier. These two approaches could be piloted on a small scale to allow for comparison with the traditional YEP model.

The basis for these two suggested options is the decentralization of the youth's learning experience from a center to a more "real life-based" work-based experience. This could also help in terms of ensuring sustainability. In Beni, a diverse model appears to be in use where a large cooperative has been set up by former students, which also sustains the YEP center. Alternative contextualized approaches that aim to deal with both the adequacy of training as well as youth's ability to meet their basic needs should also be considered.

Last of all, in implementing the traditional approach, when youth are provided with apprenticeship opportunities and inserted into work groups, it is important that NRC first identify tools of good quality and buy these types of tool in the future. Having additional workspace at YEP centers for YEP graduates to further develop their skills could also be studied as a way to provide ongoing training. This could entail youth investing a small portion of their group income so as to help with teachers' costs. This would be possible in as much as working groups are generating sufficient income for their personal needs and for this sort of additional investment.

## 4.7 Effectiveness

In terms of outcomes, assessing what has been achieved by YEP has some challenges. In particular, for the YEP light in Masisi, it was a drop-in center and there is no systematic tracking of youth who used to participate in activities at the center. As mentioned earlier, around 56 youth in Lushebere are estimated to be working either as apprentices or with those who own tools and materials. As highlighted, this is a way to provide a small amount of income and the ability to practice skills. It is not seen however as sufficient for youth to fully provide for their needs. In Bukombo, the partners were unaware of the number of youth who might be working in the same manner, though there appear to be some that do so. Perhaps a key achievement is the hair salon that was set up by the partner in Lushebere which holds the potential of being sustainable and provides practical experience for youth. The centers were seen, in any case, as having brought youth some form of meaningful experience and protection.

In Bunyakiri, youth at the Hombo Sud YEP Center are still in the training stage while those from Kando have recently graduated and were only inserted into the working groups a couple of weeks prior to this evaluation. It is therefore too early to assess what has been achieved in these locations, in terms of the youth becoming economically productive. In terms of broader social benefits, these have been highlighted by diverse respondents; in particular the reduction in negative social behaviors including thefts and prostitution. It was not within the scope of this study to assess the extent to which YEP helped reduce these practices; these could however be interesting issues to study in regards to the broader impact youth training such as YEP can have.

Unlike in the other locations, it was possible to study the effectiveness in Kitutu since the YEP center in this location has had graduates since 2012. According to NRC, around 65% of youth were successfully inserted into the market at the end of the most recent NRC-funded YEP project in the area in 2012. However, as noted earlier, 16 of the 31 original working groups were no longer running and, currently the local partner who is continuing activities in the YEP Centers is unable to track youth. Due to this situation, instead of being able to do a random questionnaire of general representation of YEP graduates, this study was only able to interview those graduates whose whereabouts were known by the local partner (47 respondents). A large number of unemployed respondents were female youth as they were still present in their homes. While some males were apparently working on fields, the whereabouts of many are unknown to partners. A highly plausible explanation is that many have been drawn to the gold mines surrounding the area of Kitutu. During the project many dropped out to find work there and provide for their immediate needs.

The statistics therefore, give a snapshot of the YEP graduates who remain in the area. Of the respondents interviewed, 45% were female and 55% male and the average age was 22 years old. In terms of familial structure, 68% of them still lived with their broader family which on average had approximately six members. While 54% are married and 44% are single (one respondent was a widow), 79% of youth have an average of 2-3 children.

Before participating in the YEP program, youth were for the most part working as cultivators (48%) or were completely unemployed (31%). The rest were doing either "small trade" (8%), studying (8%) or other various jobs. In terms of studying, 18% of youth never attended school, 55% had some amount of

primary school (with 42% of these having reached only up to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade), and around 27% had reached a secondary level (10<sup>th</sup> grade was the highest). The average grade reached was 5<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school, and the median was also 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Only one respondent had done additional training besides YEP.

Of those interviewed, around 31% had studied tailoring, 27% carpentry, 15% masonry, 14% bakery, and 13% mechanics for motorcycle at the YEP center. All respondents that were currently employed were working with the vocation they learned. Currently, 56% were working in their original working groups, 23% were self-employed (two had their own shops), 15% were unemployed and the rest were either paid on a daily basis with regular work or found occasional work. For those that are currently working, their average monthly income<sup>15</sup> is 30,600 Congolese Francs (FC) (approximately 34 USD<sup>16</sup>). Only 6% of the youth interviewed make less than what they used to before participating in YEP while 10% make around the same income. For those whose income increased, it did so by 33,140 FC per month (almost 37 USD). Table 4.1 below summarizes the average incomes and increases per vocation:

**Table 4.1 Incomes of Currently-Employed YEP Graduates**

	<b>All respondents</b>	<b>Tailoring</b>	<b>Masonry</b>	<b>Carpentry</b>	<b>Motorcycle Repair</b>
<b>Average income</b>	30,600 FC	14,100 FC	48,100 FC	54,000 FC	50,500 FC
<b>Average increase in income</b>	33,140 FC	12,200 FC	31,000 FC	42,500 FC	42,400 FC

Those working in baking – which was not included in table 4.1- were the ones currently having the most difficulty. Seven of the respondents had studied baking. Of these four were unemployed, one was making the same income as before YEP and one was making 10,000 FC less than before she came to YEP when she worked with small trade. Only one had a positive improvement in income; she used to be unemployed but now made 18,000 FC a month.

For tailoring, only one respondent's income remained the same as before YEP when she was working with small trade. The large increase in income after YEP for the other respondents is tied to the fact that many were previously unemployed while those who had worked as cultivators had not earned much. The same can be said of masons who were either unemployed or working with agriculture. Except for one respondent who was unable to quantify what he made in agriculture, all considered their income to have risen in absolute terms. For carpenters, two respondents earned a lot less than before YEP which made the difference of income a low average of 26,400 FC.

For most respondents, YEP resulted in significant gains in their income – for previously unemployed it was absolute. Out of those who had similar or less income, almost all of them had worked in small

<sup>15</sup> This is the amount youth take as an income after they have re-invested part of their earnings in their businesses. It is also an indicative average since earnings can vary from month to month in their shops.

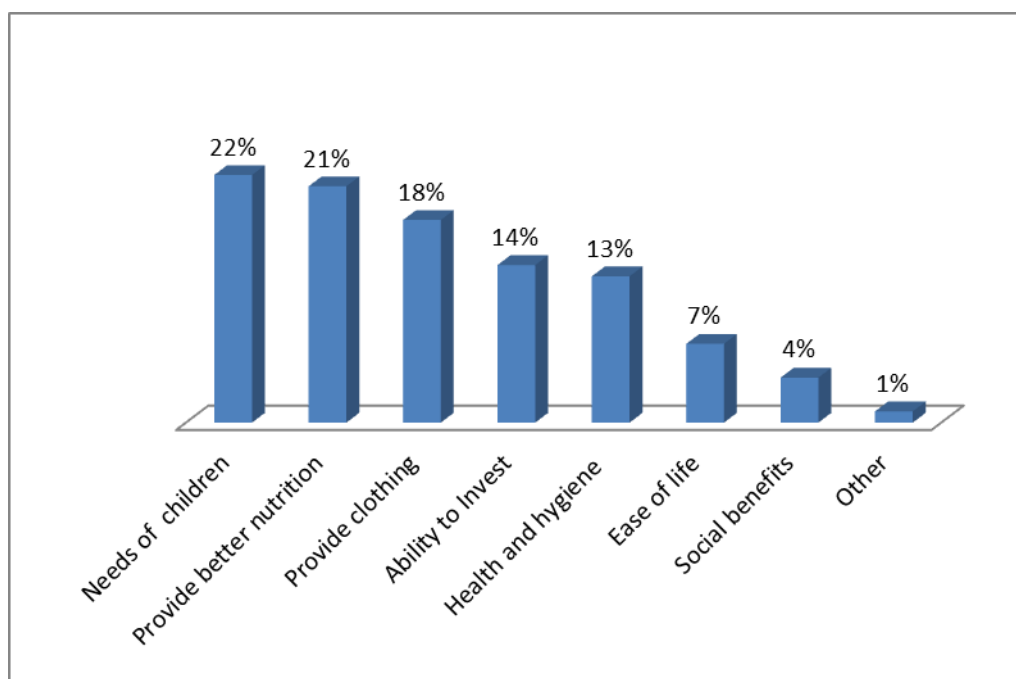
<sup>16</sup> The following conversions calculate the exchange rate at around 1USD = 900 (FC)



trade, as a motorcycle driver and one as a teacher before participating in YEP. Only one respondent, a carpenter, reported having made a higher income in agriculture before participating in YEP than what he currently earns. It is worth noting that a few respondents who made an equal income considered that they had a better lifestyle given the greater ease with which they were able to earn a living after their YEP training.

When respondents were asked if their current income allowed them to have a better, a worse or an equal quality<sup>17</sup> of life as compared to before YEP, 75% stated that they had a better life, 20% an equal life and 5% a worse life. The main reasons given by respondents for an improved life was related to what their income facilitated or permitted, as summarized in figure 4.1 below:

Figure 4.1 Reasons for Improved Life

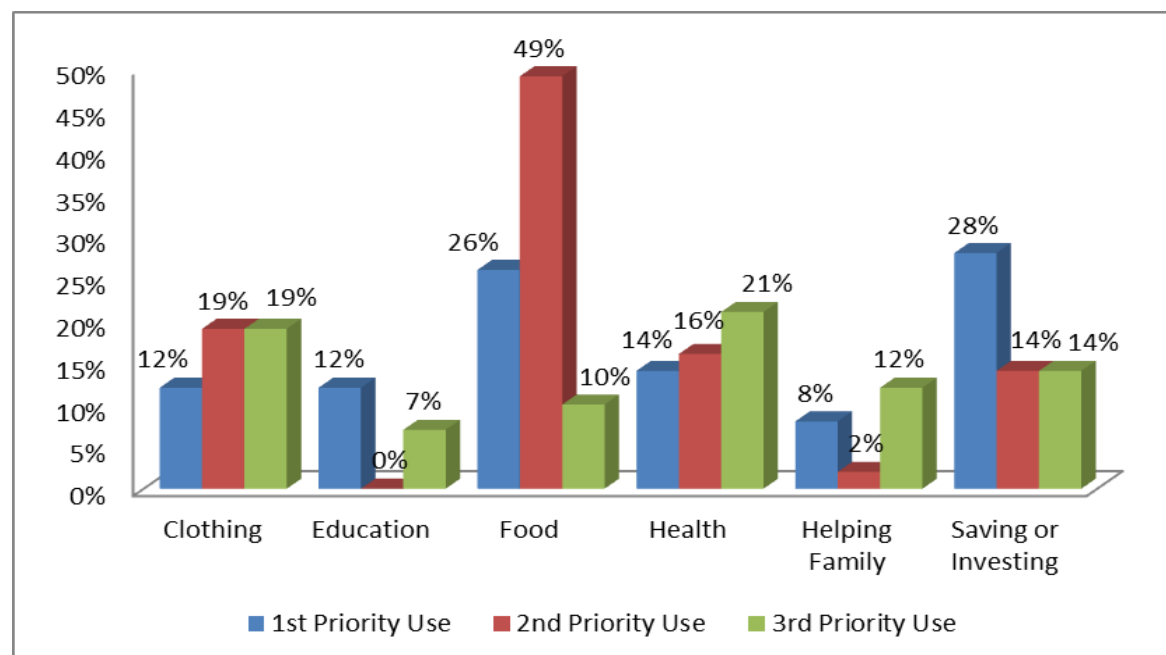


In terms of meeting children's needs respondents included reasons such as providing for their nutrition and healthcare. They distinguished this capacity from that of being able to improve their own health and nutrition; highlighting the importance their income has for their children. Respondents further included the greater facility with which they could invest in their children's education. In regards to the ability to invest, this entailed being able to buy land, build a home, and create or improve income generating activities like agriculture or commerce. Last of all, the primary social benefit that income brought was the capacity to get married.

<sup>17</sup> The assumption is that people have more or less similar parameters in understanding "quality of life".

When asked how they spent their money and to rank in order of perceived priority, many of the same categories emerged, and can be summarized in figure 4.2. This shows the percentage of youth per rank of prioritized category where money was spent. The figure shows that youth prioritize the use of their income to cover their basic needs including food, health and clothing but also highlights the importance that saving and investing has for them<sup>18</sup>. Parents and those who were responsible for youth<sup>19</sup> concurred with the first observation, suggesting that YEP has helped take a burden off of them as their children are now able to meet their own needs.

Figure 4.2 Use of Income per Priority



As noted above, many youth also use their income to help their family at large: 43 respondents were currently doing so. Of these, 37 help with a set amount of money while six help directly with goods. The capacity to help family with income has increased for 36 of the respondents. Those who can help with a fixed amount, give on average 7600 FC per month. Both the median and mode are around 5000 FC per month. A total of 39 respondents were able to specify what costs their contribution usually goes towards. These are mainly health and hygiene needs (34%), food (32%), education of siblings (9%), clothing (8%), investment in field or housing (6%) and other needs (11%).

Some of these positive outcomes and the role YEP had can be highlighted through the following stories of youth:

<sup>18</sup> Some respondents could not think of a third way in which they used their income. This could be attributed to many things. However, all of these respondents made 10,000 FC or less, with the majority of them making around 5,000 or less. It is plausible that many of those who could not give a third use of income, are more limited in what they make and how they are able to use their income.

<sup>19</sup> Some youth are orphans and were under the responsibility of siblings or at times grandparents.

*"I studied but then I stopped because I did not have the means to pay school fees. Without these means, I started working as a motorcycle taxi driver. When I was a taxi driver, I got a girl pregnant. I continued working, but I noticed that although I was working as a motorcycle driver, I wasn't really getting benefits from it. Whatever I could have had, I wasted by drinking and whatnot; all for unnecessary things. While I worked as a taxi driver, I heard about YEP. As a taxi driver, the money I had I also gave to people so they could cultivate my field. With what was harvested, I was able to have food. If I managed to sell manioc, I could make some money like 20,000 FC and I could buy clothes for the children, my wife and myself. So this was my life before: in three years, I did nothing meaningful which I could point to and say, 'here is what I have done with my money'. I wasted it on women and alcohol. I went to YEP to learn how to read and write. Then I wanted to learn manual work. I learned carpentry and I followed the entrepreneurship course. This taught me to manage my money well. The entrepreneurship lessons taught me to manage the money and not use it uselessly so now I do better than I used to do. The first change is that, before going to YEP, I did not have a place to stay. Now I have a house with a tin roof, three rooms and chair. That is all I see as change, little by little."*

For this respondent, though his income has not changed, the knowledge he acquired during the YEP program on entrepreneurship skills and broader counselling has helped the YEP graduate invest his money in a better way instead of wasting it. The example below highlights instead how YEP has allowed a mother to be able to meet her needs and that of her children with greater ease. Though she did not mention it in her story, she has also been able to invest in her own house:

*"[In school] I was a student, and then I became the girlfriend of another student and became pregnant. I left with him and went away from my home. We had three children. While I was pregnant [with my third child], my husband became sick and died. I became a widow and went back to my home. I tried to support myself, and I was doing so until I fell ill and came here (to the hospital). After my husband died, my children were often ill and I got extremely thin. My family was afraid and decided that I should come home, and that is when I returned. I would only help others with occasional work in the fields, to be able to meet my needs. I could have 3,000 FC, but it was not enough for my needs. It would allow me to eat for a day, by buying flour and fish. I had a good time [at YEP]. I learned a lot of things that are helping me today and I understand that I can provide for some of my needs. Most important to me was the opportunity to learn a vocational skill. Now that I am already doing it, I find that I did not waste my time at YEP. My life has changed, because I have easier access to things and I have greater ease to pay for things. I have begun to pay with greater ease school fees for my children and buy clothing. And with the money I earned I was able to buy a (sewing) machine for myself."*

Another example highlights additional benefits that finding work has brought to youth which went beyond meeting their basic needs. These include the possibility of marrying and also increased respect. As this male respondent told us:

*"I did not have a good life before YEP. I did not have work. I did not have a place to live. And now today, I have a place to live. I did not have money. I had no means. I did not have an education. My parents also died when I was very young. My principal need was to have work and to study. YEP helped me a lot to learn as an apprentice. There are many things I should thank YEP for, but I cannot express myself. I studied for free, I was provided materials, and I also received a free meal. I found myself in a place where I was well taken care of. Before, when I did not have work, I did not have an occupation and I felt inferior to others. Now that I have work, I feel that I am at the same level as others. My life is better than before, because I can have work now. I am respected, this allows me to feed myself and clothe myself. It is also going to help me when I will get married and help my family."*

In general, for re-inserted youth that have had a measure of success, this is the main outcome: the increased ability to supply for their needs and that of their children. A possibility is also made for some

of them to invest in improved housing or income generating activities. It also has personal benefits, such as the improved social standing it brings or increased social capital. Likewise, youth found that they were helping the community by being able to provide goods and services through their work. Leaders of the community seemed to agree with this view as they noticed that this has helped prices drop particularly for carpentry, tailoring and construction related services or goods. A concrete example of the improvement in the lives of YEP graduates is that many of them now have beds for the first time in their lives.

However, not all YEP graduates experience the same positive outcomes. As the following respondent notes, her poverty and needs continue:

*"Before YEP, I used to live in poverty. My mother died more than 10 years ago. She left us in a life of misery. I don't know how to express that. I gave birth to my first child and my husband left us. For my second child, the father also left. I was doing everything. I did not have food. I would sleep hungry. I lived in a house that leaked. There was no one to help me. And now my life still remains precarious. I [still] don't know what to do to improve my life. [Before,] I had to do difficult work to be able to meet my needs. I had to do daily labor to have something to help. I thought that YEP would be able to help, so I went. I studied baking. Now I live the same life as I did before YEP. I don't know where to get money to begin an activity. [MY working group] got in a fight and everyone separated. The only problem is that we did not work well together. Each of us did what we wanted to do and when there was money, everyone took money for themselves but not together for the group. After leaving the group, I went to the hospital because my child was sick. I stopped [working] completely. My child stayed six months in the hospital. When I came out, I did not work again, because all my money I had spent on the hospital fees for my child."*

While there is no reason to suppose that YEP will be able to provide work and a better life for 100% of those who receive training there, it is important to notice that the difficulty encountered by this respondent is similar to those faced by many others. It is tied to problems within the working groups. This girl's group broke up after two months, while respondents from other groups suggested theirs did so within three to six months. While in some cases there were personal problems, one group failed because they were not competitive enough and had sold their product on credit which was never repaid. Afterwards, when youth are on their own after the failure of a working group, it appears hard for them to continue to work. In this case, the child's illness aggravated the situation, but other respondents (particularly female) also did not have means to take up activities again even without the presence of a sick child. Female youth whose group had failed, also found it hard to find work in shops around town.

Monitoring and providing better and timelier support to working groups seems very important. One important critique made by parents was that follow-ups were done with too large a time interval between one another. In some cases, this meant that it was too late to help struggling working-groups. There is also a sense by staff that NRC is not providing the best support for youth once they join these. One major concern is that for projects with shorter durations, less time is available for providing ongoing support. NRC is nonetheless able to track groups for a total of six months. This can potentially provide valuable insight as to how effective working groups are.

From interviews with youth, it appeared that many did not work with their original group. Some appeared to have joined other shops in town or only a couple members remained. It would be interesting to understand how these groups have developed and why? At what point are youth capable of leaving the groups to work on their own? It would also be interesting to understand at what point the working groups become successful enough to provide an adequate income? An NRC staff member also suggested the importance of understanding whether initial work within these groups could provide a starting point that could lead to more established employment later, either in shops or other better formed groups. In such a case, working groups could serve as a transitory springboard into the labour market.

Better knowledge of how these groups work is important. Given the number of groups and their geographical dispersion, one possible way to increase knowledge and improve support is to monitor through ICT. If feasible, and if phone network is available, part of the insertion kit could be a cheap mobile phone accompanied with training and instruction on use. The phone could be used for two purposes: youth could text when they are in need of assistance, such as when they are facing conflicts within the group or resources have become insufficient because buyers did not come to pay and collect what they ordered. This could hopefully allow for more timely intervention when problems arise instead of discovering them when scheduled visits are due. A second use could be to collect basic data every week based on indicators that would help to understand the progression of the working groups within the market. This could, for example, help understand if and at what point in time micro-cooperatives are able to provide members with adequate income.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

Conflict and poverty have created an environment for youth that encourages them to reproduce the conditions of poverty and the potential for armed conflict. There are not many adequate social structures or processes that enable youth to participate and contribute to their society or community in a meaningful way. Limited possibilities are available for conflict-affected and impoverished youth in terms of employment, education and healthy spaces to develop in positive ways. Some activities that would typically engage a large number of youth, such as agriculture, have been much reduced due to conflict or the low results it yields. Youth are therefore at the margins, unable to meet their basic needs such as food, clothing, healthcare and housing, both for themselves and in many cases for their children. Instead, many youth engage in negative social behaviors that are harmful to society at large as well as to themselves and their future.

Youth need guidance and support to find ways to engage in society in a positive and meaningful way. Education, for example, enables one to learn how to contribute to society in various spheres. Through it, youth can learn vocations so as to contribute to and integrate in society. However, work opportunities have to be facilitated for youth given the limitations of the market. This can be done either through the creation of employment or the provision of means for them to start-up their own income generating activities.

There is also a general need for an environment that enables the integration of youth. Male youth's association with armed groups results in them facing various barriers both in Masisi and Bunyakiri, which include labor market discrimination and being mistreated by the national army. In Bunyakiri, trauma emerged as a widespread problem and cause for concern. Youth also lack spaces to meet and have healthy recreational activities, as well as places to be heard.

NRC's YEP approach is relevant to the needs of youth as it aims to help the most vulnerable with an educational opportunity. It creates a structure that attempts to enable youth's integration into society. By teaching a vocational skill, literacy and life skills, the traditional YEP prepares youth to contribute to their society. In doing so, it also brings youth out of harmful lifestyles. It further attempts to support youth with their integration into the market by providing them with re-insertion kits comprising of tools and materials. Though some of these component are missing in the YEP "light" approach, in the context of emergency, YEP "light" provides youth with a meaningful activity and a protected space.

There are, however, five main issues with regard to the appropriateness of the YEP approach. Besides the fact that the traditional YEP reaches very few youth at a time, it struggles with being sustainable. The piloted YEP "light" though it reached a higher number of youth, also proved unsustainable. Second, it might not be the most effective approach pedagogically when it comes to teaching vocational skills. While in the traditional YEP the theoretical knowledge seems adequate, youth do not seem to have sufficient practical knowledge and experience when they finish the program. This is even more so with

the YEP “light”. This could be due to the insufficient time youth have with tools, materials and teachers. Third, youth have immediate needs that have to be met on a daily basis. Attending a full day at a traditional YEP center five days a week is demanding on youth and their families. YEP “light” is seen as an option to overcome this barrier by providing youth a “drop-in” center, giving them freedom during the week. Fourth, in the traditional YEP, the support given to youth in the working groups could be improved. Given the lack of practical skills, youth need to have their capacity strengthened and could be assisted with more capital in the beginning. Better follow-up of youth in their working groups is essential. Lastly, NRC does not assist much with broader issues that make the environment less conducive for youth’s integration.

Based on what was observed in Kitutu, for those who are successfully inserted and who continue to work, YEP has enabled them to begin taking care of their own needs. . Their income has increased enabling youth to invest in building homes, pay school fees and healthcare bills for children and has even enabled some to get married. Most are also able to help broader families with some of their needs. Parents feel a burden has been removed and community leaders believe benefits have been brought to the community with the increased services and goods and the reduction of prices.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the needs that have been presented and the issues pertaining to the appropriateness and effectiveness of YEP, the following are strategic recommendation:

- As NRC plans to implement the YEP “light” in conjunction with the traditional model, its pedagogical effectiveness must be considered. Some structures must be in place to guarantee youth have adequate time with tools, materials and teachers. Having shifts during a week is one possibility which ensures youth can practice skills twice a week. This could alternate with other necessary subjects such as literacy and recreational activities like music and theatres.
- In implementing YEP light, if it is not increasing skills of youth who are already engaged in the market, it must be adapted to facilitate their entry into work; particularly as its original purpose was protection and not insertion. Given that providing kits to a large number of youth is not feasible, then facilitating some form of entry point into work must be studied. A possible option is the approach the Lushebere center is taking, where youth learn on the market through the creation of a shop. More experienced youth can begin earning an income as they contribute. Part of this could be set apart for a kit.
- If local partners and government bodies such as the Ministry of Youth are unable to guarantee a free center for youth, perhaps an alternative model or approach to training youth needs to be considered in these contexts – such as the case of Beni.
- Consider ways to increase the level of practical skills youth gain at the center. The pedagogical effectiveness of the skills training at the YEP center should be studied, compared to traditional

apprenticeships so as to evaluate in which scenario youth would learn a vocation more effectively.

- Consider alternative models that can tackle the problem of sustainability, equip youth better and allow them to meet their needs. One example has been suggested throughout the study: create self-sustaining shops where youth learn in the afternoon and advanced youth practice in the morning for an income.
- Ensure that NRC identifies tools of good quality and buys these in the future.
- Consider partnerships with stakeholders engaged in development projects that could assist in creation of employment for NRC-trained youth.
- Consider how to create a community environment that is conducive for youth. Perhaps by finding local partners who can help advocate with the community on the importance of integrating youth and not discriminating based on associations with armed groups. This could also include providing broader recreational opportunities or spaces for youth to meet safely and finding ways to engage traumatized youth.
- Consider implementing ICT as a tool to better monitor the working groups.
- Consider tracking the 35% of former YEP students who were not successfully re-inserted in Kitutu so as to be able to better understand how effective YEP has been, to get an overview of what these youth are currently doing and how they could have been better supported.



## 6. Annex

### 6.1 Terms of Reference

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

After decades of conflict and displacement in DR Congo, more than 7 million school-age children are not enrolled in school. In the Kivus, there are currently 294,638 IDP children, who either have never been to school or are enrolled in school and face a high risk of dropping out. The combination of conflict, repeated displacement, and poverty has a particular toll on girl's education. In the eastern provinces of DRC, completion rates show that on average only 46% of girls (compared to 66.5% of boys) complete the primary school cycle and only 28.8% of girls (compared to 51.2% of boys) enroll in secondary school. Considering that in DRC, children age 9-10 years old who have never been to school are not eligible to start primary school as they are considered over the age limit, and that there are very few quality educational opportunities for youth, countless children are lost to the education system and become illiterate members of society without vocational skills. Currently in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), there is a gap in the humanitarian response for the needs of youth (age 15-24).

NRC's traditional response to meet the needs of youth in DRC has been the implementation of a standard Youth Education Pack (YEP) project. The 10-month YEP training programme is designed with three components, literacy/numeracy, life skills and basic vocational skills training but with an emphasis on vocational skills training. The objectives are for the learners to:

- Become functionally literate, mastering basic and relevant literacy and numeracy.
- Obtain knowledge and awareness on life skills subject such as hygiene, health and various other topics that will further empower their development and awareness as individuals and as members of their societies.
- Acquire basic vocational skills that will increase their chances of finding apprenticeships, paid work or allow them to pursue further professional training.

NRC currently implements the standard Youth Education Pack (YEP) program and has also previously implemented an emergency version of the YEP program. During 2004 and 2005, an initial Youth Education Pack programme (YEP) was piloted in the province of North Kivu. NRC has since then implemented its YEP program in North Kivu, in both Grand Nord Kivu (GNK) and Petit Nord Kivu (PNK), as well as in South Kivu. NRC has also implemented an adapted YEP program for an emergency response in Masisi in 2013-2014.

NRC is committed to basing education programs on the best available evidence of what works to improve the lives of children and families. There is a large population of youth in DRC who are illiterate and struggle to find a way to earn income to support themselves and their families. NRC's response to meet the needs of these youth has been the YEP activities, providing them with literacy courses, vocational training and teaching them life skills. However, the understanding of the true needs of youth and the extent to which humanitarian responses reaches their needs is limited.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND INTENDED USE

The **purpose** of this study is to learn from what we are doing and to improve our performance.

The primary users of the evaluation are:

- NRC education team

The secondary users of the evaluation are:

- Other NRC missions where YEP is implemented
- Local partners
- Education Cluster at local level

The **findings and conclusions** of this study will be shared internally with:

- NRC Head Office and country programs: Study publication (print), email dissemination to target staff, presentation and discussion at head office
- Current and potential YEP donors in DRC: UNDP, UNICEF, Sida, NMFA

### **3. SCOPE OF WORK AND LINES OF INQUIRY**

#### **3.1 Scope of Work**

This study will review and use the portfolio of existing YEP project documents in DRC, including all final YEP project reports, all YEP project budgets, monitoring data, etc. covering 2012-2014.

A key component of this study will be a field visit to DRC. The field component will consist of visits to former YEP implementation areas, current YEP Centers, as well as interviews and focus groups with key informants. A former YEP Centre will be visited in Kitutu. Masisi will be visited where the emergency version of YEP was implemented. Two currently functioning YEP Centres will be visited in Bunyakiri. The field visit will consist of interviews of: NRC project staff, current YEP students, local implementing partners, former YEP students and local leaders in the communities where YEP is currently or has been implemented. Additionally, focus groups will be carried out with youth and parents in each of the communities.

#### **3.2 Lines of inquiry**

This study primarily explores whether the traditional YEP model meets the existing needs of youth in Eastern DRC. As part of this question, there are several important lines of inquiry:

- **Relevance:** Research the needs of youth in the context of Eastern DRC, and the support they need to become productive, contributing members of their society. This should focus on the needs identified by youth, including educational needs, employment environment, etc.
- **Appropriateness:** Which of these needs is the traditional YEP model designed to address, which needs are currently not being addressed? Identify the key strengths and gaps in the approach.
- **Effectiveness:** How well does it meet those needs – what outcomes have been achieved?

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

The study should provide a holistic review of the existing YEP program in addition to an analysis of how well it meets the needs of youth in Eastern DRC, and related recommendations for meeting the needs of these conflict-affected youth.

The following approaches will be used:

- **Desk study:** The evaluator will review project data, proposals, reports and other documents relevant for the programme.
- **Field visit:** The visits should include Masisi, Kitutu and Bunyakiri.
- **Interviews:**
  - o Face-to-face individual structured questionnaire interviews with YEP graduates.
  - o Semi-structured interviews with YEP project staff (including both NRC staff and YEP Centre staff).
  - o Key informant interviews with other project stakeholders (employers, government authorities, current and former local partners).
- **Focus groups:** Sessions with youth in the communities, parents of current YEP students, parents of former YEP students and community leaders.
- **Direct observation:** Classroom and workshop activities in the functioning YEP Centres and prior YEP Centres that have already been handed over to local partners.
- **In-depth case studies:** Interviews with former YEP students to provide typical result case studies (both good and bad) showing longer-term impact of YEP on their lives.

#### 5. STUDY PRINCIPALS

The study will be guided by the following ethical considerations:

- Openness - of information shared, to the highest possible degree to all involved parties
- Public access - to the results and study documents (reports, briefs, etc.)
- Confidentiality and informed consent – names and identifying information for youth and other beneficiaries, NRC staff, or others consulted or included for this study will be kept confidential, unless clear, voluntary consent is provided to disclose identifying information.
- Reliability and independence - the study should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy

## 6. COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE STUDY

The study will be guided and led by an established team of NRC staff, including:

- Shannon O'Rourke, NRC DRC Education Program Manager
- Awa Samba, NRC DRC M&E Coordinator
- Marco Di Cecco, NRC DRC RRR Program Manager

The study team will oversee administration and overall coordination for the study, including:

- Establish the Terms of Reference;
- Select evaluator(s);
- Produce and approve the proposed study methodology;
- Review and comment on the draft evaluation report;
- Establish a dissemination and utilization strategy.

The study will also be given additional technical support as necessary by an established reference group of NRC staff, including:

- Andrea Naletto, NRC Education Special Adviser
- Katrine Wold, NRC Youth Thematic Adviser
- Lian Bradley, Evaluation Adviser NRC
- Silje Besseberg Bråten, Programme Adviser DRC

The reference group will provide technical support as needed for review of documents such as:

- Terms of Reference;
- Concept note;
- Final Report; and
- Management Response.

## 7. DELIVERABLES

Study deliverables include:

1. Concept note (22 October 2014): Following the desk review and prior to beginning field work, the evaluator will produce a 2-3 page concept note subject to approval by the NRC Evaluation Steering Committee. The concept note will detail a draft work plan with a summary of the primary information needs, key stakeholders, the methodology to be used, and a work plan/schedule for field visits and major deadlines. In addition, the tools which will be used (focus group guides, questionnaires, etc.) should be included as annexes. With respect to methodology, the evaluator will provide a description of how data will be collected and a sampling framework, data sources, and drafts of suggested data collection tools such as questionnaires and interview guides.
2. Feedback and Validation Meeting (end of field mission): The evaluator will present key findings to NRC management and staff in the field. They will also use this opportunity to discuss key lessons learnt and get feedback on the findings from the programme staff.
3. Draft report (30 November 2014): A draft report will be submitted to the Evaluation Steering Committee, who will review the draft and provide feedback within two weeks of receipt of the draft report
4. Final report (17 December 2014): A final report will be submitted to the Evaluation Steering Committee. The report will include: an executive summary (maximum 2 pages) with key recommendations, table of contents, background of the YEP program in DRC and a main text comprising of findings and professional commentary and analysis. The report will be written in English and it should not exceed 30 pages, using Calibri 11 point.
5. Final report translated to French (20 December 2014)

## 8. TIMEFRAME

Timeframe for this study includes:

1. Desk review – September to 22 October 2014
2. Inception report – 22 October 2014
3. Field visit to DRC – October-November 2014 (2.5 weeks)
4. Draft and final report – draft 30 November 2014, final 17 December 2014

In event of serious problems or delays, the study team should be informed immediately. Any significant changes to review timetables shall be approved by the study team in advance.

## 9. EVALUATION CONSULTANT TEAM

NRC seeks expressions of interest from people with the following skills/qualifications:

- Education and youth (YEP) experience
- Qualitative research skills
- Evaluation and/or research experience
- Experience in humanitarian contexts
- Experience in the Democratic Republic of Congo is an asset
- Fluency in French is required

## 10. APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

**Application Deadline: 26/09/2014**

**Interview dates: 01/10/2014**

Bids must include the following:

- 2-3 page concept note including outline of evaluation framework and methods, including comments on the TOR, proposed time frame, tools, and work plan.
- CV including past experience of evaluation
- Before presenting your interest, please have the consent of your line manager that you can be released for this evaluation should you be selected (for NRC staff only).

Submit completed bids to Shannon O'Rourke ([Shannon.ORourke@nrc.no](mailto:Shannon.ORourke@nrc.no)) and Marco Di Cecco ([Marco.DiCecco@nrc.no](mailto:Marco.DiCecco@nrc.no)). The final decision on the candidate will be taken by (01/10/2014).

## 6.2 Evaluation Matrix

The following matrix was developed to guide the study. Given some field constraints, gender parity was not achieved.

Questions	Data Source	Data collection	Sampling	Analysis
<b>Inquiry line 1 – Relevance</b>				
How does the youth's current condition affect their being contributing members of their communities?	Youth from the community Community Leaders Parents of Current Students	Focus Group discussions	Purposive Sampling: Representative of Most Vulnerable 50% F/M	Participant based group analysis
What improvements are desired by/for youth and what assistance is understood as necessary for such changes?	Youth from the community Community Leaders Parents of current Students	Focus Group Discussions	Purposive Sampling: Representative of Most Vulnerable 50% F/M	Participant based group analysis
What factors inhibiting youth's broader participation/contribution to society have been identified?	Partner organization Employers Ministry of Youth, Social affairs NRC Staff	Key informant Interviews	Purposive sampling	Cross case analysis
What types/levels of assistance have been identified as necessary for an improved participation of youth in society?	Partner organization Employers Ministry of Youth, Social affairs NRC staff	Key informant Interviews	Purposive Sampling	Cross case analysis
<b>Inquiry line 2 – Appropriateness</b>				
How do NRC and partner Staff understand the role YEP has had in enabling youth to enhance their participation/contribution in society?	NRC Staff Yep Staff Partner Staff	Semi-structured interview	Purposive sampling	Cross case analysis
How do beneficiaries and former beneficiaries understand the role YEP has in meeting their needs?	Former Yep Students Parents of Current Students Parents of former Students Community Leaders	Interviews Focus Group Discussions	Purposive sampling For Youth – 50% M/F,	Cross case analysis  Participant based group analysis
<b>Inquiry line 3 – Outcomes</b>				



Has YEP assisted former students to provide for themselves and their families?	Former Yep Community Youth Project documents	Questionnaire Desk review	Random sampling (if possible)	x
How do beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders evaluate the assistance youth have received in terms of enabling their contribution to society?	Former YEP Employers Parents of Former students Community Leaders NRC/Staff	Typical Case In- depth interview Key Informant Interviews Focus Group	Purposive Sampling	Typical case analysis  Cross case analysis Participant based group analysis

### 6.3 Sampled Respondents per Research Site

Data collection was therefore undertaken as following:

**Table 6.2 Sampled Respondents - Masisi Bukombo**

Respondent Category	Data collection tool	Respondents
Community leaders	Focus group discussion	11: All (M)
Parents of Current students	Focus group discussion	10: 5 (F) + 5 (M)
Male Youth from the community	Focus group discussions	8: All (M)
Female youth from the community	Focus group discussion	7: All (F)
Teachers from the Yep Center	Group interview	5: 1(F) and 4 (M)
President of YEP managing committee	Interview	1: (M)
Former students	Interview	4: 2(F) and 2(M)

**Table 6.2 Sampled Respondents – Masisi Lushebere**

Respondent Category	Data collection tool	Respondents
Community leaders	Focus group discussion	10: All (M)
Parents of Current students	Focus group discussion	8: 5 (F) + 3 (M)
Youth from the community	Focus group discussions	8: 4 (F) + 4 (M)
President of YEP managing committee	Interview	1: (M)
Former students	In-depth case study	1: (M)

**Table 6.3 Sampled Respondents – Bunyakiri Kando**

Respondent Category	Data collection tool	Respondents
Community leaders	Focus group discussion	9: 2 (F) +7(M)
Parents of Current students	Focus group discussion	11: 5(F) +6(M)
Non-YEP community youth	Focus group discussion	7: 4(F) + 3(M)
Teachers from the Yep Center	Group interview	4: 1(F) + 3(M)
Employers	Interview	3: (M)
Former students	Interview	7: 5(F) + 2(M)

Former Students	In-depth case study	2: 1(f) + 1 (M)
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**Table 6.4 Sampled Respondents – Bunyakiri Hombo**

Respondent Category	Data collection tool	Respondents
Parents of Current students	*Group Interview	5: 2(F) +3(M)
Non-YEP community youth	Focus group discussion	7: 4(F) + 3(M)
Teachers from the YEP Center	Group interview	5: 2(F) + 3(M)
Employers	Interview	3: All(M)
Former students	Interview	7: 5(F) + 2(M)
Former Students	In-depth case study	2: 1(f) + 1 (M)

\* Originally a focus group discussion. Not enough respondents were available.

**Table 6.3 Sampled Respondents – Kitutu**

Respondent Category	Data collection tool	Respondents
Community leaders	Focus group discussion	8: 2 (F) +6(M)
Parents of Former Students	Focus group discussion	12: 4(F) +8(M)
Employers	*Group Interview	5: All (M)
Former students	Questionnaire	48: 22(F) + 26(M)
Former Students	Interviews	6: 2(F) + 4 (M)
Former Students	In-depth case study	4: 2(M) + 2(F)

\*Originally a focus group discussion. Not enough respondents were available.

## 6.4 Data Collection Tools

### Topic Guide for Leaders from the Community

<b>Introduction</b>	Explain purpose, guidelines, confidentiality etc.
<b>Opening</b>	Introduce themselves –
<b>General Perception</b>	1) What do leaders think of their youth's current situation in life – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Possibilities they have</li> <li>b. Work</li> <li>c. Their role in families/community</li> </ul>
Notes	
	2) What do leaders think are the main challenges/difficulties youth face in the community?
Notes	
<b>Needs</b>	
	1) What are things that make it hard for youth to provide for themselves/families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Find better jobs?</li> </ul>
Notes	
	2) In what other ways could youth help or contribute to their lives, families/communities but are unable to do so? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barriers</li> </ul>
Notes	
<b>Support</b>	

	1) What do youth need help with to overcome the identified barriers (above) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. to provide/ find a better job</li> <li>b. Support community/themselves in other ways</li> </ul>
Notes	
	2) What things could youth learn that would help?
Notes	
	3) What are difficulties youth face in getting this type of support?
Notes	
<b>Yep Support</b>	
	1) In which ways has YEP helped your youth face challenges and barriers around them? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. General ones presented</li> <li>b. Providing for themselves/family</li> </ul>
Notes	
	2) Which barriers/challenges are still present that YEP has not been able to help? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What still makes it hard to provide?</li> </ul>
Notes	
<b>YEP Impact</b>	
	1) What kind of changes have you seen in the youth who have been through the YEP project? (name positives and negatives)

Notes	
	2) What kind of changes do you think youth have brought to their families or communities? (positives or negatives)
Notes	
	3) In which ways do you think YEP has prepared/ or not your Youth for the future?
Notes	
<b>Wrap up</b>	
	1) What do you think are the most important things about YEP, where do you think YEP should improve?

## Topic Guide for Parents of Current Students

<b>Introduction</b>	Explain purpose, guidelines, confidentiality etc.
<b>Opening</b>	Parents introduce themselves – what their children (youth) currently doing
<b>General Perception</b>	1) What do parents think of their youth's current situation in life – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Possibilities they have</li> <li>b. Work</li> <li>c. Their role in families/community</li> </ul>
Notes	
	2) What do parents think are the main challenges/difficulties youth face in the community?
Notes	
<b>Needs</b>	
	1) What are things that make it hard for youth to provide for themselves/families
Notes	
	2) What are things that make it hard to find a job// better job? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Factors related to them (own capacities)</li> <li>b. External factors (labour markets etc.)</li> </ul>
Notes	
	3) What other ways youth could help or contribute to their lives, families/communities but are unable to do so? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Barriers</li> </ul>

<b>Support</b>	
	1) What do youth need help with to overcome identified barriers a. to provide/ find a better job b. Support community/themselves in other ways
Notes	
	2) What things could youth learn that would help?
Notes	
	3) What are difficulties youth face in getting this help?
Notes	
<b>Yep Support</b>	
	1) In which ways do you think YEP is helping your youth face these, and in which ways does it not help?
<b>Wrapping up</b>	
	2) What assistance do you think is most important for your youth now? 3) And where should Yep improve?
Notes	



## Topic Guide for Parents of Former Yep Students.

<b>Introduction</b>	Explain purpose, guidelines, confidentiality etc.
<b>Opening</b>	Introduce themselves – what are their children (Youth currently doing)
<b>General Perception</b>	1) What do parents think of youth's current situation in life –
Notes	How are the youth in, in the community doing?? How do they participated/contribute to the community??
	2) What do parents think are the main challenges/difficulties youth face in the community?
Notes	What do parents think are the main challenges/difficulties youth face in the community?
<b>Needs</b>	What are the main problems they face? What is missing for them?
	1) What are things that made it or make it hard for their children to provide for themselves/families a. Find better jobs?
Notes	Why is it hard to sustain themselves? Why is it hard to find job? What is missing on their side
	2) What are educational barriers?
Notes	Why have they not been able to study? What are the opportunities they have now? Why haven't they taken advantages
<b>Yep Support</b>	

	1) What do youth need help with to overcome the identified barriers (above)
Notes	<p>What do youth need to find jobs?</p> <p>What do they need to be able to get an education?</p> <p>What do they need for the other problems we mentioned?</p> <p>Anything else you think they need here in the community?</p>
	2) What things could youth learn that would help?
Notes	
	3) What are difficulties youth face in getting this type of support?
Notes	They need these things, why is it hard to get them??
<b>Yep Support</b>	
	1) In which ways has YEP helped your youth face challenges and barriers around them?
Notes	<p>So we talked about all these problems, and things youth need, How do you think this center has helped youth with their challenges?</p> <p>How has it helped youth with what you said they need?</p>
	<p>2) Which barriers/challenges are still present that YEP has not been able to help?</p> <p>a. <b>Which needs has it not been able to help</b></p>
Notes	
<b>YEP Impact</b>	

	1) What kind of changes have you seen in your children who have been through the YEP project? (name positives and negatives) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Change in the way they provide at home?</li> <li>b. Broader changes?</li> </ul>
Notes	
	2) What kind of changes do you think youth have brought to your families or communities? (positives or negatives)
Notes	
	3) In which ways do you think YEP has prepared/ or not your Youth for the future?
Notes	
<b>Wrap up</b>	
	2) What do you think are the most important things about the assistance YEP gives? 3) Where do you think YEP should improve?

## Topic Guide for Youth from the Community

<b>Introduction</b>	Explain purpose, guidelines, confidentiality etc.
<b>Opening</b>	Youth introduce themselves – and what they are currently doing
<b>General Perception</b>	1) What do youth think of their current situation in life – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Possibilities they have</li> <li>b. Work</li> <li>c. Their role in families/community</li> </ul>
Notes	
	2) What are things you would like to change about your current situation in life? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Possibilities</li> <li>b. Work</li> <li>Role in family/community</li> </ul>
Notes	
	3) What could help with changing these things?
Notes	
<b>Needs</b>	
	1) What are things that make it hard for youth to provide for themselves/families
Notes	

	<p>2) What are things that make it hard to find a job/ better job?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Factors related to them (own capacities)</li> <li>b. External factors (labour markets etc.)</li> </ul>
Notes	
	<p>3) What other ways youth could help or contribute to their lives, families/communities but are unable to do so?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Barriers</li> </ul>
<b>Support</b>	
	<p>1) What do youth need help with to overcome identified barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. to provide/ find a better job</li> <li>b. Support community/themselves in other ways</li> </ul>
Notes	
	<p>2) What things could youth learn that would help?</p>
Notes	
	<p>3) What are difficulties youth face in getting this help?</p>
Notes	
<b>Wrapping up</b>	
	<p>1) Think through – what do you want to do with your life, what do you need to be able to do this?</p>
Notes	

## **Interview YEP Graduates**

### **Welcome /Introduction**

- Purpose/confidentiality etc.

### **General background**

- What are you currently doing?
- What have you studied at YEP?
- What were you doing before Yep?

### **Needs**

- What do you think of your current situation, as a youth?
- What are the general challenges/difficulties you face?
- What do you think were or are the biggest challenges you face to provide for yourself and your family?
- Are there other ways you would like to contribute to your family/community, but are unable to?
  - o Which are these
  - o Why not?

### **Yep assistance**

- How do you think Yep has helped you so far in facing these challenges/difficulties?
  - o Which did they help with?
  - o Which did they not help with?
- Which parts of the Yep programme helped and which did not?
  - o How did they help?

### **Yep Impact**

- How well do you think the yep has prepared you for work?
  - o To find work?
- Can you think of and describe which ways you use what you learned here at yep in everyday life?

- What ways do you think you changed after doing YEP?
  - o How are things different then before you did this yep (positive or negative)?
- Are there any ways you have been able to help your family or your community?
  - o How is this compared to before you did YEP

## **NRC Staff/Yep Staff Interviews**

### **Intro**

### **Background**

- How long have you been working with youth, or youth related issues in the region?
- How have you been involved with youth?
- How would you characterize current conditions youth find themselves in?

### **Needs**

- What would you say are the biggest challenges and barriers youth face in general?
- What are the types of assistance youth are in need of?
- What are the biggest difficulties they face in finding work/livelihood that can provide for themselves/family?
- What are the biggest challenges they have in improving these chances?

### **NRC Approach**

- What needs do you think NRCs Yep approach most assists youth with?
  - o What are the strengths of this approach?
- Which needs does it not address?
  - o What are the weaknesses in this approach?
  - o What are needs it is unable to address?
- What needs do you think the programme is designed to address?
  - o Which ones can it not address?

### **Assessment**

- How would you assess youth who have been through NRC's YEP (if you have followed)
  - o What positives do you think they have gained from their experience at Yep?
  - o What do you think they have gained for finding work/providing for family?
  - o How could they have been better prepared?
- Have you/programme – noticed changes in the lives of youth? (+ or -)
- OR changes they have brought to the community? (+or -)



## **Key informant Interviews (Ministry, Employers, Partner)**

### **Welcome/Introduction**

- How long have you been working with youth-or youth related issues in the region?
- How does this [organization/company/ministry] work in particular with youth?

### **Needs**

- How would you characterize youth's current conditions?
- What are the main challenges and difficulties they face?
- In what ways are they in most need of assistance?

### **Livelihood related needs**

- What would you say are the biggest difficulties they face in finding work/livelihoods that can sustain themselves? Assist their families?
- What are the biggest challenges they have in improving their chances of finding better work?
- What are the most important forms of assistance they need, to have better opportunities?
  - o Rank in order of importance
  - o What kind of education/skills
  - o Additional assistance
- Are there other ways you think it would be important for youth to contribute to their communities?
  - o Barriers to this?

### **NRC Assessment**

- How would you assess the youth who have been through NRC's YEP?
- How do you think they have been equipped to face the barriers/challenges you have mentioned?
  - o How could they have been better prepared/assisted?
- What do you think they have gained for finding work/providing for family?
  - o What could have been improved?
- Have you noticed any changes with these youth (positive or negative?) [+or-]
  - o Or could you compare to youth who have not had a similar opportunity?

## **In-depth Typical Case Study**

### **Narrative frame: Story Telling in 4 chapters.**

Welcome/Introduction –

Tell your experience as a story in 4 chapters:

- 1) What was your life like before YEP
  - a. What were you doing
  - b. Your experience
  
- 2) What was YEP like
  - a. How was that experience?
  - b. Positives/negatives
  - c. What changes/transformation did you go through?
  
- 3) Life after YEP?
  - a. How has your experience been after YEP?
  - b. How has Yep influenced or not?
  - c. How is it different then life before you started YEP
  - d. Difference to your life /family or not?
  
- 4) Moving Forward
  - a. What is the next chapter?
  - b. Can things learned at Yep help?

## **Survey for Employed**

### **Background information**

- 1) Gender : M /F
- 2) How old are you \_\_\_\_
- 3) Do you live with family? (y/n)
  - a. If Yes how many members in your family?
- 4) Are you a parent? (y/n)
  - a. If yes how many children?
- 5) What were you doing before YEP?
  - a. Salaried
  - b. Daily wages
  - c. Self employed
  - d. Unemployed
  - e. Household work
  - f. Studying
  - g. Other

If other please state which:

### **Educational Background**

- 6) Have you been to school before? y/n
  - a. If yes, what level of education have you reached?
- 7) Have you participated in any other training? y/n
  - a. If yes, what training/ did you receive?
- 8) What skill did you learn at YEP
  - a. Menuiserie
  - b. Maçonnerie

- c. Coupe et couture
- d. Cuisine
- e. Boulangerie
- f. Others
  - i. If other which one

### **Employment**

- 9) Are you currently working? (y/n)
- a. If no skip to question 26?
- 10) If yes, what is your current occupation?
- 11) Are you
- a. self-employed
  - b. working group
  - c. Daily wages
  - d. Salaried
  - e. Household work
  - f. Other

If other which:

### **Changes in employment/livelihood.**

- 12) How much money do you make per month?
- 13) Before and after YEP, has your income decreased, increased or stayed the same?
- a. If it changed, by how much?
- 14) Does your income today help you have a worse, better or equal life compared to before you started YEP?
- a. Why? (cite 3 reasons max)

15) What do you do with the money you make? - Rank in order of importance

16) If you live with family, do you help your family with your income? (Y/N)

- a. With how much do you help them with during a month?
- b. Has the amount you help your family decreased, increased or stayed the same compared to before and after YEP?
- c. What expenses do you most help them with? ( Rank in order of importance)

17) Besides providing an income, are there other ways your employment helps your life? If yes, which ways?

18) Besides providing an income, are there other ways your employment helps your family? If yes, which ways?

19) Besides providing an income, are there other ways your employment helps your community? If yes, which ways?

20) Besides providing work, has Yep helped your life in any other way? (y/n) If Yes, which ways?

**Questions for unemployed only**

21) How long have you been unemployed?

22) Why do you think you are unemployed?

23) How do you try to find other work?

24) What are difficulties you have in finding work?

## 6.5 Consent Form for In-depth Case Studies

### Consent Form

NRC is collecting this information as part of a study on the relevance, appropriateness and effectiveness of its Youth Education Pack (YEP) program.

I agree to allow NRC to publish this information in written form and on the internet. The audience will be donors and NRC staff. Things published on the internet can be accessed by the public.

☐

I agree to allow NRC to publish my photo in the written report.

☐

I agree to allow NRC to publish any photo on the internet.

☐

I understand that my name will not be used in any publication, both in what is printed and published on the internet.

☐

Date – Place

Signature