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ENGAGING YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE FOR THE FEED THE FUTURE SOUTH SUDAN FOOD, AGRIBUSINESS, AND RURAL MARKETS (FARM) II PROJECT

31 AUGUST 2015



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Recommended Citation: Barbour, John and Paul Bell. “Engaging Youth in Agriculture in South Sudan.” Prepared for the Feed the Future South Sudan Food, Agribusiness and Rural Markets (FARM) II Project by Making Cents International in collaboration with Abt Associates , Bethesda, MD, August 2015.



Abt Associates | 4550 Montgomery Avenue | Suite 800 North |
Bethesda, Maryland 20814 | T. 301.347.5000 | F. 301.913.9061 |
www.abtassociates.com

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THE FEED THE FUTURE SOUTH SUDAN FOOD, AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL MARKETS (FARM) II PROJECT

Engaging Youth in Agriculture in South Sudan

Contract No.: AID-668-C-15-00001

DISCLAIMER

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Acronyms

FARM II	Food, Agribusiness and Rural Markets Program II
FBO	Farmer-based organization
FGD	Focus group discussion
GAP	Good agronomic practices
ICT	Information and communication technology
IPCS	Institute for the Promotion of Civil Society
KII	Key informant interview
MC	Making Cents International
MIS	Market information system
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
ODA	Observation debrief activity
PPP	Public-private partnership
SMS	Short message service
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Making Cents International (MC) conducted an assessment of youth in agriculture in the Equatoria region of South Sudan. This activity was done at the invitation of Abt Associates under USAID's Food, Agribusiness and Rural Markets (FARM) II project, a Feed the Future initiative. Due to the fragile condition of agricultural markets in South Sudan and the lack of positive role models in farming, youth remain connected to their family farms for food security but do not always view farming as a business that can contribute to their economic success.

Two of the most significant constraints for increasing agricultural production in the Equatoria region are the high cost of clearing land and poor availability of high-quality seeds. These barriers, which are not youth-specific, provide entry points for youth into agricultural value chains. Youth also see opportunities to fill existing gaps in agricultural markets, including vegetable production, (which is particularly appropriate for youth in school), animal husbandry, and processing activities. Although youth are aware of these gaps, they feel inhibited from trying to fill them for several reasons: 1) they do not have positive role models whose examples they can emulate; 2) they have difficulty accessing capital; and 3) they feel that they lack the agricultural, business, and life skills needed to transition from subsistence farming to farming as a business. Most importantly, youth want to engage in a number of income-generating activities to smooth their income streams throughout the year and to reduce their reliance on cereal crops, which they perceive primarily as a source of food rather than a source of income.

One of the findings of the MC team is that FARM II's predecessor project, FARM, was "youth-neutral," neither promoting nor blocking youth participation in project activities. Although exact numbers were unconfirmed, the MC team uncovered evidence that youth did benefit from some FARM training activities, either directly or through their households, even though activities did not specifically target young people. FARM II should focus on piloting activities that are "youth-aware," actively encouraging youth participation. Given the short timeframe for project implementation, it is imperative that FARM II move quickly to integrate youth into pilot activities. Making Cents reviewed a draft work plan for the project, aligning recommendations where appropriate. Shifting from youth-neutral to youth-aware will require the project to create youth-specific "safe spaces" where youth can be trained in the life and entrepreneurship skills they need to succeed in the agricultural activities which interest them.

The MC team also found that infrastructure investments by USAID and others have a positive effect on the activities of FARM and FARM II. These infrastructure investments, while outside the mandate of FARM II, are essential to the creation of functioning agricultural markets and have already created new opportunities for entrepreneurs to facilitate the movement and trade of agricultural surplus. Farmers along secondary roads had reported that even when FARM helped them grow surpluses, they faced barriers in accessing markets. Now, however, recent road improvements have led traders to come to village markets to purchase agricultural surpluses. Additionally, new entrepreneurs serve as intermediary traders, sourcing from neighboring villages and selling to larger traders on market days. Seeing markets function more effectively is a powerful incentive for youth, helping them perceive the economic opportunities in agriculture.

2. INTRODUCTION

Any projects subsequent to FARM II should prioritize youth-inclusiveness by actively addressing barriers to youth access to or interest in project offerings. Future projects should consider expanding target value chains to include horticulture and animal husbandry, both of which are of interest to youth. These projects should engage in large-scale efforts to reinforce positive messages about agricultural opportunities for youth and the potential of farming as a business, while also providing youth with the skills they need to succeed in the agricultural activities which interest them.

The USAID-funded FARM II project aims to advance food security using a market-driven approach. It relies on an incentive system to encourage production. The prime contractor for FARM II, Abt Associates, has been tasked with implementing activities to improve agricultural markets and food security in targeted zones of intervention over the course of one year. The project will achieve these objectives through three components:

- 1) Agricultural markets
- 2) Agricultural productivity
- 3) Capacity building

Interventions focus on the Greenbelt region of South Sudan's Equatoria states. FARM II targets small to medium-sized agribusinesses and smallholder farmers, categories that encompass the vast majority of agricultural actors in the target region. Sustainably strengthening market systems will increase the resilience of the target population and help mitigate the shocks that typically affect the agricultural system in South Sudan, e.g., those created by conflict and poor climate.

Making Cents International is contributing to FARM II components one and three by working to include youth in building agricultural markets and by increasing youth engagement in agriculture. MC will provide capacity building and technical assistance through a three-phase process that facilitates steady, integrated, and coordinated technical contributions.

Phase One: Youth in agriculture assessment. A youth in agriculture assessment will help the project better understand current participation by youth in agricultural value chains. It will provide information on the types and extent of capacity building needed if youth are to become more fully engaged in agriculture. It will also highlight the market segments that offer the greatest opportunities for increased income.

Phase Two: Development of youth-inclusive agricultural markets. Armed with the information from the assessment, MC, in collaboration with FARM II staff, will design strategies for increasing the capacity of youth to effectively engage in agriculture by taking advantage of opportunities and mitigating constraints in markets that are attractive to youth and where youth have certain competitive advantages.

Phase Three: Youth capacity building. MC will design a youth capacity building program that will increase the ability of youth to use new technologies and interact more effectively with various market actors in high-potential value chains. The overall impact of this phase will be to increase the number of young people effectively engaged in agricultural production or post-harvest processing, storage, transport, or marketing activities.

3. DESIGN OF THE YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE ASSESSMENT

The assessment began with a desk review of publicly available literature on youth and agriculture in South Sudan as well as project documents from FARM and FARM II. The desk review revealed existing knowledge and established key questions for the assessment to verify and answer, respectively. Following the desk review, the MC team designed two sets of key informant interviews (KIIs) and a series of activities for focus group discussions (FGDs) and observation and debrief activities (ODAs). The KIIs were developed to be used with FARM II staff, traders, project partners, and other value chain actors while the FGDs/ODAs were designed to be used with small groups of 6-12 youth beneficiaries—including female-only groups, male-only groups, and mixed groups. In total, 11 KIIs and seven FGDs/ODAs were conducted throughout Eastern Equatoria State, Central Equatoria State, and Western Equatoria State.



Beneficiary assessments were conducted at the village level in all three Equatoria states. FARM II field staff organized the focus groups and provided the assessment team with translation support. Separate male and female focus groups were organized alongside those of mixed gender.

3.1 DESK REVIEW

The desk review looked at both publicly available information, including nongovernmental organization (NGO) and government reports, statistics, and country profiles, and FARM and FARM II project



The assessment team utilized a variety of action research and interactive games and activities. These were designed to increase participation, convey meaning and/or gain further insight into participant's ideas and opinion. The methodology was very well received and significantly contributed to participant's enthusiastic engagement with the assessment team.

documents. It focused on evaluating what the team *knew, suspected, or needed to surface* about youth involvement in and perceptions of agriculture in South Sudan. Overall, the desk review was able to find an abundance of information about agriculture in South Sudan, some information about youth in South Sudan, and very little that was specific to youth in agriculture in South Sudan. These preliminary findings influenced the design of the KIIs and FGDs/ODAs. The team verified challenges in the agribusiness environment specific to South Sudan and focused on identifying young people's current involvement in and perceptions of the agricultural value chain and their aspirations for their futures, both inside and outside of agriculture.

3.2 KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Building on insights from the desk review, the MC team developed two sets of KIIs: 1) those for FARM II staff (See Annex I: FARM II Staff Key Informant Interviews) and 2) those for external partners and value chain actors. The team conducted KIIs with a variety of project staff in FARM II's offices in Juba, Yei, and Yambio. The team also spoke with traders and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce for Central Equatoria State. Due to the time constraints involved in conducting assessments in three states in less than two weeks, the team streamlined the process by structuring the KIIs around specific sets of core questions about youth involvement in agriculture. The design also allowed flexibility, however, to leverage interviewees' specific expertise across the agricultural value chains.

3.3 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND OBSERVATION AND DEBRIEF ACTIVITIES

The MC team developed FGD and ODA guides that used interactive methodologies to solicit and engage youth. Interactive methodologies help youth engage in a constructive manner and facilitate the creation of a safe space where youth feel comfortable sharing sensitive information such as their future aspirations and interest in changing currently local practices or customs.

The interactive methods often used metaphors to describe what the MC team hoped to learn from the youth. They were designed to overcome barriers, such as low literacy rates, by using graphic representations to solicit qualitative and quantitative responses. As with the KIIs, the FGDs and ODAs followed specific templates, but the small group size and the focus on a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data also allowed the team to probe for more detail, especially when individual participants or the broader group gave conflicting responses that needed to be better understood.

4. EXISTING KNOWLEDGE AND ASSUMPTIONS TESTED

In conducting the desk review, the MC team categorized information about youth involvement in agriculture in South Sudan as *known*, *suspected*, or *not-yet-surfaced*. Two knowledge frameworks were then developed based on these three categories. The first framework considered the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of youth specific to agriculture; the second assessed the agricultural value chain from input to consumption. The team designed the KIIs, FGDs, and ODAs to confirm or disprove what was suspected and to gather answers to key questions. Table 1 highlights a few key points from the first framework that influenced the assessment design.

Table 1: Knowledge Framework for Understanding Youth in Agriculture in South Sudan

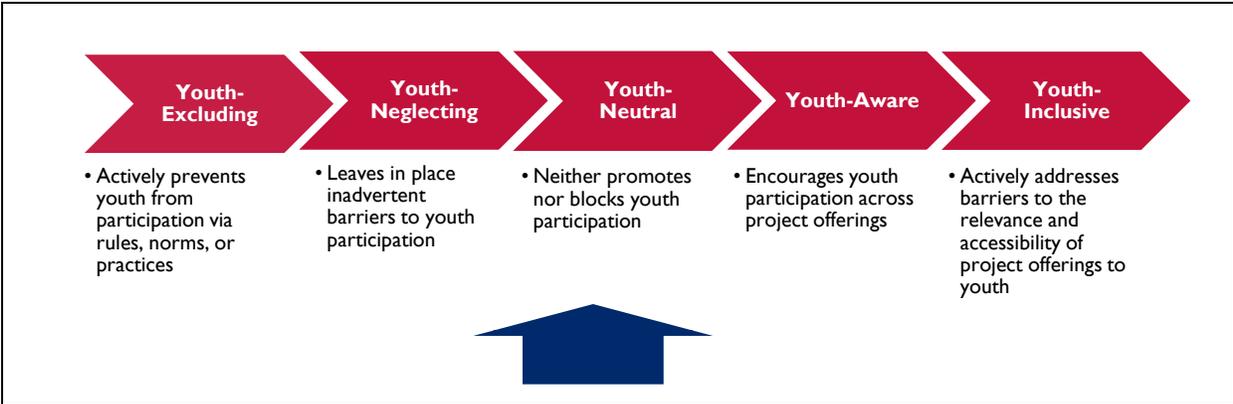
Known	Suspected	Not-Yet-Surfaced
Youth are involved with agriculture.		How are youth engaged in agriculture?
	Youth have interests that might encourage them to pursue opportunities other than the family farm.	What are the interests of youth? Do they believe agriculture is a good way to feed a family? Earn a living? Or would they prefer to do something other than agriculture?
Males and females are both involved in agricultural production.		What are the specific roles across genders? Can males and females work together?
	Youth have existing skills in agriculture.	What skills and resources do youth have? What skills or resources do they need to improve their agricultural productivity?
Significant challenges exist across the agricultural value chain, including a lack of quality inputs, a lack of market information, and poor infrastructure.		What are coping strategies to overcome such barriers? What opportunities, if any, do youth see to overcome the challenges?

5. KEY FINDINGS

Finding 1

Thus far, FARM and FARM II have fallen into the “Youth-Neutral” category on the Youth Continuum outlined below, neither promoting nor blocking youth participation in activities.

Figure 1: The Youth Continuum: Current Status of Youth in FARM II Service Areas



Finding 2

Although youth see the gaps and opportunities in agriculture, most of their experience is limited to subsistence agriculture. Making a break with previous generations and moving from subsistence farming to farming as a business is a big step for them.

Finding 3

The different elements and activities that combine to make up the agricultural value chain in the Equatoria region—from production to purchase—are extremely fragile, and the value chain is at a very sensitive stage.

Finding 4

Young farmers understand they need to move past the subsistence farming of previous generations and start moving towards farming as a business. But many are also acutely aware that they lack not only the requisite technical skills but also the basic life skills (including numeracy and entrepreneurial and business know-how) to successfully realize this change.

Finding 5

A lack of land made available for cultivation is currently the biggest barrier to increasing production. Additionally, youth are more likely to engage in agriculture if the hardest tasks (land clearing and field preparation) are less labor-intensive.

Finding 6

The lack of domestic sources of high-quality seed is a significant barrier for agricultural production. Provision of high-quality seed represents an agricultural value chain opportunity that might be of interest to youth who have an interest in trade and linking opportunities between their villages and towns or cities in their areas.

Finding 7

Youth are interested in more than just cereal crops. They expressed a strong desire, and even preference, for activities related to animal husbandry (especially goats and chickens), aquaculture, and vegetable production, although these activities are not within the scope of FARM II. Youth need capacity building and initial investment to strengthen their involvement in these areas.

Finding 8

Young people want to work in youth-only farmer-based organizations (FBOs) whose members are both male and female. In addition, youth prefer working with groups because they find it easier to trust a group than an individual.

Finding 9

Many youth will require foundational life skills; assessments are needed to see if they need basic numeracy skills training before they can move on to technical, entrepreneurship, and business skills training. Nearly all youth expressed a preference for a combination of both classroom training and practical exercises that explain and demonstrate new skills.

Finding 10

Traders report that one their biggest challenges is sourcing and transporting produce from outlying farms to intermediary markets where they can access it more cost-effectively. Traders have indicated a willingness to work with youth groups that source produce or transport it to intermediary markets.



Mr. Bosco Alemi Ilias and Mr. David Osman Donato are traders in Central Equatoria. They collect and aggregate agricultural produce from local markets and bring to Yei for sale/resale. They have both been engaged in trading activities for over ten years. They cite bad roads and high transportation costs as the number one constraint on their businesses. The second is that they cannot source enough local produce to satisfy an increasing demand. They strongly suggested that FARM II's youth focus should concentrate its efforts on setting up youth teams that could offer ox ploughing as a service and help bring more land into production.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are based on youth interests as expressed in the KIIs, FDGs, and ODAs; the state of agriculture in South Sudan; and FARM II's placement on the Youth Continuum. There are two sets of recommendations: one for the FARM II project, and one for any follow-on work beyond the FARM II project. Recommended activities for FARM II focus on moving from youth-neutral (neither promoting nor blocking youth participation in project activities) to becoming youth-aware (actively encouraging youth participation across project offerings). Recommendations for follow-on projects focus on becoming youth-inclusive (actively addressing barriers to the relevance and accessibility of project offerings to youth).

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FARM II PROJECT

All evidence considered during this assessment indicates that agricultural activities in the Equatoria region to date have not expanded much beyond the subsistence level. It is absolutely critical for agriculture in South Sudan to move beyond the subsistence level in order for the Equatoria region to fulfill its potential to feed the country. Youth will be central to this process. Although they see opportunities for expansion, they are frustrated in their inability to realize this potential.

Given the project's limited time frame and the need to conform to the agricultural seasons, the assessment team strongly recommends that FARM II immediately commence pilot activities for youth. Not only is sufficient time needed for the activities to demonstrate traction and impact before project close-out, but it is also important for FARM II to have enough time to provide the needed level of support to youth beneficiaries and do everything possible to ensure that the activities are sustainable.

The MC team identified three possible pilot activities for engaging youth in agriculture:

- 1) Provide training and grants for youth in areas such as ox-plowing services
- 2) Increase horticultural production by youth
- 3) Engage youth in seed distribution through a seed company under a public-private partnership arrangement

6.1.1 Recommendation 1: Provide Training and Grants for Youth in Areas Such as Ox-Plowing Services

The project should use appropriate technology for plowing services, such as ox-plow, and form youth groups that provide ox-plowing services to other farmers. In addition to plowing services, the groups can use the oxen for low-cost post-harvest aggregation. The pilot program would establish or train youth groups to provide plowing as a service. This recommendation is based on a variety of findings, including the following:

- There is demand for land preparation services and a willingness to pay to bring more feddans into production.
- Appropriate technologies (oxen/cattle) are readily available and plows can be manufactured and repaired using local service providers and suppliers.

- Youth want to earn immediate cash, which ox-plowing services would provide.
- Ox-plowing overcomes the biggest challenge to increasing the amount of land available for cultivation—the labor-intensive activities that surround clearing and tilling land.
- Oxen can be utilized in down times for more efficient, scaled-up production on the owner’s land.

For youth to be set up to succeed, training and capacity building is required in the following areas:

- Basic numeracy and literacy (if necessary)
- Life skills and group dynamics
- Oxen care
- Knowledge of plowing techniques
- Business management skills: bookkeeping, cash flow, customer service, and financial literacy for maintenance and possible expansion or extension
- Marketing skills and preliminary linkages to farmers interested in services
- Rotating savings or savings and credit clubs (local “merry-go-rounds”)



Kale Emmanuel is the Director of the Institute for Civil Society (IPCS) who focus on working with disadvantaged youth. IPCS engage with and organize youth into groups. They identify appropriate leaders from amongst them and facilitate group self-regulation. Mr. Emmanuel strongly advocated for the idea of youth groups engaging in ox ploughing activities for clearing land and aggregating and transporting surplus produce from outlying farms.

Upon successful completion of training programs, youth would be eligible for grants to purchase the ox plows, harnesses, and carts. The youth contribution would be the oxen or cattle necessary to ensure the success of the plowing service, plus a cash contribution (minimum of 10 percent and maximum of 20 percent of the cost of the equipment purchase). The estimated grant size is \$800 to \$1,000.

6.1.2 Recommendation 2: Increase Horticultural Production by Youth

FARM II should train youth on production of vegetables, particularly cabbage, eggplants, onions, garlic, green peppers, Irish potatoes, and carrots. The project should consider including Sukuma wiki and sweet potatoes in the pilot, due to their nutritional value. These vegetables are recommended over tomatoes because they will survive the challenging transport environment and can be sold both locally and to traders. The project should also increase local access to the necessary seeds.

6.1.2.1 Proposed Pilot

The project should work through existing youth groups, or if necessary form youth-only FBOs, to provide training. Small seed grants (and if necessary tool grants) should be made to youth to expand their limited activities in horticulture. FARM II should consider highlighting the importance of fencing land intended for vegetable production for home consumption and income generation.

6.1.2.2 Training and Capacity Building Components

Training and capacity building will be required in the following areas:

- Basic numeric and literacy training (if necessary)
- Life skills and group dynamics
- Good horticulture production techniques
- Business management skills (financial management)
- Marketing skills and preliminary linkages to farmers interested in services
- Harvesting for sale or consumption and seed production
- Seed processing and storage techniques
- Rotating savings or savings and credit clubs (local “merry-go-rounds”)

6.1.2.3 Grant Component

FARM II should provide initial support with horticulture seeds that can be grown both for vegetables and for seed production. Some youth groups might also require basic tools such as hoes, so the project should consider including a small tool package that can be shared among members of a youth group.

6.1.3 Recommendation 3: Engage Youth in Seed Distribution through a Seed Company Under a Public-Private Partnership Arrangement

The lack of high-quality seeds for cereals and horticultural crops is a significant barrier to farmers’ production. To help address this challenge, FARM II, under Task 4, Sub-Task 3, has proposed to establish a public-private partnership (PPP) with a South Sudanese seed company. The MC team recommends integrating youth into the distribution of quality seeds for this PPP, either by having youth groups sell seeds in their communities on a commission or mark-up basis or by directly employing youth as local sales agents.

6.1.3.1 Proposed Pilot

In addition to establishing a business or employment arrangement with the seed company, the project will need to train youth to gain technical seed knowledge including handling and storage, selecting seed types for various conditions, and following good agronomic practices (GAP) to ensure that seeds are properly used, (e.g., planting one seed per hole). Youth will also need training on basic business skills; life skills; marketing skills; and “soft” business skills such as customer care, relations, and negotiations. The pilot should be designed to increase rural farmers’ access to both cereal seeds and horticulture seeds while also helping youth create positive links between villages and towns. Farm II could conduct this pilot through youth groups or using a youth-employment model.

6.1.3.2 Training and Capacity Building Components

Training and capacity building will be required in the following areas:

- Basic numeracy and literacy (training if necessary)
- Life skills and group dynamics
- Seed handling and storage; GAP for different seed types
- Business management (financial management)
- Marketing, to build preliminary linkages to farmers interested in services
- Market research, to understand what seeds farmers want
- Rotating savings or savings and credit clubs (local “merry-go-rounds”)

6.1.3.3. Grant Component

The project should provide youth or youth groups with small grants of seeds that they would be responsible for selling. They would use the revenue and profits to purchase additional seeds from the supplier FARM II engaged with under the PPP. The youth, in addition to serving as sales agents, could provide the seed company with valuable input on market demand and on farmers’ interests in specific seed types or product characteristics. Additionally, youth could receive additional small grants for farm tools or other items for the purpose of lending out to farmers providing them with valuable resources to support and service their clientele.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS BEYOND FARM II PROJECT

Because nearly two-thirds of the population of South Sudan is under 30, future agricultural projects should focus on being youth-inclusive, actively addressing barriers to the relevance and accessibility of project offerings to youth. Since most youth contacted by the MC team were eager and self-motivated, these young people are in a strong position to contribute positively to their individual and family economic security as well as to the development of the agricultural sector in South Sudan. Any future project should tap into their energy and hope for the future. Future projects can captivate the interest of youth by not only increasing land under cultivation for staple crops but by also investing in areas such as horticultural crops, aquaculture, and animal husbandry. In addition, future projects should strengthen the functioning of markets, particularly for seeds support linkages across the agricultural value chain through farmer forums, and invest in value-added activities.

6.2.1 Recommendation 1: Work with Youth-Only Groups

In order to be youth-inclusive, future projects should engage with youth through mixed gender, youth-only FBOs or other youth organizations. This would create a safe space for youth, allowing them to work independently and recognize their own successes. Before a project



Sandiga, is one of three brothers who the assessment team found chipping cassava and processing groundnuts into paste in Yei market. They informed they split their time between working on their family farm and processing in the market. They bought the machines with money made by selling surplus product from their family farm. Their aim is to maintain their farm’s surplus production and combine with income derived from their downstream processing activities and create their own producer-to-consumer value chain. They are currently saving towards the purchase of a maize grinder.

could establish youth-specific FBOs or groups, however, young people will need capacity building in life skills, entrepreneurial or business skills, agriculture-specific skills, and farming as a business. The youth who were interviewed said that the most accessible training would include a mixture of classroom instruction and hands-on practical exercises.

In addition to working with youth-only groups, youth-inclusive efforts should align capacity building with young people's interests and aspirations for their futures. A more detailed market scan of youth organizations or youth involved in agricultural activities would easily identify those who are also involved in agribusinesses (e.g., selling inputs or engaged in horticulture or processing activities). Capacity building should focus either on current youth activities or on areas identified as priorities by youth.

6.2.2 Recommendation 2: Reinforce Positive Messages about Agriculture



Beda is 20 years old and married with three children. She and her husband farm land a considerable distance from the main market town of Yei in Central Equatoria. Beda has started to buy and transport some of the surplus produced by her neighbors, as well from her own farm, to sell in small, intermediary village markets. Beda is typical of a growing trend in the area whereby small scale 'feeder' traders (many of whom are women) are starting to play a fundamental role in aggregating outlying farm surpluses and feeding them into local markets.

Youth see many opportunities in agriculture, including horticulture, animal husbandry, aquaculture, value-added processing, and provision of services such as ox-plowing. Very few young people want to give up their engagement in agriculture entirely as they see it as vital to their food security. They do, however, want to expand their income sources, particularly to ensure that their incomes are not entirely dependent on the harvest of staple crops.

The perception of youth in South Sudan is that those who only work in the fields will not be able to get an education, find a job, or identify other sources of income. The lack of positive role models who have succeeded in farming as a business amplifies these negative perceptions about agriculture. There are opportunities to use information and communications technology (ICT) to reach young people with more positive messages. Radio or targeted short messaging service (SMS) campaigns could provide training in technical agricultural and business management skills and could also share the voices of role models who have succeeded in agriculture.

6.2.3 Recommendation 3: Expand Value Chain and Processing Activities

Youth, in general, are able to visualize economic opportunities that members of their parents' generation may not be able to see. Most of these opportunities are in value chains outside of cereal crops. Youth perceive maize as contributing to their food security but feel that horticulture, aquaculture, and animal husbandry offer stronger income-generating opportunities as their margins are higher and can be more easily sold in local markets. Many FARM II staff and youth reported selling horticulture adds to the family's disposable income to pay school fees, since—unlike cereal crops—vegetables are more frequently grown in

close proximity to their homes and therefore more accessible to youth who may be involved in school or other endeavors.

In addition to those engaged in new value chains, the MC team identified enterprising youth who had a strong vision for growing their businesses by milling flour. The market scan proposed under Recommendation 1 above could identify processing activities like milling which are appropriate for

youth and clarify the specific gaps youth could fill. It would be important to ensure that in filling these gaps youth do not saturate the market, rendering the value-added activities unprofitable.

6.2.4 Recommendation 4: Invest in Land-Clearing Service Providers

The biggest barriers to increasing the production of cereal crops are the lack of land available for cultivation and the cost of clearing land, particularly by hand. Ox plowing is the most appropriate technology for clearing land, in many areas of the Greenbelt, for cultivation because the equipment can be sourced, produced, or repaired locally. Future projects should provide training and grant packages to help youth build businesses as ox-plowing service providers in appropriate areas, thereby reducing the burden of preparing land for cereal crop production. If youth were provided with carts, they could use the oxen not only for land clearing but also for post-harvest aggregation to bring surplus products to markets. This intervention would be feasible throughout Eastern and Central Equatoria States and in limited parts of Western Equatoria State.

6.2.5 Recommendation 5: Strengthen Agriculture Markets

Future projects should aim to strengthen agricultural markets by focusing on 1) seeds and other inputs; 2) MIS; and 3) farmer forums. Support in these three areas (with a strong focus on long-term, post-project sustainability) would help overcome current constraints.

- 1) **Seeds.** The poor availability of high-quality seeds is the second-biggest constraint to increasing agricultural production, after the challenges of preparing land for cultivation. The need for high-quality seeds also offers opportunities for youth to link larger towns with villages, either as suppliers or as agents for established suppliers. To succeed, youth need technical knowledge about appropriate seed types and seed care, as well as marketing, business, and life skills.
- 2) **Market information systems.** The availability of price data has helped both traders and farmers feel more comfortable with the prices they negotiate. Although the MIS is not specific to youth, the project's intention to increase youth involvement in the agricultural sector should continue to strengthen and develop this system, including expanding it beyond staple crops. Because they have connections between villages and towns, youth could provide price information for the MIS and facilitate the distribution of posted information to farmers.
- 3) **Farmer market forums.** Both farmers and traders reported that these events worked well. Although these forums are not youth-specific, future projects should continue to support them. Youth could be engaged to organize the events, which would in turn allow them to see positive role models in agriculture and give them opportunities to learn from current agricultural entrepreneurs in all parts of the value chain.

7. NEXT STEPS

The findings and recommendations in this report can be leveraged by FARM II to pilot youth-aware activities. They can also contribute to the design of future agricultural projects to make them youth-inclusive. Investments that contribute to youth employment would benefit young people in both the immediate term and the longer term. And—given that two-thirds of the country’s population is under age 30—moving towards youth-inclusive agriculture would increase South Sudan’s agricultural production and improve overall food security.

Youth remain connected to family farms, but they want a more diverse and stable income stream. They see opportunities in agriculture beyond cereal crop production, which they perceive as subsistence farming rather than farming as a business. Information about positive role models, delivered through ICT or within communities, will reinforce ideas about farming as a business in expanded value chains. Future projects should engage youth and provide them with the skills and start-up capital they need to move from subsistence farming to producing surpluses in the value chains that interest them. Table 2 below summarizes this report’s recommendations in two areas: 1) FARM II pilot activities for youth that would strengthen the agricultural system and build farmers’ capacity, and 2) activities to incorporate into agriculture development interventions beyond FARM II which would achieve these same objectives.

Table 2: Summary of Recommendations for FARM II and Beyond

Short-Term Pilots under FARM II		Long-Term Design of New Projects	
Agricultural System	Farmer Capacity	Agricultural System	Farmer Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage youth in seed distribution through seed company PPP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase horticultural production by youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase domestic infrastructure for seed production and sales networks Strengthen market information systems Support farmer forums to establish and strengthen relationships among farmers, traders, and service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase horticultural production by youth Include animal husbandry activities Improve post-harvest handling practices Work with youth-only FBOs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support youth to provide ox-plowing services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support youth to provide ox-plowing services Facilitate access to credit for land-clearing activities Expand small-scale processing 	

ANNEX I

FARM II STAFF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

I. Overview and Objectives

Objectives	<p>The purpose of this tool is:</p> <p>To identify from the knowledge and experience of FARM II staff and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To confirm and/or challenge facts we think we know or suspect and to surface assumptions about which we are “unsure” or “do not know what we do not know” regarding potential relevant and accessible opportunities for youth’s engagement in agriculture2. To systematically map out our assumptions in terms of key youth programming elements and training delivery systems – using the strategies of study, ask, and observe, as appropriate
Duration	75-90 minutes
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interview Guide• Data Entry Template
General Tips to the Interviewer	<p>The use of this tool requires the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-filled index cards prepared ahead of time• Voting tools (glass beads or buttons) if there are multiple people present for the interview to indicate with which answers they agree, (place the index cards down and ask people to place the voting tool on the card with which they agree)• KII question sets that align with respondents’ areas of knowledge and mandate within FARM II

The Key Informant Interview (KII) guide is a flexible tool that can be used as a stand-alone tool or integrated into other meetings and interactions. The specific questions used should be tailored to each respondent’s area of knowledge and mandate within the FARM II program.

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the interview. You may want to use some form of the following introduction.

“My name is _____, and I am working with FARM II project funded by USAID. Thank you for agreeing to take time to speak with me today and answer a few questions related to our assessment of youth engagement in agriculture in South Sudan. For the purpose of this assessment, we use the definition of youth as defined by the Government of South Sudan as between the ages of 19 and 29.”

“The interview should take about 75-90 minutes to conduct. If there are questions that are not clear to you, let me know and I will do my best to explain it more clearly. Remember, there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, so please answer freely and honestly. Be assured that your individual answers will not be shared with anyone – rather they will be blended with other stakeholders’ responses and fed into an overall assessment report.”

Ask the respondent to share the following information if they have not done so already.

Name	
Role/Position	
Organization	

Again thank you for your time and responses. Do you have any questions before we begin?”

In the assessment plan we indicate the need to cover the following key themes:

- A. Programming is built around viable opportunities for youth in the agriculture sector**
- B. Programming is built around priorities that young people have for education, income generation and development of their future**
- C. Programming is perceived as exciting and fun; it offers opportunities that are immediately useful to young people**

Keep referring back to these themes throughout the interview and use when probing for further information.

In particular for **FARM II**, we should always consider and come back to 1) farm productivity, 2) improved markets and 3) capacity building.

II. Relevance to Youth

As you may well be aware, we are working with the FARM II project to assess opportunities to further engage youth in the agricultural value chain. We would value your perspective and experiences and would like to learn about them by asking a few questions.

I. Youth's Current Engagement in Agriculture

What we think we Know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- K: Youth are already engaged in agriculture.
- S: Youth's options for engaging in agriculture are specific.
- NS: In what areas are youth currently engaged and why?

Do youth prefer less physically intensive activities such as selling inputs, trading, or value added activities compared to farming in the fields?

A. How are youth (19-29 years old) already engaged in agriculture?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses. Probe for specific examples.

- 1) Farming for sale
- 2) Farming for household consumption
- 3) Selling farming tools (hoes, machetes, wheelbarrows)
- 4) Selling inputs (fertilizer, seed)
- 5) Labor (field or in transport)
- 6) Farming services (applying pesticide, etc)
- 7) Trading produce in market
- 8) Working for wholesalers
- 9) Transportation
- 10) Processing
- 11) Other (please define)

B. Why have youth chosen to engage in these activities?

Using the response from Question A, note responses and probe 'why'.

C. What assets/benefits do youth already have in agriculture?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) **Technical agricultural knowledge**
- 2) **Enterprising skills**
- 3) **Labor (inexpensive)**
- 4) **Ability to move/access the market place**
- 5) **Capability with numbers**
- 6) **Ability to work long hours**
- 7) **Negotiation skills**
- 8) **Eagerness**
- 9) **Other**

D. How are these assets/benefits linked to the agricultural activities they currently are doing?

Place the index cards from the 'current agricultural activities' on the table and link the 'skills' index cards with the corresponding activities.

E. What additional opportunities are there for youth in agriculture?

Write answers on index cards and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

III. Youth Attitudes and Perceptions of Agriculture

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- S: Gender influences roles and accessibility to agriculture. Males are responsible for cattle herding and females are responsible for gardening.
- NS: How do youth attitudes and perceptions towards agriculture might differ from the attitudes and perceptions of their parents and older generations and livelihood?

A. Do youth perceive agriculture as a way to earn money to support themselves and their family?

Place the index cards with “YES”, “NO”, “Sort Of” on the table. Also allow for a blank card that represents “OTHER”. Probe to find out more about their believed perceptions. Believed perceptions are what others think youth feel, not what youth themselves identify.

B. What agricultural activities do youth prefer to engage in?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses. Probe for specific examples.

- 1) Farming for sale
- 2) Farming for household consumption
- 3) Selling farming tools (hoes, machetes, wheelbarrows)
- 4) Selling inputs (fertilizer, seed)
- 5) Labor (field or in transport)
- 6) Farming services (applying pesticide, etc)
- 7) Trading produce in market
- 8) Working for wholesalers
- 9) Transportation
- 10) Processing
- 11) Other (please define)

C. Of these opportunities, where to adults perceive youth can add value?

Use the cards from Question C and indicate which of these activities adults (parents, community members and other markets actors) perceive youth can add value. Probe for specific examples.

- 1) Farming for sale
- 2) Farming for household consumption
- 3) Selling farming tools (hoes, machetes, wheelbarrows)
- 4) Selling inputs (fertilizer, seed)

- 5) Labor (field or in transport)
- 6) Farming services (applying pesticide, etc)
- 7) Trading produce in market
- 8) Working for wholesalers
- 9) Transportation
- 10) Processing
- 11) Other (please define)

D. How do the roles of males and females youth differ in agriculture?

Use the cards from Question C and indicate which of these activities are done by males and which are done by females. Indicate if there are other activities that are gender specific or gender neutral.

E. What challenges and barriers do youth face in engaging in agriculture? What are the differences for males and females?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards to fill in new responses.

- 1) Lack of access to land
- 2) Lack of money to invest
- 3) Lack of access to inputs
- 4) Gender inappropriate activities (indicate which and for male or female)
- 5) Security concerns
- 6) Lack of skillset
- 7) Lack of mindset
- 8) Other

F. What are youth's priorities? What are differences for males and females?

Place the index cards with on the table and ask for them to prioritize with 'most important' to 'least important' either by rearranging them or by voting with tools.

- 1) Going to school
- 2) Getting married
- 3) Saving for the future
- 4) Raising/having children
- 5) Providing for their home/family

- 6) Socializing
- 7) Purchasing phones, clothes, etc
- 8) Making money
- 9) Other

G. How are these priorities different for males and females?

Use the cards from Question C and indicate which of these activities are done by males and which are done by females. Indicate if there are other priorities that are gender specific or gender neutral.

H. How do adults perceive youth?

Place the index cards with “YES”, “NO”, “Sort Of” on the table. Also allow for a blank card that represents “OTHER”. Probe to find details.

- 1) Lazy
- 2) Hardworking
- 3) Lacking skills and knowledge
- 4) Clever
- 5) Interested in other things
- 6) Other

I. What type of activities would youth be most interested in?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses, then rank from greatest to least engaging for youth.

- 1) Access to small amounts of credit
- 2) Skills training
- 3) Small livestock grants
- 4) Input supplies grant packages
- 5) Other types of grant packages
- 6) Apprenticeships
- 1) Other

IV. Accessibility

In the assessment plan we indicate the need to cover the following key themes:

- A. Programming is “physically” available—safe location, easy commute**
- B. Programming is “emotionally” safe—free of judgment, conducive of expression and positive risk-taking**
- C. Programming is free of inadvertent barriers—social networks, pre-existing knowledge and skills, assets (land, equipment) and security**
- D. Programming is offered at an accessible time of day that young people face low opportunity costs for schooling and home chores and for an appropriate amount of time**

Now that we have covered who the RELEVANCE for youth in agriculture, let’s speak about ACCESSIBILITY.

I. Youth’s Physical Access

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- K:** Males and females have different access to spaces.
- S:** Youth have limited access to safe spaces.
Low numbers of youth are going to school, and the youth in school are predominantly male.
- NS:** Where do youth congregate, and where are the most appropriate places for them?
What is the difference in physical access to locations between males and females?
How do we reach out to youth in those spaces?

A. Where do youth spend most of their time? Be gender specific.

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) School**
- 2) Work**
- 3) Home**
- 4) Conducting Household Chores**
- 5) Socializing**
- 6) Doing ‘nothing’**
- 7) Other**

B. What locations are not appropriate for youth? Be gender specific.

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses. Probe on gender and differences between males and females as well as what places are considered dangerous for youth.

- 1) **Market place**
- 2) **Farm field**
- 3) **Public transport**
- 4) **Being alone**
- 5) **Being with others**
- 6) **School**
- 7) **Other**

C. What types of community organizations are youth involved in? What roles do youth play in these organizations?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

D. What types of informal groups might youth be involved in?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

2. Youth's Emotional Access and Other Barriers

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

S: Gender and ethnic considerations exist in South Sudan.

NS: What impact do gender roles and ethnic differences have on bringing together youth to conduct different programming types? What are the barriers youth encounter when engaging with agriculture, and are these internal (perceptions) or external (role in family, gender, lack of access to relevant tools)?

A. Can young males and females participate in activities together? What types of activities are appropriate?

Place the index cards with “YES”, “NO”, “Sort Of” on the table. Also allow for a blank card that represents “OTHER”. Probe to find out more about their believed perceptions as well as what types of potential programming activities are appropriate.

B. How do different ethnic groups interact with each other? Are there any specific barriers with particular ethnic groups?

Surface different responses and identify which ethnic groups might face specific barriers. This will need to be cross checked throughout interviews.

C. Are there other barriers youth might face when engaging in agriculture?

Place the index cards with “YES”, “NO”, “Sort Of” on the table. Also allow for a blank card that represents “OTHER”. Probe to find out more about their believed perceptions.

D. Does the age range of 19-29 years capture youth in South Sudan?

Place the index cards with “YES”, “NO”, “Sort Of” on the table. Also allow for a blank card that represents “OTHER”. Probe to find out more about their believed perceptions.

E. Do youth think about their future in terms of immediate needs or future goals?

Place the index cards with “YES”, “NO”, “Sort Of” on the table. Also allow for a blank card that represents “OTHER”. Probe to find out more about their believed perceptions.

F. Who in the community needs to be informed of or involved with creating opportunities for youth in agriculture?

Place the index cards with “YES”, “NO”, “Sort Of” on the table. Also allow for a blank card that represents “OTHER”. Probe to find out more about their believed perceptions.

3. Accessible Timeliness

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- K: Youth have responsibilities that would impact availability to engage in programming, and there are differences between males and females.
- NS: When is the best time to engage youth in programming activities, and how long they can participate? What are youth’s responsibilities, by gender, and what are the opportunity costs of participating in programs to increase involvement in agriculture?

A. What activities might youth have to give up to engage in program activities?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) Household chores (fetching water, cooking, herding cattle)
- 2) School
- 3) Caretaking responsibilities
- 4) Other

B. Please define youth’s participation in school.

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Rank which cards best define youth’s school participation. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) Continual uninterrupted attendance
- 2) Attendance ‘on and off’ throughout the year depending on family needs
- 3) Attendance when funds are available throughout the year
- 4) Attendance during years when funds are available
- 5) Attendance when security is present
- 6) Not attending school
- 7) Finished education due to completion

8) Other

C. When are youth most accessible (seasons and time of the day)? Is this the same for males and females?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) Rainy season
- 2) Dry season
- 3) School holidays
- 4) After school hours
- 5) Early morning
- 6) Other

D. What times of day can youth participate in programming? For how long? What are the gender differences?

Place the index cards with “SUN LOW, LIGHT”, “SUN HIGH LIGHT”, “SUN LOW, DARK” on the table. Allow for respondents to go between cards. Probe to find out more about their believed perceptions.

V. Resiliency Building

In the assessment plan we indicate the need to cover the following key themes:

- A. Programming offers youth an opportunity to build personal, financial, physical and social capital

Now that we have covered who the ACCESSIBILITY of youth to engage in agriculture, let's speak about RESILIENCY.

I. Management of Resources

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- K: South Sudan has extremely limited access to banking and credit outside of Juba.
- S: Youth get some money from parents or family.
The spending needs of females differ from those of males, reducing females' ability to save or build IGAs.
- NS: What are sources of money and assets for youth?
How do youth get financial or other resources during scarce periods?
Do youth have income they can set aside to build savings for resiliency to mitigate shocks or start IGAs?

What is youth's relationship with money? Do they have an issue with delayed gratification? *A dollar today is better than five dollars tomorrow.*

A. Where do youth get their money? Are there differences between males and females?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) **Income generating activities (firewood, charcoal, brewing, baking)**
- 2) **Formal jobs (teacher, government worker, health care worker)**
- 3) **Parents**
- 4) **Participating in illicit activities**
- 5) **Savings**
- 6) **Other**

B. How/where do youth save money?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) **With Parents**
- 2) **Local Savings Groups**
- 3) **VSLA groups**
- 4) **Micro Credit Banks**
- 5) **Fixed Assets (tools or other things that can be sold)**
- 6) **Livestock**
- 7) **Other**

C. How do youth get money during times of need?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) **Income generating activities (firewood, charcoal, brewing, baking)**
- 2) **Formal jobs (teacher, government worker, health care worker)**
- 3) **Parents**
- 4) **Participating in illicit activities**
- 5) **Savings**
- 6) **Other**

D. What access to fixed assets do youth have?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

Probe for 1) differences in access to these assets between males and females and 2) ownership of these assets. If not self-owned, from whom do they borrow them and what do they have to give in return?

- 1) **Cultivable land**
- 2) **Tools (Hoes, Axes, Slashers)**
- 3) **Bicycles**
- 4) **Motorcycles**
- 5) **Cell phones**
- 6) **Radios**
- 7) **Animals (cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, birds, oxen or donkeys)**
- 8) **Carts**
- 9) **Post-harvest storage**
- 10) **Other**

VI. Community and Market Integration

In the assessment plan we indicate the need to cover the following key themes:

- A. Youth engage with their parents and communities**
- B. Young people have the opportunity to learn from older participants, while at the same time being encouraged to bring fresh thinking and positive risk taking to longstanding practices**

C. Youth have hands-on opportunities in markets (formal and informal)

D. Programming should take into consideration the different opportunities for contribute positively to communities and markets

Now that we have covered who the RESILIENCY of youth to engage in agriculture, let's speak about Community and Market Integration.

I. Community Engagement

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

K: The expectations of communities are different for males and females

NS: What are the social norms youth are expected to adhere to?

A. What expectations do communities have of youth? Are there different expectations for male and female?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) **Income generators**
- 2) **Competitors for income generation**
- 3) **Sources of Labor**
- 4) **Contributors to households**
- 5) **Responsible for caring for family**
- 6) **Other**

B. To whom do youth look for guidance in their life?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) **Parents**
- 2) **Elder siblings**

- 3) Community Youth Leaders
- 4) Personal Relationships
- 5) Chief(s)
- 6) Religious leaders
- 7) Other

C. Are youth expected to become farmers? If so, are they expected to farm as their parents farmed?

If the answer is “YES”, then probe further in the expectations of youth to continue in their parent’s path. If the answer is “NO” then probe on what the expectations are.

2. Management of Resources

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- S: Assets are inherited differently by males and females.
There are limited farmer roles models for *farming as a business* in which farmers are successful beyond subsistence farming.
- NS: Are youth early adopters of new farming or agricultural practices?

A. What role models do youth have in their community for successful agricultural activities? Note – not just producers but ALL value chain activities

Probe to discover who youth can look to as a role model for engaging in agriculture. Uncover why they are a role model. Who have youth seen being successful in agriculture? What point on the value chain are they?

B. How could youth acquire land, inputs or tools for production use?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) Borrowing land from family

- 2) Inheritance
- 3) Renting
- 4) Purchasing
- 5) Converting raw land into farming land
- 6) Other

VII. Programming Partners and Project Options

In the assessment plan we indicate the need to cover the following key themes:

- A. Leverage current project activities that offer opportunities for youth engagement**
- B. Engage staff to build a shared understanding of the barriers that youth face and their priorities**
- C. Build on other activities and projects happening in FARM II communities**

Now that we have covered how youth relate to the community and market place, let's speak about different programming and partner options.

I. Leveraging FARM II Activities

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- K: A minority of farmers engaged in FARM are youth (based on farmer profile survey).
- S: Youth are in households receiving FARM assistance and could benefit from skills passed on by FARM trained household members or increased household income.
- NS: Can FARM work with youth in existing beneficiary households?
How could FARM work with youth and integrate reporting on youth metrics?

A. Into which activities or opportunities could FARM II integrate youth?

What are some on-farm activities? What are some off-farm activities? Where in the value chain should we engage youth?

B. What would you consider to be the three main priorities for creating youth specific programming? How would you go about integrating youth into those programs?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

C. Does FARM II have any youth specific indicators?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

D. What could you achieve with youth in agriculture in a) six months, b) post-harvest, and c) after five years?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

E. How can we best leverage current project activities to engage with youth?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

F. What are activities that could be done with youth immediately?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

2. Engaging with Staff

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

NS: What resources are needed to help FARM engage with youth?
Does FARM have the right hands and tools for the job of engaging in youth oriented agricultural programming?

A. Does anyone on the FARM II staff have specific experience engaging with youth programming?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. Do many FARM staff have specific experience in working with youth? What capacity building would strengthen FARM II staff's ability to engage youth in agricultural programming?

C. What skills would strengthen FARM staff's ability to engage with youth in agricultural programming? What types of training would be beneficial?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

VIII. Building on Other Activities

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- K: Other organizations have programming in South Sudan.
S: Some might have expertise or engagement with youth.
NS: What opportunities exist to leverage partner’s expertise and engage them with youth in agriculture?

A. Are other organizations or projects taking place in the FARM II communities?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. What organizations or institutions are working with youth? Could they be engaged to support youth in agriculture? How might you draw on their expertise in youth?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

IX. Appropriate Technology

In the assessment plan we indicate the need to cover the following key themes:

- A. Programming that has technological opportunities that are appropriate to staff/practitioners**
- B. Programming that has technological opportunities that are appropriate for youth beneficiaries**

Lastly, let’s talk about technology. We look for opportunities to find appropriate technology to enhance youth’s access to agricultural activities. Let’s see if we can find any.

I. Community Engagement

What we think we know (K), or Suspect (S) or Need to Surface (NS)

- K: FARM is exploring using ICT with existing beneficiaries.
Beneficiary ownership of ICT is low.
- S: ICTs, particularly cell phones are feasible for agricultural uses such as price data and pilots are underway.
Radios have potential to provide trainings or information dissemination on agricultural information and practices.
- NS: Could youth access ICT and use it to improve agricultural practices or agriculture as a business?
How could youth increase ownership and access to ICT assets?

A. What access do youth have to ICT?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) **Cell phones**
- 2) **Radios**
- 3) **Televisions**
- 4) **Computers**
- 5) **Internet**
- 6) **Other**

B. How do youth access ICT?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses. Match with answers from Question A.

Probe for what kind of access youth have. Is it as owner or borrower? If they borrow, from whom do they borrow it? Parents? Extended family? Friend? Do they pay to use it at internet, TV or phone kiosks? Can they select when and how these technologies are used?

- 1) **Cell phones**
- 2) **Radios**
- 3) **Televisions**
- 4) **Computers**
- 5) **Internet**
- 6) **Other**

C. How do youth primarily use technologies they have access to?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) Communication
- 2) Entertainment (Games)
- 3) News
- 4) Opportunities to learn new skills
- 5) Other

D. What opportunities exist to use ICT to engage youth in agriculture to youth? What forms of communications and what types of messages are available?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

E. How might ICT be used to engage with value chain actors to increase youth's engagement in agriculture?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) Change perceptions of youth
- 2) Build demand to work with youth
- 3) Increase knowledge of youth activities
- 4) Create linkages between youth and value chain actors
- 5) Other

What ICT might be used?

- 1) Radio Message
- 2) SMS
- 3) Videos show during farmer group meetings
- 4) Other

F. How might ICT be used to engage with implementers to increase youth's engagement in agriculture?

Prepare answers on index cards beforehand and place them in front of the respondent as they are identified. Allow a couple of blank index cards for respondent to fill in new responses.

- 1) Reinforcing Key Messaging

- 2) **Follow-up Training Support**
- 3) **Conducting assessments**
- 4) **Other**

X. Wrap Up

Let me thank you for your time and insights and wrap up with three questions:

A. Do you have any other general advice for us?

B. Do you have any questions about the process we are carrying out?

C. In your opinion, what is going to be the MOST IMPORTANT driver of the success for engaging youth in agriculture?

ANNEX II

Focus Group Discussion/Observation Debrief Activity Guidelines

XI. Overview and Objectives

Objectives	<p>The purpose of this tool is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To surface any gender related issues; • To ascertain current livelihoods and attitudes about what young people do to sustain/help sustain their lives; • To ascertain how young people see their future in agriculture and identify any gaps or opportunities they see and how their perceptions might differ from the generation that preceded them; • To ascertain the barriers young people might feel frustrate them in pursuing a life in agriculture and their effective engagement in agricultural activities; • To provide an opportunity for young people to reflect on how some of these barriers might be overcome in order to consider how these might impact future programming; • To ascertain young people’s opinions and attitudes about saving and credit; • To understand how young people spend their spare time, where and how they congregate/associate, and the best means of programmatically engaging with them; • To discuss the young people’s specific future ambitions and encourage and reinforce them.
Implementation Time	<p>Approximately 3 hours</p>
Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-12 young people participating in discrete groups, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In and out of education ○ Age: 19-24 and 25-29 ○ Male, female and mixed • Maximize attempts to keep participants within the age demographic. Doing otherwise will lower the reliability of the data collected.
Preparation Time	<p>30 minutes</p>
Suggested Preparation Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through the entire tool • Make adaptations as necessary • Gather materials • Assign someone a note-taking role • Organize translation support if necessary
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential: Soft ball

- Essential: Flash cards
- Essential: Icebreaker resources (blind and empty water bottle)
- Optional: Rubber tools, dollar sign, light bulb, etc.

XII. Introduction (15 minutes)

1. Warmly introduce the aims and objectives of the FARM II Youth in Agriculture Assessment and the importance of the young people engaging with the assessment team and giving open, honest answers. Welcome the youth and thank them for participating in the group activity.

Let me start by welcoming you to this focus group and thanking you for your participation. We are _____ and _____ from FARM II – a project that is wants to learn about the different kinds of support that young people have and don't have to complete programs pertaining to agriculture.

2. Inform the participants that their responses will be kept confidential.

You will see us taking notes, but we will not repeat your names or answers to anyone else in this community. We are not telling secrets, but we want the information to be kept private so that you are comfortable in sharing with us.

3. Introduce the idea of facilitation tools.

We have this **ball**. We will use it to invite participation, and the person who has the ball is the only one with the right to speak. You can call for the ball if you want to say something or pass it to someone else in the group if you want to invite them to speak.

4. Show the participants the flashcards and briefly explain their purpose.

We have these **cards**. We will use them to record your opinion or preferences on a variety of questions.

5. Play 'Blind Football' icebreaker game.

We look forward to this being a lively and energetic group and hope that these tools will help us all feel safe, supported, and encouraged to speak. Before we make a start, we'd like you to come outside and play a game. As with all games and activities in this assessment it has a meaning. I'd like us to play the game and then have a brief discussion on what you feel its meaning is.

Split the group into two and get each side to elect a 'kicker' who will be blindfolded. The kicker will attempt to kick an empty plastic water bottle that lies at the end of a corridor formed by the opposing teams standing on either side. The kicker's side will shout guiding instructions to help him kick the bottle. The opposing side will

shout instructions designed to make him miss. The kicker must navigate his or her way to the bottle and kick it over. The kicker only has one kick:

- Ask the young people what they felt was the meaning of the exercise;

- Probe further on any answers that suggest it was about achieving goals/objectives;

- Probe further on any answers that suggest it was also about listening to opinions and trying to discover one's own path.

Sum up by relating the activity to this assessment exercise.

XIII. Current Livelihoods (25 minutes)

Objectives

- Ascertain current livelihoods;
- Ascertain what the young people's family farms produce;
- Ascertain if they produce for subsistence, sale or both;
- Ascertain any gender related issues.

Introduction

1. Invite a sample of the participants to introduce themselves. Ensure the reliability of your sample, by inviting the participants to briefly mention their age, whether they have children, and how they are currently contributing to their households.

Now, let me hear a little about you. Can you tell me your name, age, how many children you have, and how you are currently contributing to your household?

Tell us about your family's farm

2. Invite a sample group of the young people to talk about their farms and how they and their families earn their living from it.

Tip

- Let the group do the work
- Let the tools do the work

Invite a show of hands to find out how many are involved in agriculture. Throw the ball to a sample of the young people and invite responses to the following:

- Is the land you or your family works yours and, if so, how did you/they acquire it?

- What crops are grown?

- Are there different roles and responsibilities for male and females?
- Do you produce and sell surpluses?
- Use 'Cup Half Full' flash cards and record how much respondents produce for sale.
- Where are crops sold, how are they sold, and who does the selling?
- How do you transport your surplus to the point of sale?

Probe further on any responses which show:

- They are part of a cooperative or FBO
- Are producing large surpluses for traders

Other income generating activities

3. Invite young people to share the other economic activities they and their families are involved in that produce additional income. Record their responses and probe where necessary.

What other things do you or your family do to make money?

XIV. Perceptions of Agriculture (45 minutes)

Objectives

- Ascertain how young people see their present and future life in agriculture;
- Surface any perceptions that might differ from the generation that preceded them;
- Ascertain the barriers young people might feel frustrate them in pursuing a life in agriculture and their effective engagement in agricultural activities;
- Surface any gender related issues.

Start by asking questions of sample participants about their views on a life in agriculture. Probe for any differences between young people and the generation that preceded them. Use flashcards to ascertain and record opinions on specific activities wherever possible.

Do you think agriculture is an important/central activity in providing for you and your family now and in the future? Throw the ball to a sample of the young people and invite further responses to the following. Probe as and when necessary using activity flash cards wherever possible. Record responses:

- Which of these opportunities are easiest to come by?
- Which of these opportunities are good money?

- Which of these opportunities are attractive to young people? Why?
- Which of these opportunities are not attractive? Why not?
- If you had a choice, which would you prefer to be involved in?

- Out of all of the activities related to your family farm that you're currently involved in, which do you most like doing?
- Out of all of the activities related to your family farm that you're currently involved in, which do you most dislike doing?
- Would you consider abandoning producing for family consumption in favor of producing exclusively for the market and running your farm purely as a business?

XV. Perception of Opportunities (45 minutes)

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface any gaps or opportunities the young people might see and that they are currently exploiting or would like to exploit in the future; • Surface the barriers the young people might feel frustrate them in pursuing these opportunities; • Provide an opportunity for the young people to reflect and share their ideas on how these barriers might be overcome; • Surface the young people's ideas and opinions on how FARM II might impact them in its future programming; • Surface any gender related issues.
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1. Invite young people to share their experiences/ideas/opinions on the following example related to an aggregating/sales activity:

Recently, we met a woman called Beda. She buys and transports her neighbor's surplus product to sell at the market. She and her husband are using the money they make to increase the size of their farm. Invite responses to the following:

- Are any of you or your families doing anything similar to what Beda is doing?
- Do you think Beda has a good plan for the future?

2. Invite young people to share their experiences/ideas/opinions on the following example related to setting up a value chain:

We also met three brothers chipping cassava and processing groundnuts into paste in a market recently. They split their time between working on their family farm and processing activities in the market. They bought their processing machines with money made by selling surplus product from their family farm. Their goal is to increase their farm's surplus production and combine the surplus with processing activities to create their own producer-to-customer value chain.

Invite and record responses to the following:

- Do you think these brothers have a good plan for their future?
- Are any of you or your families doing anything similar to what these brothers are doing?
- If 'yes' what processing activities are you engaged in?
- If 'no' would you like to be involved in these processing activities?
- Which do you consider would be the best for you and your family?

3. Invite young people to talk about opportunities or ideas of their own for increasing their family farm income. Probe deeply to discover the rationale behind them:

- Is there any agricultural activities that you and/or your family are doing now, on or off your farm, that you'd like to expand?
- Is there any new crop or agricultural activity that you would specifically like to develop? Why?
- What barriers or obstacles exist to you being able to pursue this new or expanded activity?
- Would you consider sectioning your farm with one part producing for family consumption and another part producing for the market?
- Would you ever consider abandoning producing for consumption to exclusively focus on your idea and running the farm as a business?
- Do you think that the opportunities we've discussed are equally open to females as well as males?

4. Invite the young people to share their ideas and opinions on what capacity building needs they might have and how capacity building might improve their agricultural activities. Start with finding out how many have undertaken training and how it benefitted them.

Please raise your hands if you have ever undertaken any agriculture related training. *Throw the ball to a sample of the young people and invite further responses to the following and probe as and when necessary:*

- What was the training and where did it take place?
- How long were the individual training sessions and at what time of day did they take place?
- How long was the training course overall?
- Did you apply what you learned and, if so, how?
- Did the training cost you anything? If so, how much?

I'd like to go round the group and ask you to share one agricultural activity for which you'd like to:

- Receive assistance;
- Receive training.

Do you think an agricultural program like FARM II should have female only activities? If so what do think they should be?

Do you think an agricultural program like FARM II should have male only activities? If so what do think they should be?

XVI. Money Flows (20 minutes)

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discover young people's opinions about who is better and more responsible with money - males or females;• Ascertain their spending priorities;• Ascertain how and where the young people save money;• Discover how many of the young people have taken out loans or had credit extended to them;• Surface any obstacles that young people feel might be placed in their way in relation to obtaining loans or credit facilities;
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- Surface any gender related issues.

1. Ask young people to raise their hands on the following saving money questions. Throw the ball and select a sample of the young people and probe for where they save money and record their responses.

Please raise your hands if you save money. Where do you save it?

- In a tin under your bed or hidden somewhere?
- With your parents, brother, or sister who look after it for you?
- Do you give it to a friend to look after it for you?
- In a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA)?
- In a Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCO)?
- In a Bank?
- Somewhere else?

- Which place do you think is best?
- Which place do you trust the most?

2. Ask young people about who is more responsible with money – males or females. Probe to surface gender related issues to financial decision making, budgeting and saving.

Who is better or more responsible at handling money – males or females? *Throw the ball and select a sample of the young people to probe and record responses to the following:*

- Why do you think (males or females) are better at handling money?
- Do you think it should be exclusively a (male or female) responsibility, or could it be shared?

3. Ask young people to raise their hands on the following borrowing money questions. Throw the ball and select a sample of the young people and probe from whom they borrowed it and the terms under which they borrowed, and record their responses:

Please raise your hands if you have borrowed money.

- From whom?
- For how long?
- How much did you borrow?
- How much did you have to pay back?
- What did you use the money for?
- Would you borrow money again?

Hands up those who have not, but would like to, borrow money.

- What is stopping you?

Hands up all those who would like to know more about borrowing money.

4. Ask young people to share their top three spending priorities and record their responses:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

XVII. Mobility Mapping (20 minutes)

Objectives

- Surface locations in the community that young people spend time and understand the reasons they spend time there;
- Surface where young people may go with and without asking for permission;
- The best ways and means, including times and places, of programmatically engaging with them;

- Surface any gender related issues.

1. Start by showing the participants the “community flash cards” and inviting them to talk about different places that they visit in the community.

We know that young people like you often visit or hang out in different places in and around the community. Some of these places might include those pictured here on these cards. Maybe at church, at school taking part in after-school activities or sports, being with friends at the water pump, the market, in the fields or around a community meeting place, a clinic or maybe your or a friend’s home.

Are we missing any places that young people like you might visit? (**For any missing places invite participants to place their counters on the blank index card.**)

2. Ask the young people questions in relation to how FARM II could best reach and engage with them and what their preferences would be for how activities would be organized:

- Which of these places you have indicated where young people meet and congregate, would be best for a program with a focus on youth to reach out and engage with young people?
- Would the young people prefer to be grouped together? If so, why?
- How would you see that group operating?
- Do you see a necessity for separate male and female groups and activities?

3. Ask the young people about when the best times would be for them to attend FARM II activities; including their thoughts on how activities might be presented:

- What is the best time for young people, given all the demands on their time, for them to participate in an agriculture program’s activities?
- Are there any days for when activities should not be considered?
- How much advance notice should be given?
- Where and how should the advance notice be given?

XVIII. Closure (10 minutes)

Objectives

- Surface young people’s ambitions;
- Encourage and confirm their ambition;
- End the assessment exercise on a high, positive note.

1. Thank the young people for their participation and ask if they have a major observation, thought or request they would like to share:

I'd like to go round the group and invite you to share your biggest thought about what we have done here today, and a major thought on your current or future in agriculture or request for what a program like FARM II could do for young people like you engaged in agriculture.

2. Play 'Ten Years' Time' game, using the ball, to elicit major ambitions and where the young people see themselves in ten years' time.

Group all participants into a circle. The ball gets thrown to one participant. Invite him or her to enter into the middle of the circle. Invite all others in the circle to jump in and jump out, twice, whilst saying the aforementioned words loudly at the same time and invite them to do a twirl whilst saying "I turn myself around". After this the person in the middle says his or her name. Upon hearing the name all other participants say "uh huh"! The person in the middle says what he or she is going to be in ten years' time. The other participants point exaggeratedly at the person and say the name and repeat his or her ambition, confirming it loudly. Go round the circle until all have taken a turn in the middle. Record the ambitions of the participants.

APPENDIX I: QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONS

Conduct these activities as part of the Focus Group Discussion.

Question



SAY “I would like to ask you several specific questions regarding opportunities for youth in agriculture. To help answer the questions, I am going to do a short demonstration.”



PREPARE an empty drinking glass or clear plastic bottle and a second bottle full of a dark colored liquid (such as Coke or coffee). **POINT** to the glass, bottle, or liquid as you mention each item.



SAY “I would like you to imagine that this glass/bottle is you, and that this liquid is your answer to different questions I ask.”

“If I ask you a question that you don’t really agree then the glass might be empty.”



LEAVE one glass or bottle empty.



SAY “If I ask you a question that you agree only a little then the glass might be almost empty.”



FILL one glass or bottle about one quarter full of the liquid.

 *"If I ask you a question and you agree with it in part, then the glass might be half full."*



FILL one glass or bottle to half full with liquid.

 **SAY** *"If I ask you a question and you agree with it mostly, then the glass might be mostly full."*



FILL one glass or bottle to three quarters full with liquid.

 **SAY** *"If I ask you a question and you agree with it completely, then it might be full."*



FILL one glass or bottle to almost to the top with liquid.



ASK

- *"Does anyone have any questions or clarifications about how to answer the questions before we start?"*

Questions

 **SAY** *"Now I am going to ask you several question and tell me which glass/bottle best describes your response."*



POINT to all of the glasses/bottles and find out which response youth identify with:



As participants respond, indicate their responses with numbering system noted above.



ASK

“We’d like to understand ways in which youth are already engaging with agriculture. We will ask about different ways youth are already involved in agriculture. We will go through this exercise twice. First to see how males are involved in agriculture and second to see how females are involved in agriculture. We will ask you to select the glass/bottle that best describes your response for each item.”

1. Farming for sale
2. Farming for household consumption
3. Sell farming tools (hoes, machetes, wheelbarrows)
4. Sell inputs (fertilizer, seed)
5. Labor (field or in transport)
6. Farming Services (applying pesticide, etc)
7. Trading produce in market
8. Working for wholesalers
9. Transportation
10. Processing

Probe: Are male/female youth involved in agriculture in any other ways that we have not mentioned here?



ASK

“Now that you’ve told us how youth are engaged in agriculture, we’d like to ask you what youth would prefer to do in agriculture. For example, would youth rather work in the field or sell produce in the market. Again, we will go through this exercise twice. First to see how males are involved and second to see how females are involved in agriculture. We will ask you to select the glass/bottle that best describes your response for each item.”

1. Farming for sale
2. Farming for household consumption
3. Sell farming tools (hoes, machetes, wheelbarrows)
4. Sell inputs (fertilizer, seed)
5. Labor (field or in transport)
6. Farming Services (applying pesticide, etc)
7. Trading produce in market
8. Working for wholesalers
9. Transportation
10. Processing
11. Youth would rather not be engaged in agriculture in any way.

Probe: Do male/female youth want to be involved in agriculture in any other ways that we have not mentioned here?

For 11, if strong agreement against being involved in agriculture, probe for what youth would rather do.



ASK

“What skills do youth already have in agriculture? For example, would youth rather work in the field or sell produce in the market. Again, we will go through this exercise twice. First to see how males are involved and second to see how females are involved in agriculture. We will ask you to select the glass/bottle that best describes your response for each item.”

1. Technical Agriculture knowledge

2. Enterprising skills
3. Labor (inexpensive)
4. Ability to move/access the market place
5. Good with numbers
6. Ability to work long hours
7. Negotiation Abilities
8. Eagerness

Probe: Do male/female youth have any additional skills to engage in agriculture or farming as a business?



ASK

“Now we’ll talk about adult/elders perceptions of youth and where they believe youth can add the most value to agriculture. Again, we will go through this exercise twice. First to see how males are involved and second to see how females are involved in agriculture. We will ask you to select the glass/bottle that best describes your response for each item.”

1. Farming for sale
2. Farming for household consumption
3. Sell farming tools (hoes, machetes, wheelbarrows)
4. Sell inputs (fertilizer, seed)
5. Labor (field or in transport)
6. Farming Services (applying pesticide, etc)
7. Trading produce in market
8. Working for wholesalers
9. Transportation
10. Processing

Probe: Do adults have any other perceptions of how youth can play a positive role in agriculture?



ASK

“Now we’ll talk about how youth earn money. We will go through this exercise twice, first to see how male youth earn money and second, to see how female youth earn money.”

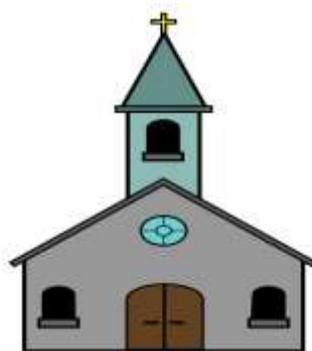
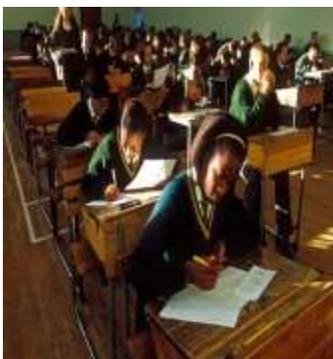
1. Income generating activities (cooking, sewing, selling in the market)

2. Formal jobs
3. Parents
4. Participating in illicit activities
5. Savings
6. Other

APPENDIX II: AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY FLASH CARDS



APPENDIX III: COMMUNITY FLASH



ANNEX III

Findings and Recommendations

The following findings address FARM II's directive to target youth:

A. Perceptions of Youth in Agriculture

Finding 1

The different elements and activities that combine to make up agricultural value chains in the Equatoria region - from production to purchase - are in an extremely fragile condition and at an equally sensitive stage.

Confirmed: FARM II's strategy of ensuring that value chains become a channel for 'value infusion' and not pathways for 'value extraction' at the expense of producers.

Finding 2

Young farmers are risk averse and understand the primacy of their family farms in ensuring food security for their families and mitigating shocks. For the vast majority, any further agricultural activities they engage in/are already engaged in will be additional, and they will not abandon the primacy of the family farm to exclusively pursue them.

Recommendation 2.1: FARM II should consider training farmers to calculate and block requisite amounts of land for growing crops which will comfortably provide food for family consumption and to calculate areas of land which can be devoted for surplus production for sale to the market.

Finding 3

Young farmers understand they need to move on from the subsistence farming of the generations that preceded them and begin farming as a business. However, many are also acutely aware that they not only lack the requisite technical skills but also the basic life, numeracy, entrepreneurial and business skills, which will allow them to successfully realize this change.

Finding 4

There is a self-perception amongst some youth in the villages that they are failures if they stay in agriculture; that they are immobile, uneducated, and fit for nothing else. They are not receiving positive messages on the potential of agriculture to provide a good living for themselves and their families.

Recommendation 4.1: FARM II should consider promoting positive messages on the opportunities for youth in agriculture as part of a public awareness communications activity on farming.

Finding 5

There is evidence of generational misunderstanding and moral panic surrounding the gravitation of youth to the towns. Most youth come to the towns, particularly during dry seasons, to work and buy necessities and then return to their villages. This majority are being tainted by the marginalized minority who have abandoned village life alongside other important stabilizing influences like education.

Recommendation 5.1: FARM II should engage with youth who go to work in the towns to earn money for necessities. FARM II should inform them of and attempt to integrate them into FARM II activities.

Recommendation 5.2: FARM II should not devote the time or resources required to work with the marginalized minority of youth who have abandoned village life. Further consideration should be given to the best ways to engage with and incorporate this difficult youth demographic into future agricultural programs.

Finding 6

There is evidence of a generational misunderstanding in relation to youth being unable to defer their gratification and being over-focused on activities with a quick pay-off. However, evidence points to the fact that youth are as risk averse and as focused on food and physical security as the generation that preceded them. The difference is that youth see many gaps and opportunities in agriculture that the older generation does not see, and youth are frustrated by the variety of constraints and barriers to exploiting them.

(See Findings and Recommendations contained in 3 and 6 under B Production).

Finding 7

Youth strongly support the idea of working within self-regulatory groups and associations which enforce group discipline and perseverance through mutual aid, established rules, peer pressure, and trusted leadership.

Recommendation 7.1: FARM II should consider partnering with or drawing upon the experience of organizations that work with youth groups and promote self-regulation and management amongst them, for example, the Institute for Promotion of Civil Society (IPCS).

Finding 8

The majority of youth do not subscribe to the idea of separate activities for females. On the contrary, they strongly advocate for mixed groups for agricultural activities and consider farming to be a joint male/female activity. They believe that males and females bring different skills, aptitudes, and qualities which combine to make their agricultural activities more effective.

Recommendation 8.1: FARM II should think through carefully the promotion of separate groups or activities for females and thoroughly discuss this with the youth themselves in order to minimize push back and maximize buy-in and legitimacy.

Finding 9

Youth congregate in a variety of different places, but the most common one and the place they go to at least once per week is church. Many are also involved in youth organizations and associations.

Recommendation 9.1: FARM II should consider reaching out to youth in the main places where they congregate. First and foremost amongst FARM II's considerations should be the best means of engaging them and distributing information on FARM II's youth related activities through the churches.

Finding 10

Youth communicated strongly that they need adequate advance notice on when activities are taking place. They also provided a variety of convenient times during the day for training activities and recommended training durations.

Recommendation 10.1: FARM II should consider providing at least one week's prior notice on its activities. Times and durations should be negotiated with the youth themselves in order to ensure maximum attendance before the prior notice is given.

Finding 11

75% of FARM II staff interviewed believe they need additional training/capacity building to focus on program development for the youth demographic.

Recommendation 11.1: FARM II should consider providing training for its technical staff on the best ways to work with this demographic drawing upon the knowledge and experience of local organizations that work with youth.

B. Production

Finding 1

Youth perceive agriculture primarily as food security. While they do see opportunities in agriculture to make money, most do not see farming as a business. Additionally, youth have demonstrated a desire to be more closely linked to larger towns but have not completely abandoned farming because it provides both food security and income. Most often, youth assist with the family farm or cultivate their own land in addition to the income generating activities they pursue – especially during the dry season – in town.

Recommendation 1.1: FARM II should introduce positive messages that reinforce the idea of farming as a business as part of a public awareness communication activity on farming.

Recommendation 1.2: For youth, seeing is believing. FARM II should consider integrating youth into its value chain linkage work and provide farm exchanges that use highly successful technologies youth can access. FARM II should use audio/visual material that illustrates successful youth farmers as part of public awareness communications activity.

Finding 2

Cleared land is currently the biggest barrier to increasing production. Perceptions of how much land an individual with hand tools could cultivate varied from 0.8 feddans to 2.5 feddans. Additionally, youth are

more likely to engage in agriculture if the hardest job, land clearing and field preparation, is less labor intensive.

Recommendation 2.1: FARM II should consider the use of appropriate technology for plowing services and form youth groups that use ox-plowing to provide services to other farmers under its land preparation assistance work.. There might be an opportunity to integrate ox carts and engage youth in post-harvest aggregation as part of its market development and strengthening work. FARM II should provide additional training and support, including business training, technical oxen care and plowing skills, and linkages to FBOs.

Recommendation 2.2: FARM II should consider tractors only if the group demonstrates the capacity to manage it and maintain it without outside assistance.

Finding 3

Youth are interested in more than just cereal crops. In particular, they see a lot of opportunities in vegetable production.

Recommendation 3.1: FARM II should consider training youth on vegetable production - particularly cabbage, eggplant, onion, garlic, and carrots - as these products will survive the challenging transportation environment. In addition, local access to necessary seeds should be increased.

Finding 4

Youth want to work in Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) that are comprised of both males and females and whose members are only youth. In addition, youth prefer working in and working with groups because it is easier for them to trust a group than an individual.

Recommendation 4.1: FARM II should consider establishing youth only FBOs that are mixed gender under farmer-group formation work. FARM II's considerations on the promotion of separate groups or activities for females need to be thought through carefully and thoroughly discussed with the youth themselves in order to minimize push back and maximize buy-in and legitimacy,

Finding 5

The lack of domestic sources of high quality seeds is a significant barrier for agricultural production. It represents an agricultural value chain opportunity which might interest youth because it creates linkages between villages and towns.

Recommendation 5.1: FARM II should consider working with existing providers to establish interest in using youth as distribution agents out to villages and, if possible, tie into its seed multiplication development activities. FARM II should also provide youth with hands-on technical product knowledge and business and marketing skills,

Recommendation 5.2: FARM II should consider helping youth establish seed importing and distribution businesses with strong linkages to existing FBOs and cooperatives.

Finding 6

Although neither have been the remit of FARM thus far, youth express a strong desire (and even preference) for activities related to animal husbandry (especially goats and chickens) and for aquaculture.

Recommendation 6.1: For any future program iterations, projects should consider animal husbandry and basic animal care. In particular, projects should produce links with Community Animal Health Worker system for improved veterinary care and disease management for goats and poultry. For goats, the introduction of larger breeds of goats would be more profitable than breeds currently available.

Recommendation 6.2: For any future program iterations, projects should consider aquaculture as not only a potentially profitable, diversified income activity but also as a way to increase food security and nutrition.

C. Building Trade

Finding 1

Agricultural commodity importation traders in Juba are experiencing increasing difficulties in maintaining profits as the exchange rate of the South Sudanese Pound continues its fluctuating and downward trend. This is causing some to abandon the business and others to seek sources from inside the country. At the same time, state capital and county town based traders report that they cannot source enough local produce to keep up with local demand. They cite the lack of local produce available for purchase as their biggest problem.

Confirmed: FARM II's strategy under *its facilitation of farmer-trader forums at the state level*.

Finding 2

Traders cite bad road conditions and high transportation costs as their second biggest concerns.

Recommendation: None; outside the scope of FARM II.

Finding 3

FARM I's Farmer–Trader Forums were successful in producing linkages between producers and traders and in making traders aware of new cooperatives, FBOs, and surplus produce for sale in village markets.

Confirmed: FARM II's strategy under *its facilitation of farmer-trader forums at the state level*.

Finding 4

There is evidence that local farmers (mostly women) are starting to act as intermediary traders who buy surplus produce from their neighbors and transport it for sale in village and town markets. Evidence also suggests that established local traders do not see these intermediaries as threatening new entrants but, on the contrary, would be interested in working with young males and females willing to act as intermediary traders or providing intermediary transportation services.

Confirmed: FARM II's assumptions under its work to promote collective marketing for commercial integration in national grain markets.

Recommendation 4.1: FARM II should consider providing support and encouragement for young male and female intermediaries in bulk commercial aggregation of not only grains but also other farm produce for sale in village and town markets.

Finding 5

There is evidence that FBOs and cooperative associations are becoming increasingly successful in aggregating produce for bulk sales to traders. However, limited post-harvest capacity is restricting opportunities to sell into the WFP Purchase for Progress program.

Confirmed: FARM II's strategy under its market development and strengthening work.

Finding 6

Farmers have found FARM I's Market Information Service (MIS) very useful and source price information from it regularly. They expressed a strong interest in seeing it expanded to encompass other product categories.

Confirmed: FARM II's strategy under to expand access of Market Information Services.

Recommendation 6.1: FARM II should consider expanding the variety of price information available to include additional crop types.

Recommendation 6.2: FARM II should ensure long-term sustainability of MIS system since it provides valuable information to help farmers determine when to sell their harvest to the market.

D. Capacity Building

Finding 1

Thus far, FARM has been youth neutral, neither promoting nor blocking youth's participation in activities. FARM II should focus on becoming youth aware and actively encourage youth's participation in capacity building exercises.

Recommendation 1.1: FARM II should consider providing training for its technical staff on the best ways to working with a youth demographic drawing upon the knowledge and experience of local organizations that work with youth,

Recommendation 1.2: FARM II should consider providing youth only trainings that create a safe place for youth to exchange ideas away from any possible influence of, or deference to, parents or elders.

Finding 2

Although youth see the gaps and opportunities in agriculture, most of their experience is limited to subsistence agriculture, so making a break with previous generations and moving from subsistence farming to farming as a business is a big step for them.

Recommendation 2.1: FARM II should ensure all capacity building activities take careful note of youth starting points and that new skills are only introduced once previously taught skills have been mastered.

Finding 3

Youth see opportunities in farming but are risk averse and acutely aware that they lack knowledge that would allow them to invest in increased production. Many of the youth will require foundational life skills and need to be assessed to see if they have basic numeracy skills before they receive technical, entrepreneurship, and business skills training.

Recommendation 3.1: FARM II should consider providing capacity building for youth in life-skills and basic numeracy in addition to technical agricultural production and processing skills and farming as a business as part of its business development services support activities. In order to provide such capacity building, FARM II should draw upon the experience of other organizations with knowledge and experience in providing such trainings.

Finding 4

Youth want to move beyond subsistence farming and recognize that doing so is important to their future physical and financial well-being. Whilst youth recognize the importance of cereal crops for home consumption, they also express strong preferences for other value chains. Capacity building should focus on building both activities they are already engaged in and some of the new activities for which they express preferences, such as horticulture.

Recommendation 4.1: FARM II should consider providing youth with GAP and PHL training for cereal crops.

Recommendation 4.2: FARM II should consider providing trainings for youth in additional high-value, horticultural value chains.

Finding 5

Youth are engaged in post-harvest processing activities such as milling and are interested in additional processing activities.

Recommendation 5.1: FARM II should identify youth already engaged in processing activities and support them with technical training along with requisite business trainings to help them understand the best means of investing in and scaling up their businesses under the project's business development services support program.

Finding 6

Most youth are acutely aware that they would benefit from training on financial literacy and management, options and best practices for establishing savings, and the process for obtaining and managing loans and credit.

Recommendation 6.1: FARM II should provide interested youth with training on financial literacy and management, options and best practices for establishing savings, and the process for obtaining and managing loans and credit under its financial literacy training programs.

Finding 7

Nearly all youth expressed a preference for a combination of both classroom and practical exercises that explained and demonstrated new skills.

Recommendation 7.1: Trainings should include both classroom and practical exercises to facilitate youth learning and information retention.

Finding 8

The interactive methodology employed in focus group work with youth participants for this assessment was enthusiastically received.

Recommendation 8.1: FARM II should consider employing interactive, applied learning methodologies in its trainings to maximize engagement in trainings and absorption and retention of content.

E. Financial Literacy, Awareness and Access

Finding 1

Few youth have previously accessed a loan or credit. Most are highly risk averse to taking out loans due to the fact that they cannot meet the collateral criteria of banks. Many were concerned that the high interest rates charged by micro-finance organizations add to the repayment burden and bite deep into the profits for which the loan was obtained.

Confirmed: FARM II's strategy under its task to improve access to credit and finance.

Finding 2

Youth expressed mixed interest in accessing credit. Increased financial literacy would assist youth with understanding the opportunities and risks in obtaining and managing loans and credit.

Finding 3

Issues surrounding youth's access to credit need to be addressed from both supply and demand sides.

Confirmed: FARM II's strategy under its task to improve access to credit and finance..

2. PROPOSED PILOT ACTIVITIES

A. Training and Grants for Youth in Ox Plowing

I. Finding

Cleared land is currently the biggest barrier to increasing production. Perceptions of how much land an individual with hand tools could cultivate varied from 0.8 feddans to 2.5

feddans. Additionally, youth are more likely to engage in agriculture if the hardest job, land clearing and field preparation, is less labor intensive.

2. Recommendation

Use appropriate technology for plowing services and form youth groups that use ox-plowing to provide services to other farmers. There might be an opportunity to integrate ox carts and engage youth in post-harvest aggregation. Support youth with business training, technical oxen care and plowing skills, and establish linkages to FBOs.

3. Proposed Pilot

This recommendation has geographic considerations given the limited availability of oxen/cattle in Western Equatoria State. It would be ideal to establish the pilot in Central Equatoria, in and around Yei.

In this pilot, FARM II will establish youth groups or train existing youth groups on 'plowing as a service' as well as the use of ox-carts for 'feeder' aggregation from smaller towns and villages to village markets. This leverages the following:

- a) Demand for land preparation services and willingness to pay to bring more feddans into production;
- b) Appropriate technologies as ox/cattle are readily available and plows can be manufactured and repaired using local welders;
- c) Youth's preference to earn more immediate cash; and
- d) Availability of land which only needs to be cleared in order to be cultivatable.

4. Training and Capacity Building Components

- a) Basic numeric literacy, if necessary;
- b) Life skills and group dynamics training;
- c) Oxen care;
- d) Plowing techniques;
- e) Business management (bookkeeping, customer service, financial preparation for repairs or to purchase future oxen or cattle);
- f) Marketing (building preliminary linkages to farmers interested in services); and
- g) Rotating savings or savings and credit clubs (locally, merry-go-rounds).

5. Grant Components

Upon successful completion of trainings, youths will be eligible for grants of ox plow, harness, and cart. The youth's contribution will be the oxen or cattle necessary to ensure success of the plow service. Each grant will be roughly \$800-\$1,000 plus training costs.

6. Establishing Farmer/Service Provider Linkages

The Making Cents International team received positive feedback about the farmer-trader forums. These were critical in establishing linkages between FBOs and purchasers. Similar forums to establish linkages between FBOs or larger farmer organizations and youth groups providing plowing services would be highly beneficial to both farmers and youth groups. FARM II should be careful not to 'over saturate' the market with plow services. Existing extension agents could conduct an assessment of demand and willingness to pay at a payam level to determine how many feddans would need to be cleared and the cost farmers would pay per feddan for the service. This information will determine how many ox-plow teams are needed in each payam and how profitable they could be.

B. Increase Horticultural Production

1. Finding

Youth are interested in more than just cereal crops. In particular, they see a lot of opportunities in vegetable production, animal husbandry (goats and chickens) and aquaculture.

2. Recommendation

Train youth on vegetable production, particularly cabbage, eggplant, onion, garlic, green peppers, Irish potatoes, and carrots. Consider including in the pilot Sukuma wiki and sweet potatoes for nutritional value. These vegetables are recommended over tomatoes because these products will survive the challenging transportation environment and can be sold both locally and to traders. Increase local access to necessary seeds,

3. Proposed Pilot

Work through existing youth groups – or form youth-only FBOs – to provide training, and small seed (and possibly tool) grants to youth that expands on limited activities in horticulture. Consider highlighting the importance of 'ring fencing' vegetable production for home consumption (food security and nutrition) and vegetable consumption for income generation.

4. Training and Capacity Building Components:

- a) **Basic numeric literacy, if necessary;**
- b) **Life skills and group dynamics training;**
- c) **Good horticulture production techniques;**
- d) **Business management (financial management);**

- e) **Marketing (building preliminary linkages to farmers interested in services);**
- f) **Harvesting for sale or consumption and seed production;**
- g) **Seed processing and storage techniques; and**
- h) **Rotating savings or savings and credit clubs (locally, merry-go-rounds).**

5. Grant Components

Provide initial support with horticulture seeds that can be grown both for vegetables and for seed production. Some youth groups might require basic tools such as hoes, so consider including a small tool package that can be shared amongst the group.

6. Establishing Farmer/Trader Linkages

Both youth and traders have demonstrated interest in vegetables. Through farmer-trader forums, support youth in establishing market linkages with traders who would purchase and retail their crops.

While sitting in the market is not very interesting to youth, support youth in both sales to traders and direct retail so they can select which method is most profitable based on available price.

C. Domestic Seed Production

1. Finding

The lack of domestic sources of high quality seeds is a significant barrier to agricultural production. It represents an agricultural value chain opportunity in which youth might be interested because it creates linkages between villages and towns. Youth could be involved in distributing imported seeds or cultivating seed for sale since it commands a higher price than grain sold for consumption.

2. Recommendation

Train farmers in proper cultivation, processing, and storage of grains grown for the processing and selling of seeds.

3. Proposed Pilot

The lack of high quality seeds is a significant barrier to all farmers. High quality seeds are currently imported from Uganda, and with the currently deteriorating economic situation, imports are becoming costlier. Traders frequently comment on the high level of formal and informal taxation which makes importing increasingly challenging. Establishing local seed production capacity enables youth to fill a gap in the agricultural value chain. Additionally, grain sold as seeds generates a higher price than grain sold for consumption and is critical to building resiliency against insecurity and economic situation deterioration.

4. Training and Capacity Building Components:

- a) **Basic numeric literacy, if necessary;**

- b) Life skills and group dynamics training;**
- c) How to select and harvest crop for seed production;**
- d) Seed processing and storage techniques.**
- e) Business management (financial management);**
- f) Marketing (building preliminary linkages to farmers interested in services); and**
- g) Rotating savings or savings and credit clubs (locally, merry-go-rounds).**

5. Grant Components

Provide initial support for seeds that can be cultivated for seed production and any necessary processing and storage equipment.

6. Establishing Farmer Linkages

Farmer forums work. Link seed producers directly with FBOs, cooperative unions, and assist them in establishing distribution networks out to villages.