This Brochure provides highlights from a synthesis report commissioned by USAID’s Office of Education related to USAID’s Education Strategy Goal 2 “improved ability of tertiary and WfD programs to generate workforce skills relevant to a country’s development goals.” This review synthesizes the results for 26 evaluations covering 30 activities related to Goal 2.

**Study Objectives**

Review of findings and lessons learned of topics of interest to the Office of Education.

**Topics of Interest**

**Workforce Development**

1. Responsiveness to labor market demands
2. Entrepreneurship integration
3. Access by marginalized groups
4. Policy and systems strengthening
5. Responsiveness to needs and dynamics in conflict-affected regions
6. Measurement issues

**Higher Education**

7. University extension services
8. Entrepreneurship promotion
9. Access for marginalized youth
10. Policy and systems strengthening
11. Responsiveness to needs and dynamics in conflict-affected regions
12. Measurement issues

**Crosscutting Themes** – Gender, disability, information and communications technology, innovative financing, and scaling up/sustainability.

Full report available here.
Inclusion Criteria

As determined by the Office of Education, evaluations to be reviewed in this study were:

- USAID-funded evaluations of education interventions;
- Published between 2013 and 2016;
- Performance and impact evaluations;
- Relevant to the Education Strategy;
- Single, latest published report (in case of reports for multiple phases of an evaluation);
- Evaluation reports from multiple countries (in case of a multicountry education intervention);
- Of acceptable quality based upon minimum evaluation quality criteria set in the synthesis phase.

Sample

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Intervention Components

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
for Economic Growth & Employment

12 Institutional Change Activities
- 12 Public-Private Partnerships
- 8 Professional development
- 6 Demand-driven curriculum
- 6 Industry associations
- 5 Labor market assessment
- 3 TVET capacity building
  - 2 Cost-share
  - 2 Policy reform
- 1 Workforce development authority
- 1 Labor market information system

12 Skills Training Activities
- 8 Soft skills or life skills
- 7 Vocational skills
- 5 Basic skills
- 4 Workforce readiness
- 4 Technical Skills

11 Employment Services Activities
- 5 Internships
- 5 Job placement
- 4 Networking
- 3 Mentoring
  - 2 Apprenticeships
  - 2 Job fairs
  - 1 Career services

5 Entrepreneurship Promotion Activities
- 5 Entrepreneurial skills development
- 4 Access to Finance
- 2 Business coaching

7 Skills Training Activities
- 5 Workforce readiness
- 4 Vocational skills
- 3 Soft skills or life skills
- 3 Technical
- 2 Basic skills

7 Employment Services Activities
- 4 Internships
- 4 Job placement
- 2 Mentoring
  - 1 Apprenticeships
  - 1 Career services

7 Entrepreneurship Promotion Activities
- 7 Entrepreneurial skills development
- 3 Access to Finance

5 Youth Civic Engagement Activities
- 1 Apprenticeships

2 Other peace-building activities
Key Findings

Workforce Development

1. Responsiveness to Labor Market Demands

Goal 2 programs are investing in a comprehensive mix of skills, based on both the needs of targeted beneficiaries and (mostly) local labor markets. USAID programs are providing the holistic mix of skills that global research indicates is needed to ensure youth success in rapidly changing labor markets, including technical skills, soft skills, basic literacy, and work-readiness skills.

⇒ Soft skills, life skills, basic skills, and work-readiness skills—all of which are cross-functional—are provided as frequently as technical or vocational skills, which are more occupation-focused.

Projects are mainstreaming private sector engagement and linking training with placement. All evaluated WfD programs pair skills training with either employment services (e.g., job placement, internships, career networking) or entrepreneurship support. Furthermore, engagement of the private sector has been an expected part of all projects, and they do this in diverse ways. This represents major progress from earlier generations of workforce programs that provided training without engaging employers and without follow-up services to ensure that trainees actually obtain jobs. Job placement rates were not always consistently tracked, but virtually every program includes design elements that actively connect young people to the labor market.

⇒ There is evidence that programs are conducting consultations with local businesses to design or revise skills training curriculum, although it was impossible to determine from the evaluations alone how many projects conducted labor market assessments as part of project design (or during the early stages of implementation). Programmatic interventions engaging the private sector were nonetheless common.

⇒ For example, the Afghanistan AWDP (Afghanistan Workforce Development Program) required its training partners to consult with local businesses and use their knowledge of the local labor market to develop TVET training that meets market demand.

⇒ Internships, apprenticeships and entrepreneurship development were important experiential approaches used to train youth in areas that meet actual market demand.

⇒ The Azerbaijan YBLP (Youth Business Leadership Program) developed partnerships with British Petroleum Azerbaijan for program funding, and with the American Chamber of Commerce to support internships for over 100 university students in 32 companies. Junior Achievement Armenia provided applied economics and business training as extracurricular activities coupled with student-run businesses. The youth sold their products at trade fairs organized by private sector partners.

2. Entrepreneurship Integration

Projects are integrating entrepreneurship into skills training, general education, and youth engagement activities. USAID programs are responding to global research and country analysis of labor market conditions that point to the need for a greater focus on entrepreneurship. Employer demand for more flexible thinking and behavior in the workforce, coupled with the paucity of formal sector jobs in many developing countries, has prompted a stronger emphasis on entrepreneurship promotion. USAID interventions include support for development of entrepreneurial mindsets and skills, business coaching, linkages to markets for improved livelihoods, and access to finance. These are often provided in combination with general education and vocational skills training.

⇒ About 50 percent of youth workforce programs and over 75 percent of CVE-WfD programs include entrepreneurship promotion.

⇒ Entrepreneurship programming is very diverse. The Junior Achievement programs in Armenia and Jamaica cultivated private sector partnerships to create practical opportunities for youth to market and sell their products. Similarly, the Iraq Foras Project employed start-up weekends and business competitions for emerging entrepreneurs, but also attempted to facilitate access to microloans for winners, albeit with limited success. The Georgia EPI (Economic Prosperity Initiative) connected small- and medium enterprises (SMEs) and farmers with financial advisors so that the businesses could receive sound financial advice and successfully apply for small business loans from banks. Nepal EIG linked its farmers to markets and agriculture support services from other businesses. Finally, Yes Youth Can in Kenya required youth associations (called bunge) interested in additional financial support to form savings and credit associations and to deposit savings into accounts that the program would match.
3. Access by Marginalized Groups

The majority of workforce development programming focuses on marginalized youth. Nearly two-thirds of WfD programming, and virtually all WfD programs for violence prevention and CVE, targeted marginalized youth: either young people who have dropped out of school and are unemployed, or in-school youth who are at-risk of engagement with gangs or violent networks. Youth living in regions affected by conflict and youth from stigmatized groups such as low-caste Indians or ethnic minority groups have been targeted by programs.

⇒ Liberia’s Advancing Youth Project offered young adults who have missed their chance for education the chance to catch-up through informal, basic education programs. While enrollment numbers are high, there is little evidence that many youth have been able to complete the program, given the pressure for earning a living and caring for family.
⇒ Many evaluations provided anecdotal evidence of the challenges of meeting the needs of marginalized youth, however, there was no evidence of systemic testing of strategies employed to enable these youth to remain in learning or training environments.

4. Policy & Systems Strengthening

While institutional capacity-building and partnerships are common, there is a lack of strategic focus on systems strengthening. Nearly all programs included institutional capacity building and private-sector partnerships alongside service delivery. However, there were few examples of well-defined theories of change related to the needs of country or subnational workforce systems. Typically, programs were designed on the assumption that more demand-driven training was needed and that services for disadvantaged youth needed to be expanded. Neither of these assumptions are incorrect: all education systems are becoming more responsive to labor market demand as global competitiveness increases, and nearly all developing countries are experiencing a demographic youth bulge such that investment in youth is needed. However, there was little evidence of assessment and diagnosis of systemic inefficiencies, such as bottlenecks, information gaps, lack of coordination, or disincentives for a better functioning system, that might have been conducted prior to project design. As a result, systems-strengthening activities tended to be diffuse and without well-crafted monitoring and evaluation. Few evaluations described in much detail the specific interventions utilized to improve systems.

⇒ One exception is the Iraq Foras project, which introduced a web portal for job matching because a significant gap in labor market information was identified.
⇒ Another exception among the WfD for violence prevention and CVE programs is the Eastern Caribbean CARSI-funded program that pilots an innovative public health model. Rather than looking at crime as only a security issue, the model considers primary, secondary and tertiary levels of risk factors facing youth, and introduces an ecological model that brings together the individual, family, and community.

5. Responsiveness to Needs and Dynamics in Conflict-Affected Regions

The links between youth employment and violence prevention/countering violent extremism are not well understood. WfD programs for violence prevention and CVE were grounded on theories of change that assume that higher levels of youth, family and community engagement can reduce youth vulnerability to joining gangs or networks espousing violent extremism. Although sustainable livelihoods and workforce participation are thought be promotive factors for stability and peace, few project designs made explicit linkages between WfD components and violence prevention outcomes, and only one evaluation—though a significant one—was structured to elucidate this link. Livelihood and youth employment outcomes are typically reported in parallel with other outcomes predictive of violence (such as attitudes and risky behavior), but not in concert with them to understand the interaction between them.

⇒ The Kenya Yes Youth Can evaluation found that youth remained active in youth associations (bunges) even though they did not experience improvement in their employment or earnings. They did, however, believe that as a result of their experience with their bunges their political views were taken more seriously by those around them and that trust had improved between themselves and their communities. While the findings are discouraging from a livelihood point of view—interventions were admittedly very light in this area, the findings are encouraging for social cohesion and trust which are critical for building stability in Kenya.
The East Africa CVE programs evaluation shows positive effects for civic engagement, and to a lesser degree, identity and the value of youth associations. Here, “identity” includes youths’ perceptions of their preparedness for the labor market and belief in education and training as more important than family connection for finding a job. All three programs showed some significant positive effects for youth in the full treatment group versus the comparison group.

6. Measurement Issues

Weak outcome measurement of employment and workforce readiness makes it difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate the full effectiveness of workforce development programs. Employment outcomes were reported by 9 out of 12 programs, but they are presented as employment rates or number of people employed without comparison groups or baselines. For the vast majority of evaluations, it was impossible to render an objective judgment as to whether the programs’ employment results were positive or negative, because, absent the program, young people will experience some change in employment status or earnings over time. The question is whether the program improved their prospects beyond the opportunity cost of participating in the program. In some cases, programs did not collect employment data at all. On the other hand, evaluations do typically report positive qualitative data about youth satisfaction with employability and life skills components—though this should not be accepted as the full evaluation of project effectiveness.

Of 12 programs, three had program objectives in employability that did not necessitate collection of employment outcome data. Of the remaining nine evaluations, seven used poor employment data, one used high-quality data, and one was of moderate quality.

Liberia Advancing Youth Project served some 22,256 young adults with an informal education program, coupled with WfD training, and livelihoods support; however, output data show that only 3,103 completed the program and there is virtually no employment/earnings outcome data. The evaluation recommended a post-program tracer study, as well as more attention in the future to rigorous outcomes data monitoring.

The Jordan Youth for the Future project evaluation found, through phone interviews with 352 participants, that 47 percent had found jobs, but only 29 percent of these attributed this to help from the project. It is difficult to determine whether the project was successful without a comparison with the employment rates for similar youth.

Weak input/output measurement makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, especially those recruiting out-of-school youth in challenging environments. While not all evaluations were designed to answer the question of the overall outcome of the intervention, there is nonetheless a marked weakness in the collection and analysis of program enrollment data against data on program completion. This is particularly important for informal workforce training and livelihoods programs with disadvantaged, out-of-school youth because dropout (attrition) can be very significant and costly. Without this data, USAID cannot determine whether programs are targeting the right beneficiaries for the planned intervention, or whether the intervention truly reflects the perceived needs and capacities of the targeted beneficiary.

Ten of the 12 WfD programs reported program enrollment or completion figures. However, of these ten programs, only three reported both. This is significant because without both enrollment and completion data—including a clear description of what completion means for that program—it is difficult to understand whether USAID programs are targeting individuals who can successfully complete, and presumably, benefit from the investment. Both data points are also needed to understand attrition and retention dynamics, and as an extension, program costs for desired effects.

There are few impact evaluations available, especially for workforce development programs. Of twenty-one WfD and WFD/VP-CVE programs, seven had impact evaluations in five reports, of which only four had findings currently available. WFD/VP-CVE programs have many more impact evaluations than WfD programs, which had only two. (Of these two, one was initiated and conducted by the implementing partner, and the second was quasi-experimental.) Considering the large scale of many of the WfD programs, some involving tens of thousands of youth and project budgets over $20 million (for example, in Liberia, Afghanistan, Nepal), it is surprising that there are not more impact evaluations. Without more impact evaluations, it will be difficult to understand whether programming in truly having an effect, and which interventions work best for which populations in which contexts.
The Paraguay Women’s Leadership Program used several modalities, with varying degrees of success, to reach out to farming families to promote young women’s leadership in agriculture and entry into higher institutions of agricultural sciences.

8. Entrepreneurship Promotion

Entrepreneurship promotion is included in some higher education programs as specialized training for students and, to a lesser degree, as a focus for faculty research. Specialized training in leadership and entrepreneurship were provided to higher education students in Lebanon and Paraguay to give them an edge in the labor market, and respectively, to better manage their own agro-business cooperatives. In Pakistan, one round of faculty research grants included entrepreneurship as a theme. While there appears to be some understanding that entrepreneurship skills are increasingly important in rapidly changing marketplaces, there is room for further development of this awareness and of specific interventions tailored to higher education programs.

Key Findings

### Higher Education

#### 7. University Extension Services

Extension services expand the reach of universities to contribute to national development. At least four higher education programs were structured to provide relevant expert research and development for critical country objectives through extension services. Although activity monitoring did not always provide a clear picture of the results of services from the end-user perspective, this is a promising growth area for USAID higher education programming.

- In Georgia, a partnership between the Ministry of Education and Science and Georgia’s Ilia State University was supported to create an effective education management system and the country’s first master’s degree in education to train educators for careers in education management and administration. Activities included training 2,298 school principals and 280 Education Resource Center (ERC) officers in financial management and administration.

- The Indonesia University Partnerships initiative included a collaboration between Columbia University and Institut Pertanian Bogor on climate change that had an extension component targeting 100 farmers with index insurance, a crop calendar, and fire risk management.

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9. Access for Marginalized Youth

Most higher education interventions of the reviewed evaluations focused on professionalization of faculty, as opposed to scholarships for marginalized youth. There were only two scholarship programs among the evaluations reviewed: the Pakistan Fulbright Student Program and the Lebanon University Scholarship Program. The latter explicitly targeted disadvantaged youth. The Women’s Leadership Program in Paraguay strengthened the Center for Leadership at the National University of Asuncion to develop innovative programs to promote gender equality including a focus on helping vulnerable populations access the means to attend the university.

10. Policy and Systems Strengthening

Systems strengthening for higher education programs focused on improving the quality of instruction and in promoting gender equality at all educational levels, as opposed to larger-scale institutional or policy reform. None of the evaluations reviewed included efforts at targeted policy reforms or creation or coordination of national-level advisory bodies. For ensuring the continuation of improved, active learning pedagogical skills acquired by faculty as the result of a USAID project, the challenge is to shift from individual-level change to institution-wide change in the teaching culture.

⇒ In Vietnam, HEEAP trained a small percentage of faculty at the five universities and three vocational colleges. However, change is needed at the other estimated 130 Vietnamese institutions teaching engineering. A solid strategy within and across institutions to disseminate the results of active teaching to those not trained by HEEAP was needed for a significant, sustainable difference in the teaching methods. Even at the individual level, faculty project participants feared that the one-year stipend for a teaching assistant to relieve their workload to enable them to implement the new pedagogies would not be enough, as they would revert to the heavy workload the following year.

11. Responsiveness to Needs and Dynamics in Conflict-Affected Regions

Higher education interventions are less focused on conflict prevention and stabilization. Higher education programs did take place in countries experiencing violent extremism, such as Pakistan, Lebanon and Kenya; however, the projects’ theories of change and designs did not focus on stabilization or violence prevention. Some programs such as the Fulbright program in Pakistan reported promotion of good will and cooperation with the U.S., which could be a resource for peace-building in foreign policy. A few higher education programs, such as the scholarship program in Lebanon, focus on access to higher education for disadvantaged youth. Alleviation of feelings of marginalization among youth may have a stabilizing effect on countries prone to conflict, though this may be a longer-term, indirect effect.

12. Measurement Issues

Higher education programs are focusing on quality improvement, though few objective measures are used to assess progress over time. While a few higher education programs focus on supporting student access to and persistence in higher education programs, most USAID activities focus on bringing higher education institutions closer to international quality standards through faculty professional development, institutional capacity building, and research partnerships. They provide leadership opportunities for faculty to conduct and disseminate world-class research, train them in active learning pedagogy, and take measures to improve the educational environment for women to succeed. Nonetheless, there was little or no evidence of efforts to objectively measure educational or research quality beyond beneficiary self-report or satisfaction surveys. Nor was there evidence of the use of labor market surveys to increase the knowledge within higher education institutions to better respond to country skills gaps. (One exception to the absence of labor market assessment is the Higher Engineering Education Program in Vietnam which arose from collaboration with Intel focusing on the skills gaps for potential hires, particularly around soft skills.)

⇒ Women’s leadership programs in Rwanda and Paraguay exposed faulty to gender-sensitive pedagogy and supported research agendas in education and agribusiness.

⇒ Higher education faculty in Pakistan markedly improved both their soft skills and technical competency in using research equipment.
Key Findings

Crosscutting

Gender

Overall, there is a lack of attention to the more complex dynamics of gender in Goal 2 programming. Gender-sensitive programming assumes that gender is a dynamic process and that both male and female perspectives and experiences need to be considered. Although there was attention to leveling the playing field for females, there was no indication that either programs or evaluations have considered male experiences from a gender perspective or opportunities to engage men in unique ways in the pursuit of gender equality.

For workforce development, there have been some impressive gains for women in specific projects, though little strategic focus on gender. Most workforce development programs did not highlight gender-based targets or interventions, however, ten of the 12 programs disaggregated data by gender. Four WfD for violence prevention and CVE programs disaggregated by gender, and it was unclear whether an additional four did, though their experimental evaluations did include gender in their sampling strategies. Still, six programs achieved significant results for girls or women without a theory of change or results framework focusing on gender.

⇒ Djibouti AIDE placed 240 participants, of whom 64 percent were women, in jobs after receiving vocational training.
⇒ Georgia EPI made a concerted effort to train women in vocational skills for the garment industry. While the program did not track individual outcomes, but anecdotal evidence suggests many women are largely employed and there is high demand for skilled garment workers.
⇒ The EIG project in Nepal had a dominant share of female participants for literacy training (95 percent) and agriculture and enterprise training (81 percent). Female-headed households had higher incomes than male-headed households, with the gap growing from roughly Rupees 10,000 in 2010 to more than Rupees 30,000 in 2012. Women who had completed the literacy training and agriculture and enterprise training contributed the most to increasing the household income gap.
⇒ The Akazi Kanoze initiative in Rwanda found that its workforce readiness training benefitted women more than men; women had statistically higher gains in knowledge related to applying for jobs and searching for jobs relative to men. The gains closed a gender gap in knowledge between men and women.
⇒ The evaluation of the East Africa CVE programs found lack of attention to gender to be a salient gap, and suggested that future programs should include a gender assessment. It noted that “in patriarchal societies [such as Somalia], women and girls can have a pacifistic influence on family members should they choose to exercise it.”

For higher education, projects reveal mixed attention to gender. Inclusion of women as students, faculty and administrators in higher education systems is critical for a wide array of development outcomes, including more inclusive workforces and research and technology transfer that improves gender equality in all development sectors, from access to water to climate change. Therefore, it may be surprising that only four of nine higher education programs disaggregated results by gender. Nonetheless, two programs had extensive gender-focused objectives. The Women’s Leadership Program in Paraguay delivered workshops on leadership to girls and awarded scholarships for young women to study agriculture. However, the scholarship program at the National University of Asuncion only led to nine women studying agriculture.

⇒ The Women’s Leadership Program in Rwanda worked extensively to design a gender-sensitive curriculum and implement gender-sensitive policies at the University of Rwanda, College of Education. The program also led outreach in local communities on girls’ education and attempted to augment the access of female students through e-learning platforms. Efforts to enhance the gender research capacity of faculty produced six research projects in progress at the time of the evaluation.
⇒ The Vietnam Higher Engineering Education Alliance increased female participation in its faculty cohorts from 17 percent in the first year, to 33 percent and 30 percent in the second and third years. The program hailed the increased number of women as significant because women compose less than 30 percent of university-level engineering students in Vietnam.
⇒ The Lebanon University Scholarship Program had nearly 500 graduates, of whom 60 percent were women. This share of female graduates mirrors the gender distribution in Lebanese public secondary schools. However, focus group discussions with female students revealed that they felt more empowered and gained a greater sense of equality due to their stipend. For these young women, the stipend was the first time in their lives they had personal money to spend at their own discretion.

Disability

*Overall, there is little evidence for the inclusion of disabled learners in Goal 2 programming.* Only one evaluation referenced disability. Empowering Jamaica’s Youth revised its curriculum so that deaf students could study in Jamaican Sign Language, and provided a one-week training on personal development for students with disabilities which led to apprenticeships for the top performers.

Information and Communications Technology

*Overall, there are significant and at times, impressive efforts to utilize information and communications technology, though results often fell short.* Nine programs substantively deployed information and communications technology (ICT) for instructional purposes, employment services, education management, professional networking, and agricultural research. However, there were a wide range of technical and design difficulties in getting the systems to work as intended. While few would argue with the need to continue to mainstream ICT solutions into Goal 2 programming, more attention is needed both to design issues around the usefulness of the selected technologies and equally to measuring the impact of these investments.
⇒ In Indonesia, faculty from the University of Southern California (USC) designed an introductory geothermal course for delivery over the internet to students at Institut Teknologi Bandun. Unfortunately, USC could not overcome technical issues with communication and voice quality.
⇒ Iraq Foras contained an e-learning platform for online courses, but users had trouble accessing them because the vast majority of courses required English and slow internet speeds made it difficult to use the platform. Only 173 people completed at least one course out of nearly 3,000 that viewed course materials. While Foras registered an impressive 175,000 job seekers for the portal and 3,000 firms, only 20 percent of users actively used it. Furthermore, the project did not track individual employment outcomes, so it is impossible to determine the platform’s impact.
⇒ Similarly, the Somalia Youth Livelihoods Program (SYLP) designed InfoMatch, a job platform primarily for mobile phones. Roughly 10,000 Somali youth registered for InfoMatch through which they uploaded resumes and applied for jobs. However, SYLP did not monitor individual employment outcomes for InfoMatch users, so the study team cannot ascertain the added value of this component.
⇒ The Teacher Education and Professional Development initiative in Kenya trained teachers on integrating technology into their classroom instruction using pre-service and in-service training. Teachers from the in-service program reported that their students had become more motivated and performed better in school. The Vietnam Higher Engineering Education Alliance developed a website through which Vietnamese faculty who attended training at Arizona State University (ASU) could communicate with each other and their mentors at ASU. The evaluation determined that the website existed, but evaluators could not access its content, and a survey of Vietnamese faculty revealed that they had used the website infrequently.
Innovative Finance

There is no evidence of experimentation with innovative financing, defined as social impact bonds, development impact bonds, and results-based financing, as well as special financing schemes to support students such as student loans or entrepreneurs such as venture capital. Workforce development and higher education are critical elements of a national education system, but for a variety of reasons tend to be more expensive than basic education and more likely to be privately funded by families, learners, and, sometimes, the private sector. For this reason, innovative financing could be used to expand the reach of workforce and higher education systems. Although evaluated programs boasted a wide variety of private-sector partnerships and some in-kind cost-sharing (which is now mainstream for WfD), none of the evaluations revealed programmatic efforts to test innovative finance.

Sustainability

Overall, evaluations reveal an interest in expanding the reach, and achieving sustainability, of quality improvement, though there have been few efforts to assess sustainability. For workforce development programming, many evaluations noted the importance of private sector partnership as critical to sustainability with demand-driven training aligned with employees’ skills needs having the potential to attract cost sharing from businesses. For scholarship programs, there is little expectation of sustainability without USAID funding. However, for other types of higher education programming, evaluations reveal a consistent concern in USAID for the sustainability of institutional capacity-building. Still, while evaluations have enumerated the discrete achievements of higher education partnerships, there has been little effort to measure or evaluate systems-level impact and sustainability of reforms. For example, while a small number of faculty or institutions may benefit directly from USAID support to upgrade student services, modernize pedagogy, or develop research agendas, it is unclear how these reforms would be spread across tertiary institutions and systems.

⇒ The Georgia’s EPI, the project subsidized both students and manufacturers by supporting the training, though most students are required to pay part of their tuition.
⇒ Junior Achievement Armenia engaged with businesses to mentor youth entrepreneurship programs and sustainability was built into the model from the beginning by keeping overhead and costs down.
⇒ Several evaluations, such as those of research partnerships in Indonesia and Pakistan, recommended improved sustainability through more inclusive research processes and a call for more technology transfer from the university to the field through prototyping.
⇒ The evaluation of the Lebanon scholarship program revealed that program managers believed that program components, such as workshops, community involvement, leadership training, and capstone projects, had substantial value for all students, and could strengthen the universities’ overall educational programs. Apart from the scholarships themselves, university staff recognized and appreciated the impact of program experiences on students: that they had become better students, stronger leaders, and more employable.

Limitations

This review provides a landscape perspective on the range of programming conducted under Goal 2, though not necessarily proportional to all USAID investment in Goal 2 programming. This is because many activities have not been evaluated, evaluations are not yet available, or evaluations did not clear the Phase I quality review. However, drawing on available evaluations, this synthesis does provide a snapshot perspective on trends in outcomes achieved, both short-falls and accomplishments. In some cases, a clear view of results was compromised by the lack of data available, usually because activities were not structured to collect the types of data needed to make the strongest judgment about program effectiveness.

Also, Goal 2 programs are extremely diverse in activity design, target beneficiary, and outcomes--in part due to diverse funding sources--and as a result, measurement indicators are inconsistent across activities. This lack of consistency in outcomes measurement makes generalization difficult.

Finally, there are very few experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations of Goal 2 programs designed to isolate the effects of specific interventions or combinations of interventions, as well as the effects of various levels of treatment duration and intensity. Therefore, at this stage it is not possible to render a judgment about the effectiveness of specific Goal 2 interventions that could be reliably generalized to other contexts.
**Recommendations**

### Workforce Development

- Continue to experiment with innovative ways of linking entrepreneurial skills development and livelihoods support to workforce development programming.
- Conduct more strategic analyses of assets and deficiencies within country workforce development systems to shape activity design.
- Examine the links between employment, gender, and violence prevention to more meaningfully integrate workforce development programming into youth violence prevention and CVE programming.
- Require comparative benchmarks against which employment and earnings outcome results can be interpreted and evaluated.
- Support implementers to improve reporting of sex-disaggregated enrollment and program completion data, and utilize this data to ensure that program interventions are optimally matched to the ability of beneficiaries.
- Develop workforce development programs that respond directly and substantively to the most urgent gender-based challenges to labor market success.

### Higher Education

- Improve the relevance of higher education institutions to country development efforts by expanding results monitoring of their extension services with end users.
- Sharpen activity theories of change in conflict-affected countries that show how higher education investments can contribute to gender equality, stabilization and peace-building.
- Develop and utilize measures for tracking improved quality of core higher education services including teaching/learning, student services, and research.
- Expand comprehensive efforts to enhance women’s higher education leadership in strategic fields such as agricultural sciences and technology.
- Improve the sustainability of higher education quality improvement efforts through increased participation of research end users.

### Measurement

#### Lack of Impact Evaluations
Increase the number of experimental and quasi-experimental impact evaluations to enable judgments about the effectiveness of specific interventions to inform investment decision-making.

#### Lack of Clear Description of Key Information in Evaluation Reports
Request that evaluations consistently include clear descriptions of key information.

#### Lack of Cost-Effectiveness Analyses
Increase the number of cost-effectiveness studies to improve activity design decision-making and increase financial sustainability of USAID investments.

### Crosscutting

#### Gender
Conduct and deepen gender analysis prior to program design to identify gender-based dynamics affecting education quality, access to education and training, and youth labor market outcomes after program completion.

#### Disability
Expand efforts to create inclusive learning and work environments for people with disabilities.

#### ICT
Further research on the value added of ICT is needed, as well as possible uses of technology in the field to gather information during monitoring.

#### Innovative Finance
Experiment with innovative finance that aims to build resources and sustainability for programming for disadvantaged populations.