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THE HOPE OF TOMORROW

INTEGRATING YOUTH INTO THE TRANSITION OF EUROPE
AND EURASIA

VOLUME II

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THE HOPE OF TOMORROW

**INTEGRATING YOUTH INTO THE TRANSITION OF
EUROPE AND EURASIA**

VOLUME II

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ARV	Anti-Retro Viral
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc.
CDIE	Center for Development Information and Evaluation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Association
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DHS	Department of Human Services
DIS	Development Information Sciences
E&E	Europe and Eurasia
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EGAT	Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade
EU	European Union
FLEX	Future Leaders Exchange
FSU	Former Soviet Union
GOU	Government of Ukraine
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit
IIE	Institute for International Education
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
ILO	International Labor Organization
IREX	International Research and Exchanges Board
LWA	Leader with Associates (a USAID contract mechanism)
MOBIS	GSA's Management, Organizational, and Business Improvement Services
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ODC	Other Direct Costs
PHARE	European Union's Technical Assistance Program to Central and Eastern Europe
PHN	Population, Health, and Nutrition
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RA	Rapid Appraisal
SA	Stakeholder Analysis
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Scope of Work, Statement of Work
STD	Socially Transmitted Disease
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunities Threat Analysis
TACIS	European Union's Technical Assistance Program to the CIS Countries
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
YNAP	Youth National Action Plan

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to the Youth Rapid Assessment Index

Exploring the topic of youth in transition countries leads to three major premises. First, the youth cohort is a largely untapped force for furthering transition goals. Second, youth are highly vulnerable to many of the adverse impacts of transition. Third, the opportunity cost of ignoring this subset could have major implications for the long-term success of transition in the region.

“Youth in Transition Countries,” E&E Bureau discussion paper, September, 2000

A. Why Invest in Youth?

Youth in Eastern European and Eurasian nations have a significant contribution to make to the transition of their countries today. They represent an age group of unrivaled energy and great potential. The youth in the Europe and Eurasia (E&E) region will be the ones who actually consolidate the reforms initiated in the past decade and that are yet to come. It will be the youth who will, or will not, successfully complete the gradual transformations that will make the societies of the former Soviet Union (FSU) and of Eastern Europe democratic and prosperous. Yet, in contrast to commonly held beliefs about youth values and attitudes, many youth have not been convinced that the changes they have lived through in the past decade are to their benefit. Their unwavering acceptance of a democratic civil society and Western humanistic values is not a foregone conclusion.

Developing a youth perspective in US Agency for International Development (USAID) programs can be important for a number of reasons.

- This demographic best captures the generation straddling childhood and adulthood;
- Adolescence is firmly underway even for the youngest in this group, making it possible to track patterns in adolescent experience, such as sexual activity;
- It combines the years of obligatory and optional school age;
- Many in this group are on the verge of entering the labor market, offering a valuable way to juxtapose their success at finding jobs against the quality of their preparation to join the workforce; and
- For the researcher, data gathering is easier and more likely to be empirically valid because it conforms to five-year cohort groupings used in census formats.¹

The strategic thinking required to address the challenges and opportunities facing youth – and to target youth in country programs – needs to be based on a good understanding of the specific situation of youth in each country. Without that understanding, it is unlikely that USAID Missions will be prepared to give informed consideration of youth in program planning.

¹ Elizabeth McKeon, Victoria Semenova, and Susan Somach: “Programming for the Next Generation: Options for Mission Consideration,” p. 5-6, prepared for USAID/Moscow, November 2001.

Missions need easy-to-implement, reliable, and cost-effective methods for quickly identifying the particular needs, aspirations, and strengths of the young people in their country.

B. Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide USAID Missions in the Europe and Eurasia region with tools and methods for diagnosing the situation of youth in their countries by means of a rapid appraisal (RA) approach. Rapid appraisal is an effective system of research methods that can enable a Mission to assess speedily the current situation of a given group or conditions, and, with those results, to develop the most appropriate programs to meet needs that are identified. This manual is designed to provide the Missions with an understanding of rapid appraisal and how to realistically and practically apply it.

A primary focus in the RA approach is gathering an “inside view,” that is, of mobilizing relevant youth groupings to articulate their views, values and experiences to those conducting the assessment. Others, such as youth experts, national and local government officials, and educators, most definitely are included in the assessment. However, the voice of youth must be in the forefront of the information gathered in order to ensure that the priorities identified by the RA are grounded in the country’s realities. In terms of substantive areas of interest, the RA aligns itself with the Europe and Eurasia Bureau’s strategic priorities, with special emphasis on education, labor market conditions and employment, health, population and migration, and youth’s role in civil society and their attitudes towards political participation.

The manual is intended to be a *resource guide* for Missions to apply to their circumstances and needs. It does not provide answers to all possible permutations and situations that Missions may face. It also is an *assessment tool*, and is not designed, in itself, to help the Mission mobilize youth behind new initiatives, nor to provide a model for implementing activities.

While the approach is referred to as a *rapid appraisal of youth*, this does not imply that the approaches described here are uniquely applicable to the situation of youth. While the manual and its examples focus on this segment of the population, the methods described herein could be adapted for use in any situation where a Mission needs to assess social and development conditions quickly.

C. Organization of the Manual

This manual is designed to provide Missions with an understanding of rapid appraisal techniques and how to apply them realistically and practically. It may be used as an introductory guide for staff unfamiliar with RA and the data collection techniques described, or as a reference for staff who may be familiar with some, but not all, of the techniques and concepts.

The manual is meant to be something of a cookbook. It provides the ingredients (rationale) for conducting an assessment, as well as the pros and cons of different methods, the concrete steps required, and sample checklists and selected examples to provide Missions with sufficient context to undertake their own youth assessment or to hire consultants to implement rapid appraisals for the purposes of developing appropriate strategies and programs.

The discussion of each step is detailed, but important; this detail may not be needed by everyone. If readers have extensive experience in developing such research activities, they may well be able to skip over sections and skim the text to locate the passages that are most relevant to their needs. For those new to organizing assessments of this nature, the detail will provide a working model, which can be tailored to a Mission's specific needs.

- Chapter Two discusses the approach termed “Rapid Appraisal,” or RA. In this chapter, the benefits and potential shortcomings of rapid appraisal methods (also termed, with variations in each instance, rapid assessment, rural rapid appraisal, and participatory appraisal, among others) are discussed. The chapter will provide a brief description of RA, its components, underlying premises and requirements.
- Rapid appraisal is implemented in three main steps: preparation, implementation, and application. Chapters Three, Four, and Five take closer looks at each of these steps and demonstrate how Missions can operationalize them. These chapters also include examples of how rapid appraisal methods can be used effectively to assess the needs of youth. Sample checklists, questions, and guidelines are provided to assist the Missions in developing their own rapid appraisals, and reference materials are provided in the appendices to this manual.
- The meat of the manual is in Chapters Three and Four. While it is hoped that readers will find the entire manual useful, it should be noted that the manual is designed with two principal audiences in mind: the USAID mission as manager and user of the assessment; and the assessment team responsible for carrying out the study.
- Chapter Three focuses on the full range of preparations necessary to conduct a youth rapid appraisal – how a relevant scope of work (SOW) is conceived, options for contracting the assessment or conducting it internally within the Mission, and considerations for recruiting an assessment team. This chapter is designed primarily for Mission staff and should help Missions to save time and effort in working through the steps required to prepare for a rapid appraisal.
- Chapters Four and Five are designed primarily for the rapid appraisal team, the group of practitioners who will be responsible for conducting the assessment. Chapters Four and Five move from the conception and mechanics of a rapid appraisal – the focus of Chapter Three – to implementing and conducting the analysis. These chapters highlight a fundamental premise underlying the manual – the importance of youth involvement in the rapid appraisal and how that participation may be achieved. In the following chapters, approaches and methods for data collection are presented, and substantive research questions provided, with a focus on civil society, employment, and health issues.

It is suggested that the discussion of stakeholder analysis in Chapter Three be reviewed in some detail. This is an important building block for the rapid appraisal. While the specific methods adopted by the assessment team may vary, a well-executed stakeholder analysis is of great importance to a successful outcome. This discussion will have relevance for the implementation

of the rapid appraisal discussed in Chapter Four, and it may be that stakeholder analysis begun as a preparation for the rapid appraisal's SOW will need to be expanded by the research team as it carries the work forward.

For experienced researchers, sections of Chapter Four may be more detailed than necessary. For example, how to conduct focus groups is explained in detail. Those staff members who have conducted focus groups in the past may find some of the information presented to be more detailed than they need (e.g., recruitment, screeners, group preparations, etc.). If so, those readers should proceed on to other sections that might be of more use to them. The same advice holds true for other areas and topics covered.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction to Rapid Appraisal

A. What is Rapid Appraisal?

Rapid appraisal (RA) is an approach for developing quickly an action-oriented understanding of a situation, such as the status of youth in a country, in which specific research techniques are chosen from a wide range of options. Rapid appraisal is focused on providing sufficient information for decision-making in program planning, with the aim of compiling a base of information that is “sufficient to meet the need” rather than exhaustive.

To conduct a rapid appraisal, a team of two or more individuals (more frequently three to five specialists) representing different disciplines works together to produce primarily qualitative results. The goal is either to provide an adequate amount of data for preliminary decisions regarding the design and implementation of development activities or to show that additional research effort is necessary. A participatory rapid appraisal might gather information and data using local key informants, opinion leaders and experts, stakeholders, and/or the youth themselves.

The rapid appraisal approach is based on **three basic concepts**,² which will guide the discussions throughout the manual.

- 1. A systems perspective.** A rapid appraisal assumes that the issues and circumstances being studied are interrelated, and provides a quick way to define key elements and their relationships to each other.
- 2. Triangulation of data collection.** Triangulation refers to using several different kinds of data collection (such as focus groups, key informant interviews, and analysis of extant data) in the research. The research team then compares the collected data for continuity and consistency.
- 3. Iterative data collection and analysis.** The rapid appraisal team meets continuously throughout the appraisal process to confer about the findings. The team discusses the significance of information collected to date and decides what additional information they should gather to expand their understanding of the issues and to make their recommendations.

² James Beebe, “Basic Concepts and Techniques of Rapid Appraisal,” *Human Organization*, Vol. 54, No. 1, Spring 1995, pp. 42-51.

B. When Would a Rapid Appraisal Be Useful?

In order to determine when a rapid appraisal is the best approach to assess a group or certain conditions, program managers should consider the availability of resources, research roles, subject matter, information currently available, and the complexity of the issue to be investigated.

A rapid appraisal is a useful tool when:

- Qualitative, descriptive information is sufficient for decision-making;
- An understanding of the motivations/attitudes that may affect behavior is required;
- Available quantitative data must be interpreted;
- The primary purpose of the research is to generate suggestions and recommendations; and
- The Mission needs to develop questions, hypotheses and propositions for more elaborate, comprehensive formal studies.

Missions can use this manual to design rapid appraisals of youth for a number of purposes, including to:

- Identify national trends on youth;
- Identify significant institutional constraints to youth fulfilling their potential;
- Identify prevalent attitudes of youth toward their country's transition and attitudes of other relevant stakeholders toward youth;
- Synthesize what USAID and other donors are doing to assist youth; and
- Make recommendations to USAID on how programs could be adapted better to tap youth as a resource for transition and respond to major youth issues.

Uses for Rapid Appraisals

Strategic Planning: Conducting strategy reviews or developing a revised country strategy.

Program Development: Developing new programs, refining existing programs, or informing regional programs.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Bench-marking: Providing assessments of on-going activities funded by USAID to orient programming or funding decisions.

C. Illustrative Examples of Youth Rapid Appraisal

To help make this manual more useful to Mission staff, illustrative examples are provided throughout the text from the areas of democracy, employment, and health (see the following text box for brief examples).

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF YOUTH RAPID APPRAISALS IN DEMOCRACY, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH	
Democracy	An early assumption was that youth, who grew up either under a withering socialist system or a newly liberalized state, would be more open to reform and less rigid in their attitudes and approaches than their parents. Yet, considerable evidence suggests that they may have ended up bearing significant burdens during the past decade, as their parents struggled under uncertainties and economic privations. Current regimes do not often seek the support of youth, and youth often appear disenchanting and disinterested in taking part in the political process. Given these potential needs to determine both where youth stand in terms of their political attitudes and their likelihood to participate in civil society, the Mission chooses to undertake a RA focusing on youth and civil society to determine if it would be appropriate to include this focus as an element in a new strategy.
Employment	A host country's government has determined that youth face particular challenges in finding gainful employment in the evolving market economy. The Mission has no substantial new resources to initiate a new program area. A RA reviews the situation that youth confront as they attempt to complete their education, search for job training and employment opportunities, contribute their income to their parents' household or their own, as well as the challenges of emigration, participating in an underground economy, or starting their own businesses. The RA helps the Mission to review and re-orient its economic development portfolio and to see how programming might be fine-tuned to address youth's needs.
Health	The Mission finds its earmarked funding increased for activities relating to HIV/AIDS, which leads Mission leadership to revise significantly the country strategy. A new Strategic Objective focusing on HIV/AIDS is required, with the expectation that programming will increase substantially in that area. Public health experts report that the most vulnerable group for contracting AIDS is women under 25, and the Mission decides that a youth assessment highlighting health concerns (and attempts to assess the health risks that youth actually face) would be useful in helping to decide how to design the new strategy and to program the funds most effectively. The RA team focuses on issues of health-related lifestyle choices and examines the infrastructure and services that currently exist to serve the youth population.

D. What Kinds of Questions Can a Rapid Appraisal Answer?

Rapid appraisal of youth is not intended to provide a statistically significant survey of youth behavior. Instead, the rapid appraisal method is useful when there is some understanding of the problem and one would like to investigate the reasons driving the behavior or to design (or

change) programs focusing on youth. In the text box below are some illustrative questions that might be explored using rapid appraisal methods to gather information and data in the areas of democracy, employment, and health.

ILLUSTRATIVE QUESTIONS FOR A YOUTH RAPID APPRAISAL		
TOPIC	STARTING POINT	QUESTIONS
Democracy	Perception of citizen participation in society (data available from World Development Indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the obstacles to youth voting (e.g., transportation, registration, attitudes)? • Are youth involved in the community in other ways (e.g., starting NGOs, working at NGOs, volunteering)? • What kinds of student groups exist in high schools and universities, and what is the level of student involvement in these groups?
Employment	Unemployment rate among youth (available from the ILO for many countries)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what sectors are youth employed? • Do youth have access to unemployment benefits? What kind of benefits? Are these benefits adequate? • What kinds of higher paying jobs are available to youth? What kinds of training or vocational education are needed to move youth into higher paying jobs? • Are youth dropping out of school (explore for both primary and secondary dropouts)? Are the reasons economic (families need another wage earner), school-related (school is boring, not geared toward employment opportunities in the area), or attitudinal (families do not value education)? • What kinds of intervention would be necessary to keep youth in school longer?
Health	Prevalence of HIV/AIDS among youth (available from World Development Indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is HIV/AIDS among youth due to intravenous drug use, sexual activity, or both? • Are condoms available to youth? • What are youth attitudes toward condom use? • What do you believe and know about HIV/AIDS?

E. What Are the Strengths and Weaknesses of Rapid Appraisal?

It is important to know that the rapid appraisal approach is neither infallible nor applicable in all circumstances. There are strong arguments – both pro and con – for using a rapid appraisal.

1. Arguments: Pro

- **Rapid appraisals are relatively inexpensive.** Rapid appraisals tend to cost less than more formal assessments because RAs are purposefully condensed into a short period of time. Since rapid appraisal gathers only enough information to assist in the development of programs, data collection does not require the large, often open-ended outlays of effort and time required for traditional research. Rapid appraisal does not typically include

extensive survey work, which can be expensive, time consuming, and require large investments of labor. Rapid appraisal teams also usually include at least one local consultant, so that the team has substantial “local knowledge” at its disposal in improving logistics, managing the activity and benefiting the local economy.

- **Rapid appraisals are fast.** The short time frame of a rapid appraisal study means that the team should get useful results relatively quickly. The RA, for instance, would be structured usually to complete its work in three to four weeks. The data analysis is ongoing, since the team works to process and analyze its information as it conducts interviews and discusses issues with key informants and sector specialists. A goal of the RA is to provide not only findings but also conclusions and recommendations within a relatively short time span.
- **Rapid appraisals are participatory.** The rapid appraisal approach strives to be participatory, in that it gathers solid qualitative and quantitative information from a wide range of experts, opinion leaders, and stakeholders, including the youth themselves. Within the two principles of triangulation and carrying out an iterative process, the rapid appraisal team strives to incorporate the points of view of as many players as possible. Broad participation provides a check against reporting the views of only one interest group and ensures a broader “buy-in” to the goals of the assessment. In sum, rapid appraisal is designed to provide a series of “shortcuts,” recognizing that the approach leads – to quote Robert Chambers, the guru of rapid assessment – “to tradeoffs between timeliness, accuracy, relevance, and the actual use of the information.”

2. Arguments: Con

- **The rapid appraisal team should possess the experience and expertise to counter any potential pitfalls of the approaches involved.** The rapid appraisal team, for instance, develops a wide enough web of informants and interviewees to ensure that it is gathering views and experiences that are representative of all social strata and most interest groups – especially of the poor and less powerful – and are not limited to only certain groups with easy access to international donors. Since data collected by the team are largely qualitative, care must be taken to carry out this data collection systematically, so as to avoid bias and one-sided views. If translators are used, it is important that the translator understands the importance of conveying accurately both the meaning and the context of a person’s words and is fully aware of how to avoid leading questions and sugarcoated responses. Chapter Four of the manual discusses these and other such potential shortcomings and recommends strategies for minimizing them.
- **Assessments using rapid appraisal methodologies have limited reliability and validity.** Information generated by a rapid appraisal may lack reliability and validity because of informal sampling techniques, individual biases of the evaluators or interviewers, and difficulties in recording, coding, and analyzing qualitative data. Those using rapid appraisal methods can minimize these problems, for example, by taking steps to reduce bias during data collection and analysis or by using more than one method to cross-check results (i.e., triangulation).

Rapid appraisals, by their construct, lack quantitative data from which generalizations can be made across a whole population. Most rapid appraisal methods generate qualitative information. Even those that generate some quantitative data (such as mini-surveys and observation) cannot be generalized with precision, because they are almost always based on non-representative samples. While rapid appraisal methods can give a picture of the prevalence of a situation, behavior, or attitude, it does not indicate the extent or pervasiveness. For example, a rapid appraisal may find that few youth have savings accounts but not be able to indicate with certainty the percentage.

- **The credibility of rapid appraisals with decision-makers may be low.** Most decision-makers are more impressed with precise figures than qualitative descriptive statements. For example, a sample survey finding that 83 percent of out-of-school youth are unemployed is likely to carry more weight than the conclusion, based on key informant interviews, that most youth are unemployed.³

F. How Would a Rapid Appraisal Based on This Manual Be Conducted?

The perspective taken in this manual calls for a participatory process in which the Mission is closely involved. A Mission could, of course, delegate the entire RA process, from start to finish, to an outside consultant team that operates on its own and delivers a final report and briefing to interested Mission personnel at the conclusion of its work. The rapid appraisal could be entirely carried out by Mission staff and other local expertise, or carried out by a mix of contracted expertise and existing staff (the preferred option).

A principal goal of this manual is to engage Mission staff in the youth assessment process. Experience demonstrates that the assessment is of much greater benefit to Missions that take an active role. Given the workloads of most Missions, it is probably unrealistic to suppose that Mission staff will have the time to carry out a youth assessment without some outside assistance. Nonetheless, Missions would profit most if at least one or two staff members join the RA team as full members and if others are engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the assessment team as they carry out their work.

Given the workloads of most Missions, it is probably unrealistic to suppose that Mission staff will have the time to carry out a youth assessment without some outside assistance.

The manner and extent to which Missions may become involved in youth rapid appraisal will vary. Mission staff should recognize that their degree of participation will impact how readily adaptable the results of the assessment are for their programming.

Appendix A contains three illustrative scenarios for how Missions might structure youth rapid appraisals in the areas of employment, democracy, and health.

³ USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation, "Using Rapid Appraisal Methods," Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Tips, No. 5, 1996, Washington, DC, p. 2.

CHAPTER THREE

Preparing for a Rapid Appraisal of Youth

Proper preparation for a rapid appraisal (RA) is more important than its implementation. If false assumptions are made or inadequate information is given to the rapid appraisal team prior to the assessment, then its success could be compromised or hampered. A basic foundation of the rapid appraisal approach is that a range of practical information-gathering approaches are used in a systematic way by the team to gather and synthesize information on youth. It is through a well-planned, carefully designed and executed evaluation plan that the rapid appraisal team can confidently assist the USAID Mission in making recommendations for future activities in light of its country's strategic plan and portfolio.

In order to prepare for a rapid appraisal of youth issues, Mission staff first focus on the desired level or extent of the assessment and then develop an assessment scope of work (SOW) corresponding to that level.

A. The Level of Assessment

In the early stages of planning for its rapid appraisal of youth, the Mission chooses one of the following levels of review, depending upon its needs and objectives.

- **Comprehensive, Global Review.** A comprehensive youth assessment could be designed to identify the contextually specific problems of development for youth or to describe the relationships between the problems of youth. A comprehensive review might be conducted when, for example, there are concerns about youth unemployment, and the Mission wants a broad study of the youth situation across most, or all, of the Mission portfolio. Other areas of research might be the participation of youth in local organizations or the capacity of institutions to incorporate the needs of youth into their educational or corporate culture.
- **Detailed, Sectoral Review.** A sectoral review goes into greater depth on specific sectors the Mission already identified as priorities, such as an assessment focusing on health. Sectoral reviews are designed to provide a detailed analysis of specific areas and require a more detailed and specialized inquiry than the comprehensive review.
- **Combination Review.** Frequently, the needs of the program planners require not only elements of global data, but also more detailed sectoral elements. Most assessments fall somewhere along a continuum of the two levels.

The rapid appraisal guidance in this manual is appropriate for any of the three levels of assessment review. However, it is through the scope of work that the parameters of the RA will be articulated. Costs, resource requirements, and implementation time will, of course, differ for the various levels of review and must be factored into the planning strategy.

B. Preliminary Diagnostic

1. Using Available Information to Create a Preliminary Diagnostic

While it is not a requirement for a rapid appraisal, Missions are encouraged to conduct a preliminary diagnostic on the country’s youth that draws upon readily available information early in the Mission's effort in order to determine the needs of youth. The preliminary diagnostic, centered on a series of key indicators, would be a relatively inexpensive way for the Mission to get a quick snapshot of the situation of youth. The diagnostic may be used to help design the assessment, to answer some assessment questions, to cross-check other data, or to provide a comparison. The Mission may want to conduct this diagnostic – collection and review of existing data – using Mission staff, a rapid appraisal team, or hire local staff hired to collect the information and prepare summaries for the team.

A preliminary diagnostic consists of collecting available data on a number of indicators. At least three benefits could result from such a diagnostic.

- First, collecting data on relevant indicators may provide a common language for discussion and information in specific areas where the Mission is most active.
- Second, an effort to complete an indicators table may highlight areas where youth are particularly vulnerable in your country, especially if the table is structured with a side-by-side comparison with a young adult cohort (e.g., ages 25 to 29, or 25 to 34).
- Finally, it may reveal information gaps, which would help to set priorities for subsequent data gathering and interviews.

In the case of youth in the E&E region, considerable data are already available. The Bureau, USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE), Development Information Service (DIS), and other international donors and researchers have compiled and analyzed a host of relevant information that can be directly provided to Missions.

Appendix B contains a list of recent publications available at CDIE on youth-related issues. The table in the text box on the following page provides advantages and disadvantages of document studies for consideration.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Document Studies	
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available locally • Inexpensive • Grounded in setting and language in which they occur • Useful for determining value, interest, positions, political climate, public attitudes, historical trends or sequences • Provide opportunity for study of trends over time • Unobtrusive
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be incomplete • May be inaccurate; questionable authenticity • Locating suitable documents may pose challenges • Analysis may be time consuming • Access may be difficult

First Stop

Check the Mission library or shared computer drive first. Information on a specific issue or on the situation of youth in general may be available from earlier studies or monitoring documents, such as trip reports, mid-term reviews, and trip notes.

Host Government Sources

Government ministries often collect a variety of data, including census data, labor statistics, education statistics, and data on use of government benefits. The type and quality of government-collected statistics vary significantly by country.

The following sources may be available from the host country government:

- Disaggregated demographic information (such as population, age distribution, death rates, suicide rates, etc.);
- Technical department surveys and analyses from Ministries (e.g., Ministries of Education, Labor, Health, Social Welfare or Youth, Sports and Culture);
- Departmental records and reports; and
- Maps, aerial photographs, and district gazetteers⁴ (depending on the need).

Donors and Other Players

United Nations organizations, national aid agencies, and NGOs are ubiquitous throughout E&E. Initial data-gathering should always include a search for reports and other documents prepared by these organizations. By skimming these reports (or just looking at the table of contents), the rapid appraisal team will have an idea of what kinds of information are available, who is working on the same or similar issues, and what questions have already been answered.

- International donor evaluation reports (such as World Bank, Asian Development Bank, EU TACIS, USAID, GTZ);
- In-country reports produced by NGOs and other donors (such as UNICEF, Aga Khan Foundation, the UK Know How Fund, Open Society Institute, and others); and
- Books and other publications.

Using Local Hires for Research

The Mission and the team should not invest a significant proportion of RA resources in detailed local research, which would run counter to the effort to gather data quickly and efficiently. The team will want to take full advantage of previous work done in the youth area. This local information can often be gathered and synthesized quickly and inexpensively using local hires. If the team includes a local researcher – which is recommended very strongly – he or she can begin finding available information before the team arrives in-country. The local researcher also can search non-traditional sources of data, such as newspaper articles or youth magazines,

⁴ Lists of place names.

review these documents and compile them into a briefing document for the team. This briefing document will provide an initial glimpse into the circumstances facing youth.

2. Structuring the Preliminary Diagnostic around Indicators

A good example of using a preliminary diagnostic is the recent assessment conducted in Romania in support of its Youth National Action Plan (YNAP), which adopted eight categories of indicators. Proposed by the Working Group on Young People of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the indicators ran the gamut of social, demographic, and economic measures on youth. In the Romania case, the data collected led to a “SWOT Analysis,”⁵ which attempted to summarize both positive and negative findings relating to the indicators. While some of the indicators are perhaps not relevant for USAID purposes or for the situation in each Mission, they do provide a useful starting point for discussion.

Table 3.1 presents a complete list of the indicators used in the YNAP. The indicators in this table do not represent the entire field of all possible indicators for each of the sectors. Instead, the table provides some examples of indicators that have been found useful to estimate the current condition of youth by sector. It is advisable that each Mission select its own indicators to be reflective of the realities in the country (countries) in which it works. For example, a Mission may choose to add qualitative response fields, such as the names of influential magazines targeted at youth. If Missions choose to use the following table as a model, it is advisable not to exceed 10 indicators per sector. The purpose of this table is to provide an overall sense of the situation of youth, not present a detailed assessment.

General Categories	Indicators	Sources of Data
Demographic Indicators	Percentage of the total population	Census or Statistical Offices U.S. Bureau of Census, International Database TransMONEE Database Human Development Indicators World Development Indicators
	Structure of youth population by gender	
	Structure of youth by residence area	
	Internal migration of youth	
	Migratory flow of youth	
	Average age of first marriage	
	Average age of divorce	
	Rate of marriage	
	Rate of marriage by gender	
	Fertility rate of youth	
Percentage of youth from single parent households		
Living Standards and Life Quality Indicators	Average net wage per month	Ministries of Economy
	Youth assessment of decent living	TransMONEE Database
	Level of consumption	Human Development Indicators
	Youth assessment of housing	World Development Indicators
	Security on the street	

⁵ SWOT analysis is a standard component of strategic planning: organizations identify their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, as well as assign staff responsibility for addressing issues identified.

⁶ Ministry of Youth and Sports, Romania, Youth National Action Plan in Romania (YNAP), 2001.

	Level of social tolerance	
	Perception of special social groups	
	Level of satisfaction	
	Spare time activities by youth	
Health Status Indicators	Quality of the health care system	WHO
	Number of health facilities for youth	Ministries of Health
	Prevalence of TB among youth	TransMONEE Database
	Prevalence of STDs among youth	Human Development Indicators
	Prevalence of HIV/AIDS among youth	World Development Indicators
	Causes of disease in youth	UNDP, WHO, UNAIDS
	Self assessment of health status	USAID DIS or DHS Surveys
Economic Participation and Unemployment Indicators	Number of employed youth	
	Structure of employed youth	
	Characteristics of employment by youth	Ministries of Labor
	Participation by employment groups	TransMONEE Database
	Employment by branch of the economy	Human Development Indicators
	Employment by location	World Development Indicators
	Percentage of unemployed	The Economist
	Length of unemployment by youth	Department of Labor
	Unemployment by socio-professional categories	ILO
Education Indicators	Active youth population by level of education	UNESCO
	Enrollment rates	Ministries of Education
	Abandonment rates	TransMONEE Database
	School population over time	Human Development Indicators
	Perception of education	World Development Indicators
Civic and Political Participation Indicators	Satisfaction with political life	
	Level of trust in institutions	
	Perception of democracy	NGOs working in civic development
	Level of openness about political views	TransMONEE
	Perception of citizen participation in society	Human Development Indicators
	Perception of influence on government	World Development Indicators
	Types of activities involved in	USAID DIS
Deviance and Delinquency Indicators	Number of youth committing offenses	
	Stage of judicial process	TransMONEE
	Number of accused youth by offense	Ministries of Justice
	Number of irrevocable sentences given to youth	UN Agencies
	Drug users by age group	Local NGOs
	Drug users by location	Focus Groups with students
	Suicide among youth male/female	

Examples of Indicator Tables

Most of the proposed youth indicators point in one of two directions. First, some highlight the internal characteristics of the youth cohort itself, in which the dynamics of the youth situation can be seen by looking at differences within groupings of youth arranged by the variables in question. The data in Table 3.2, the structure of unemployment by youth according to age and location, point out these differences.

Location	Youth Cohort (15-19) % of Unemployment	Youth Cohort (20-24) % of Unemployment
Capital/Major Metropolitan Areas	26.4	14.7
Oblast Capitals	32.4	18.4
District Capitals	38.9	24.7
Rural Districts	44.7	32.3
Region		
Western Region	26.4	12.7
Central Region	32.7	16.7
Eastern Region	35.5	22.4

Second, indicators may reveal useful information if comparative data is available between youth and the next older adult cohort, or even the figures for adults in their productive years. This is exemplified by Table 3.3, which shows illustrative youth cohort data alongside adult information.

C. Stakeholder Analysis

1. Stakeholder Analysis: Who are the stakeholders?

A *stakeholder* is any individual or group who has a vested interest in the area being examined, anyone who significantly affects, or is affected by, someone else’s decision-making and actions. In the case of youth, as in any examination of complex social phenomena, knowing who the various stakeholders are, what they think, and what power and influence they have will be fundamental to the success of the rapid appraisal. One of the first substantive activities that the team should undertake is to conduct a “stakeholder analysis” of the groups, organizations, and institutions in the specific social arenas on which the assessment is focusing.

Unemployment by Level of Education	Youth Cohort (15-19)	Youth Cohort (20-24)	Adults (25-34)	Adults (35-54)
Secondary School Incomplete	47.9%	29.7%	22.4%	26.7%
Completed Secondary Schooling	39.3%	22.4%	19.9%	22.1%
Completed Post-Secondary Technical Training	29.3%	18.7%	15.4%	12.1%
Completed Some University Study	NA	19.9%	14.4%	13.1%
Completed University Degree	NA	16.4%	9.8%	7.8%

* Includes only those actively seeking employment (excluding full-time students and homemakers)
NA: Not available

In a wide-ranging exercise such as a rapid appraisal of youth, this suggests a large, varied panorama of social actors. The youth cohort itself is the most obvious and important group of

stakeholders. Because the youth are perhaps the least likely to be organized to articulate their interests, this may be, in some senses, the “quietest” stakeholder group, with the least voice in making its own views felt. The appraisal team has to ensure that from the very beginning it builds in the ability to include the input of youths of various backgrounds and perspectives, from various levels of society.

Stakeholders obviously include the most important decision-makers and public actors, such as:

- those in government who have control over public resources in education, health, and other ministries;
- popular figures and media voices who highlight and focus on youth issues;
- leaders of organizations that advocate for youth ends, attempt to educate youth on specific issues (such as health practices or employment) or who organize youth to carry out activities; and
- manufacturers and merchants who target the youth market.

Other stakeholder groups may include churches, sports associations, community organizations, clubs, and other voluntary organizations. Stakeholders in the youth arena also include parents and families, teachers, counselors, and others who work with and guide young people.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS

Representatives of the Government

Ministry of Education (policy for youth and relative importance/priority)
Ministry of Health (policy for youth and relevant importance/priority)
Ministries or other governmental agencies relating to youth issues
In post conflict areas or compulsory service countries – military leaders

Representatives of NGOs

Other international donors (World Bank, EBRD, ADB and bilateral donors, etc.)
International NGOs (CARE, World Vision, etc.)
National NGO networks and groups working in youth issues or on youth projects, such as disadvantaged youth, public health, education, training, street children, etc.
Church groups, clubs

Other Governments

European Union’s PHARE/TACIS

Beneficiaries and other member of the local community

Selected school directors / faculty
Journalists
American Chambers of Commerce / Junior Achievement programs / Other business or private sector groups
Youth and youth leaders: University students, participants in US government-funded training and exchange programs.
Cultural, recreation centers
Sports groups and associations

Staff on Site

Peace Corps Volunteers
USAID Contractors

2. What is a stakeholder analysis?

Over the past 20 years, researchers in a variety of fields have developed approaches labeled as stakeholder analysis (SA), all with the intent to improve our understanding of how institutions and social groups function – how they articulate their interests, what influence and power they may have to shape events, what their views and values are, and how they may react to proposed policies and activities. Stakeholder analysis “has the advantage of being a flexible, context-specific paradigm that helps focus attention on specific problems, actors, and opportunities for change.”⁷ It allows the researchers – in our case, the RA team – to determine systematically who the principal social actors are in an area vital to the assessment, and leads them to consider (and to investigate) what their values and views are, what power and authority they may have to influence decisions and actions, what their objectives and goals would be with respect to the area of interests; whether they would support particular policy approaches, be indifferent, or create obstructions; and to what degree the different individuals or groups might be involved as participants in the appraisal or in subsequent policy initiatives.

Why conduct a stakeholder analysis?

The stakeholder analysis will be helpful both in providing the overall context of the system being investigated, as well as providing specific, concrete information that gives insight into the activities or condition of the specific demographic subgroups of the youth cohort. Stakeholder analysis, in the first instance, will provide answers to the following questions:

- Who can provide important insights into the area at which we are looking?
- Who can, through the power they hold and their place in the system, be supportive and cooperative in furthering potential youth initiatives? (What are their values, objectives and goals, and interests?)
- Who, through the power they hold and their place in the system, can prevent advancement or create obstacles in the way of potential youth initiatives?

As key informants in the rapid appraisal process, they help identify other key informants, providing the names of individuals who can offer further insight or who may disagree with the key informant’s point of view.

For the RA of youth, stakeholder analysis may be somewhat more difficult than it is when done to develop a specific project. In the rapid appraisal of youth undertaking, no specific project or activity may be yet identified. The assessment is looking to develop specific action recommendations that only later might result in concrete projects or programs. To be most useful, the SA should be focused on specific questions or policy concerns. The queries that shape the SA need to be linked to definable issues and potential proposed outcomes. For example, each of the illustrative scenarios (e.g., HIV/AIDS, unemployment, and youth and civil society) focuses on a specific area of concern that has policy implications. The SA, like the rapid appraisal itself, is likely to be less useful if it is so open-ended that it does not lead to action proposals.

⁷ Chevalier, Jacque, “Stakeholder analysis and natural resource management,” <http://www.carleton.ca/~jchevali/stakeh2.html>, p. 2.

The following three characteristics should guide the framing of the focus area of the SA:⁸

- The themes should be specific and “definable.” Policymakers and managers will need an area of substance around which to articulate proposed actions.
- The issues should be controversial socially and politically, so that the assessment team is able to determine what aspects of potential activities or programs *are* controversial and to whom.
- The themes should be clear enough that they can yield recommended actions coming out of the analysis.

Is stakeholder analysis designed primarily to create buy-in?

Stakeholder analysis, done well, will encourage and facilitate participation by a wide range of social actors in the RA of youth. A principal purpose of an initial SA in the rapid appraisal of youth is to ensure the assessment team that it is taking into account as wide a range of principal players as possible. It can help to ensure that groups, institutions, and key individuals are not overlooked as the process proceeds.

However, SA is not in itself identical with participation. Stakeholder analysis works best when it is inclusive and open-ended, but its primary purpose in supporting the youth assessment is to provide the guiding framework to elucidate the social groupings relevant to the assessment and a preliminary understanding of their influence and their relationships. It is these groups that then will provide the specific data needed.

What are the tradeoffs between rapidity and participation?

The core of the issue lies here: the rapid appraisals are normally going to require quick turnaround and intensive work over a short period of time. The team will need to retain a clear vision of the fact that information will need to be collected, assessed, triangulated, and put into context in an expeditious manner. However, without participation by a wide range of stakeholders – again, including representatives of segments of the youth population – the purpose of the youth assessment will not be achieved.

The key is to recognize that participation takes many forms. It may be that the Mission wants wide participation in providing general information, understanding, and views. The broader the participation at this level, the better the assessment will be, since it will serve to incorporate the knowledge and insight of many players with varying perspectives on the youth reality. However, when it comes to setting priorities and making recommendations, broad participation will be most useful for establishing a wide range of possibilities. For narrowing those priorities to make them relevant to USAID, it may be more important to elicit the views and ideas of more limited groups, since USAID’s own policy goals, as well as its resource constraints, will necessarily shape the recommendations for new initiatives and how they can develop with budget and program constraints.

⁸ Kammi Schmeer, “Stakeholder Analysis Guidelines,” Section 2, pp. 2-5.

More detailed information on how to go about organizing a stakeholder analysis can be found in Appendix C, Stakeholder Analysis.

D. Preliminary Steps to Developing the Scope of Work for a Rapid Appraisal of Youth

A good scope of work (SOW) is critical to undertaking a good youth assessment whatever the intended objectives and methodologies are. Experience shows that expending adequate time and effort in preparing a good SOW results in an assessment's quality, relevance, and usefulness.⁹ This section of the manual presents the basic preliminary steps involved in creating a useful SOW. Depending on the reader's experience in preparing scopes of work, he or she may wish to skip this section of the manual, or simply skim it for helpful tips. However, for those who need a refresher or who have little experience preparing scopes of work, it might be useful to review this section of the manual carefully.

The process of developing the SOW from conceptualization to finalization varies, largely depending on how extensive the assessment is, what kinds of resources are available to the Mission, and the experience of Mission staff in preparing SOWs. All scopes of work should identify the objectives and needed outputs and parameters of the assessment (objectives, intended audience(s), timing, available resources, desired outcomes, and any other implementation requirements that will be critical to the implementers of the RA).

If the rapid assessment is to be done "in-house" by Mission staff, the SOW should include the methodologies and work plan for the assessment. However, the SOW does not need to prescribe the detailed approach and methodology of the assessment if it is being turned over to "experts" for a response. In some instances, it may be advisable for the SOW drafters simply to identify the objectives and need for the assessment and leave the details of implementation up to the responding organization. Further information and detail about preparing a scope of work for a rapid appraisal and a sample SOW may be found in Appendix E.

1. Step One: Conceptualizing the Purpose of the Assessment

As with any other research project, the purpose of the assessment should be clearly stated – along with a hypothesis, if there is one. It is at this juncture that the Mission should begin to determine the extent of the RA—comprehensive, detailed, or a combination of the two. One such example might be to conduct a needs assessment to identify goals, products, problems, or conditions which need to be addressed in future program planning. Another might be something more specific such as to study youth unemployment, its causes and consequences, in order to develop strategies and programs to address it.

In considering the purpose or purposes of the assessment, the planners should keep in mind the needs of the stakeholders and the target audience for the study. These needs will, to a degree, determine the level of assessment to be undertaken. The following text box suggests some key questions that planners should consider when developing a SOW for the rapid appraisal of youth.

⁹ USAID, "Preparing and Evaluation Scope of Work," Performance Monitoring and Evaluation TIPS, No. 3, USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation, Washington, DC, 1996.

Key Questions to Assist Planners to Define Objectives for a Rapid Appraisal of Youth Scope of Work

- What category or populations of youth should be targeted?
- What is the purpose of the assessment?
- What are the information needs?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the timeframe?
- Can it be done in-house? Or by a contractor?
- What resources (time, labor, travel) are available?
- Can other donors contribute resources to the assessment?
- What information resources already exist in this area?

2. Step Two: Defining the Assessment's Objectives

When the Mission staff decides, in broad terms, the level and purpose of the youth assessment they would like to pursue, the next step is to define the objectives of the assessment. It is important to note that different objectives will help to determine the selection of different tools and methodologies for the assessment.

Determining the objectives for any project is not a simple exercise. Staff from different offices may want the assessment to provide different things. These differences need to be thoroughly discussed, prioritized, and agreed to prior to writing the SOW. For example, Mission staff may find that they would like an extensive assessment of youth, but resources only permit an assessment of one sector. This section should help the Mission think through competing demands to develop clear objectives and gain agreement on the assessment of youth.

By taking a closer look at the motivating factor(s) behind the youth assessment, Mission staff can better determine the objectives. Has the Mission become aware of new information about youth? Was there a change in legislation or government organization that may drastically affect the status of youth in the country? Was there a catastrophe to which the Mission needs to respond? Does the Mission have excess funds it needs to deploy before the end of the fiscal year?

The following questions focus on the purpose of the assessment, the Mission's expectations, and the potential audience(s) beyond the Mission who will use the results of the activity. Thinking through these questions will help to determine the objectives for the youth assessment.

Purpose Questions (see employment example below)

1. Why are youth being assessed at this time?
2. How are the assessment results going to be useful to the Mission?
3. Have any major changes (in the economy, government programs or priorities, society, etc.) occurred recently?
4. Are any major changes anticipated in the future?

Purpose of the Rapid Appraisal of Youth: Employment Example

1. Due to a stagnant economy and the slow pace of privatization of large-scale state enterprises, unemployment has remained officially low. However, workers now are finding that their jobs have been terminated and they are entering the labor market to seek new work. Youth now face double difficulties in securing employment: first, the job market did not expand to absorb them in recent years before privatization began; and now, although economic activity is picking up, they face competition from newly laid-off seasoned workers who are struggling to find new employment. The perception of growing youth-related social problems – idle youth, increased street crime and drug use, and the fear of a “lost generation” – has moved both the government and USAID to conduct an assessment of the employment situation of youth to be able to design more effective policy responses.
2. The Mission already has a focus on labor market reform, especially related to supporting the Parliament in developing revisions to the national labor law and working with independent trade unions. The Mission has also advised the Ministry of Labor on the design of an active unemployment program, involving labor market research, and management training, and with the reform of the banking system in developing credit mechanisms to strengthen small business creation. USAID officers also have been investigating the possibility of expanding their activities into job training. The results of the rapid appraisal will provide a base of information to determine whether and how new activities related to job training might include, or even be targeted to, the youth cohort.
3. The situation of youth was already growing critical as the cohort of under-25 matured and yet found little career opportunity in the large state enterprises. Leaders already recognized as well that technical and vocational training was out of sync with the changing economy, no longer providing training in the kinds of skills that led to new jobs. They have also perceived that the social problems mentioned above are growing. With the increased pace of privatization and institutional reform of the productive public sector, the situation appears even more critical.
4. The Mission does not anticipate higher levels of funding. However, with a new strategy required in the next two years, it may well be that the Mission can expand its focus on the situation of youth by re-orienting and refining on-going activities.

Expectation Questions (see democracy example below)

1. How would you describe previous assessments of youth?
2. How could any previous assessments have been made more useful?
3. What kinds of information do you think the assessment should contain?
4. What information about youth would be most useful to the Mission? Your clients? USAID/Washington?

Mission Expectations: Democracy Example

1. Previous USAID assessments of youth have focused on health conditions. They have provided no insight into the attitudes of youth towards democracy and civil society institutions. Other donors have conducted polls to determine who votes and why, but no special attention was given to the 15-24 age cohort.
2. Those assessments might have provided good data on youth attitudes towards voting, but should at least provide the team a baseline measurement of political involvement, recognizing that voting is often the simplest and most common form of political participation, but does not necessarily constitute approval

of or confidence in the political system. Those polls also did not ask for whom people voted, so we have little data on which political parties and issues resonate with the country's youth.

3. The assessment will obtain several types of information. First, the Mission will need information on what the level of political and civic involvement of youth is at and information on current efforts by political or civic organizations to target youth in their activities or increase youth involvement. Data on youths' attitudes toward and interest in democratic development and civil society institutions, broken down into specific categories of institutions, are paramount. The Mission also needs to gauge the level of trust the country's youths have in various institutions and processes (i.e., local charities, national non-governmental organizations, local governments, courts, parliament, executive agencies, elections, etc.) and perceived access to decision makers.

4. The Mission is most interested in youths' attitudes and perceived access to decision makers. Partners in the government would like to know about levels of trust in the various governmental institutions and political processes. Political parties will be interested in trust in the political processes and perceived access to decision makers, particularly at the local level. USAID/Washington is most interested in the level of civic and political participation and the level of trust in political institutions and processes.

Potential Audience(s) Questions (see health example below)

1. What groups of people are involved with youth or are affected by youth issues?
2. What sorts of information about youth would be most useful to each of these groups?
3. Should representatives from other groups be interviewed while planning the assessment or during the assessment?
4. What are the multiple audiences (stakeholders, ministries, donors, Mission, Agency) which have need of information on youth?
5. Which groups should receive information about the assessment when it is complete? Should special reports be directed to specific groups?¹⁰

Potential Audience(s): Health Example

1. In the area of health, some of the groups that are involved with youth are primary care physicians, nurses, pharmacists, HIV/AIDS and family planning clinics, and hospitals. Outside the health community, other groups that are affected include educators (e.g., high schools, polytechnic institutions, and universities), employers in all sectors, and social welfare administrations. Non-governmental organizations that provide health, education and training, counseling and materials goods are likely to be adversely affected by a growing number of HIV/AIDS infected youth, or will need to re-direct their programming to better meet the needs of this segment of society.

2. All stakeholders would be interested in hearing from the youth themselves, particularly women under the age of 25, regarding their needs and interests. Health providers might be particularly interested to know where youth feel there are gaps in provision or quality of care. Educators want to know what methods of communication and messages would be most effective in reaching youths that are at risk for HIV/AIDS infection. Social welfare administrations that care for youths might be interested in learning how to target existing funds more effectively to address the particular needs of young women.

3. Since HIV/AIDS in youth transcends a number of sectors and affects a wide variety of people both directly and indirectly, it is important to talk with a variety of stakeholders to assess where new programming can be most effective. For this instance, a local researcher compiles and summarizes available information and reports from international donors and foundations, as well as relevant census

¹⁰ Strecher, Brian M. and W. Alan Davis. (1987) *How to Focus an Evaluation*. London: Sage Publications.

data, prior to the team's arrival in order to inform the approach to be taken in the rapid appraisal of youth. If the initial research leads to interesting findings, then follow up meetings should be conducted during the course of the rapid appraisal.

4. The primary audience for the final outcomes of the rapid appraisal is the Mission. However, since many other international donors were contacted during the RA, it would be beneficial to provide a brief executive summary of key findings (1-2 pages) so that the work is not replicated. The Mission might consider holding individual follow-up meetings with each of the government representatives with whom they met during the RA to show that their recommendations and observations have been taken into consideration in planning new programs. If the findings show that the atmosphere is ripe for a constructive dialogue about HIV/AIDS in youth, it might be a good time to host a two-day workshop on the issue or to begin a coordinating committee among the main stakeholders.

3. Step Three: Key Questions, Identifying Activities, and Developing a Plan

After carefully making the determinations and considering the questions in Steps One and Two, it would be useful for the preparers of the scope of work to identify several *key assessment questions* for the RA. These key questions will point the way to developing the assessment plan, determining the methodologies to be employed, identifying the activities, and setting forth a tentative work plan.

After the planning team determines and defines the dimensions, the objectives, the stakeholders, and the audience for the youth assessment, the next step is to consider how the assessment will be implemented (the assessment plan, the methodologies, the activities, and the work plan).

The main questions the work plan should address are: *What are the key questions? What methodologies should be used? What activities will be undertaken? By whom? In what time frame?*

Key Questions

Key questions are simply a verbalization of what research information, data, analysis and recommendations are needed by the administrator of the program or the activity, the stakeholders, and the multiple audiences. The assessment planners will find the development of key questions useful whether the research will be done in-house, by an experienced consultant, or by a contracting firm. Following are some illustrative examples of key research questions (in the area of health) for research and analysis.

- What messages about HIV/AIDS have been shown to be effective in reaching youth in other less-developed countries (literature search)?
- What have been some of the effective messages that have been successful in reaching youth at risk from HIV/AIDS in this country (literature search, interviews, donor interviews)?
- What are the best methods for communicating these messages to at risk youth (literature search, surveys and interviews of educators and youth, focus groups)?
- Should messages to youth about HIV/AIDS be gender-specific (same as above, triangulate)?

- At which level (primary grades, middle grades, secondary school, out-of-school youth) would educating youth about the risk of HIV/AIDS be most effective (literature search, interviews with educators, parents, HIV/AIDS experts, Ministry of Health)?
- What should parents of youth be taught about HIV/AIDS and what is the best way to reach them?
- What kinds of HIV/AIDS educational materials are other international donors providing (donor interviews)? What has been their experience with successful communication with youth (donor interviews and reports)?

The Methodologies

The methodologies applied to the assessment should correspond to the kinds of information needed to respond to the key questions and satisfy the data needs of the audiences. The methodologies may be qualitative (i.e., observations, non-structured interviews, focus groups), quantitative (survey, structured interview), or a blend of the two, with qualitative data providing context and enrichment for the quantitative data. For discussion about the types of data collection methodologies that are available and appropriate for a rapid appraisal, please refer to Chapter IV: Conducting the Assessment.

The Activities

The illustrative list of activities in the following text box presents some of the likely steps, general responsibilities, and activities of a typical rapid appraisal team. The work plan will contain greater specificity and, to a degree, will depend upon whether the Mission has decided to use a rapid appraisal team composed of internal, external, or combination of experts. If the Mission decides to hire consultants or a consulting firm to conduct some or all of the assessment activities, the tasks assigned to those consultants represent the main points of the work plan. The differences between these three types of teams are discussed in greater detail in the following text, and will determine, to some extent, the types of methodologies to be employed.

Illustrative Rapid Appraisal Activities

Preparation

- Provide inputs regarding evaluation design; bring refinements and specificity to the assessment concerns and questions.
- Review information and documentation made available by the Mission.
- Design or refine the instruments to collect additional information as needed.

Implementation

- Undertake site visits as necessary.
- Conduct interviews (or implement other data collection methods; the work plan should be specific).
- Facilitate stakeholder participation, if part of the scope.

recommendations; draw lessons learned.

Follow-up

Provide debriefing or guide reflection or discussions if a workshop is required.

Further discussion of work plan activities may be found in Chapter IV – Conducting the Rapid Appraisal of Youth Assessment.

By Whom?

As part of the process of developing a work plan, Mission staff will determine which activities to assign to itself, to an independent rapid appraisal consultant, or to an experienced consulting firm.

Because of their inter-relationship, the next two steps (Assigning Financial and Human Resources and Creating an Estimate of Time and Costs) should be considered together. But, before taking the next step this may be an appropriate time to take a step back and review the results of the first three steps with the planning team to get agreement and consensus on the path proposed for the assessment.

4. Step Four: Assigning Human and Financial Resources

While Appendix D, Recruiting and Organizing the Rapid Appraisal Team, provides a more in-depth discussion of staffing issues, it is important to note here that developing the SOW includes giving some thought to the team composition. Who will be on the team? Who will manage the team? This initial discussion will give the Mission planners a sense of the staffing choices they will have to make. Among these choices might be the following individuals or a combination of the following types of people.

- local hire staff
- local hire consultants or consulting firms
- full time expatriate staff
- personal services contractors
- international consultants and consulting firms
- staff or volunteers from other international donor organizations
- staff or volunteers from other U.S. government agencies operating in the country
- staff or volunteers from NGOs or PVOs operating in the country
- staff or volunteers from government agencies or institutions

Assigning Financial Resources

Typically, Mission staff may have greater flexibility in assigning financial resources for a youth rapid appraisal than they may realize. The Mission may choose to use some of its own resources to fund the youth assessment. Depending on the focus of the youth assessment, the *pillar bureaus* (Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade; Bureau for Global Health; and Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance) may be willing to fund the assessment, either fully or partially.

Missions also have a number of *existing contract mechanisms* at their disposal for recruiting rapid appraisal teams. Almost any IQC or LWA (“Leader with Associates”) holder should be able to conduct a rapid appraisal in its field of expertise, and a task order is probably the fastest way to initiate the work. A list of current IQCs and their holders is available on-line at

http://www.usaid.gov/procurement_bus_opp/procurement/iqc.htm. Other options include a purchase order for a small, well-defined appraisal; letting a new contract or cooperative agreement for a large-scale appraisal; or using such government-wide mechanisms as the General Services Administration's MOBIS mechanism.

Also consider *leveraging financial or other assistance* from non-governmental organizations and international donor institutions. Several Missions in Europe and Eurasia have coordinated programs successfully with the World Bank, Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the Asian Development Bank, European Union (PHARE and TACIS) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). All of these organizations have web sites for additional information, and most of them have offices in each of the countries of Europe and Eurasia.

5. Step Five: Estimating Time and Cost Factors

Even the most experienced staff may have a difficult time predicting the exact length of time of an assessment and foreseeing all of the costs associated with it. Estimating the time and cost of an assessment, therefore, is a tricky business, but one that has been written about extensively. This section of the manual provides some guidance that should help the reader get a general sense of how much time each step of the assessment might take and what factors to include in estimating the cost of the assessment.

Thinking about upcoming Mission activities will help the planning team to determine an approximate start and end date for the rapid assessment.

- *What are some key milestones coming up in the Mission planning process for which the rapid appraisal results may be useful?*
- *By what date is the assessment report needed for these?*
- *Are there interim reporting dates or is a single, final report sufficient?*

Time Is Money

Often the time allocated for the assessment during the planning process is too short when compared to the expected outcomes. For a simple rapid appraisal, a total duration of 30 to 45 workdays is adequate in most cases. However, there are numerous factors that can postpone the assessment's progress, including the complexity of the assessment, the availability of personnel and stakeholders, and exogenous factors like weather, illness, political unrest, war, and airline strikes.

- **Complexity.** The time that the rapid appraisal will take is dependent largely on the complexity of the assessment. The more complex the assessment and the geographical distribution of the stakeholders, the more time must be allowed.
 - *Will the assessment examine all possible social sectors contributing to the status of youth, or will the assessment focus on the attitudes of youth towards random drug testing of students in extracurricular activities?*

- *Will the rapid appraisal team try to talk with all possible stakeholders in the city being assessed or will the members only talk with the recent graduates of local high schools?*
- **Data.** Another factor contributing to amount of time allocated for the assessment is the availability and accessibility of data. The more steps that are required to obtain the data, the greater the time frame will be.
 - *What information is already available concerning youth?*
 - *Has an assessment of youth been done before?*
 - *Does the government publish education, health, and other statistics about youth?*
 - *Are the data reliable?*
 - *Do other donors have country reports that will provide relevant information?*
 - *What policies exist regarding confidentiality and protocol?*
 - *Will they make the data available?*
 - *Do local non-governmental organizations collect and publish data about youth?*
 - *Will key groups or individuals be available to provide information only at certain times?*
 - *How will existing information be accessed (computer, paper files, various locations)?*
 - *Will it be necessary to create a database to “dump” the data and information that is obtained in the course of the assessment? The more steps that are required, the greater the time frame will be.*
 - *Will there be conferences, seminars, or meetings where large groups of youth may be coming together, which researchers might visit and contact various individuals or groups of youth?*
 - *Can other organizations contribute resources (including in-kind resources) to the assessment?*
 - *Can staff of these other organizations be relied upon in the data collection and retrieval process?¹¹*
- **Personnel.** Mission staff should also take their own availability and the availability of potential stakeholders into consideration, when considering what human resources can be directed toward the assessment. If Mission staff are available only on a part-time, when-available basis, the time frame will necessarily increase.
 - *Will government staff be on vacation, or are there any holidays or religious observances during the assessment?*
 - *Are the workloads so great that staff cannot take on any new activities?*
 - *If so, what are the options?*
- **Weather.** Weather, particularly weather in the Europe and Eurasia region, can significantly impact the ability of the rapid appraisal team to travel, thus raising travel and per diem costs. Often assessments must be conducted when children and youth are in

¹¹ Strecher, Brian M. and W. Alan Davis. (1987) *How to Focus an Evaluation*. London: Sage Publications.

school and the school year may limit the time of year that researchers can gather the data. Frequently, this will impact on the time frame of the assessment.

- *Will winter weather make it difficult to predict when air travel will be possible?*
 - *Is it going to be too hot for the airplanes to land, as can happen in Armenia in August?*
 - *Is the mountain road from Almaty to Bishkek going to be open and passable in February?*
- **Distance.** In large countries, particularly Russia and Kazakhstan, the long distances between cities often mean that planners should carefully consider and build in adequate travel time. Even within the cities, time is an important consideration. It often takes an hour to get from one side of Moscow, for example, to the other, by metro or taxi. Travel time must be factored into the level of effort and time required to do the assessment.

Developing a Draft Budget

Depending on the level of assessment, rapid appraisals can be completed with a budget of between \$50,000 and \$200,000. However, there are a number of factors that could increase the cost of the assessment, including delays in implementation, complexity of the assessment, location, and number and experience of the staff. As discussed earlier, the main categories of expenses are labor, travel, and other direct costs.

Factors That May Affect Cost Estimates

- Delays may increase labor time spent.
 - The need to include secondary cities and rural areas may require extensive internal travel.
 - The more complex the assessment and the more quantitative data to be collected, the more expensive the assessment becomes.
 - Economy class airfares to Europe and Eurasia from the US range from \$1,500 to \$4,500. If a consultant has a medical waiver to travel business class, the costs are much higher.
 - Local hire staff is much less expensive than international consultants.
- **Labor.** Labor is calculated by multiplying the number of days by the daily rate of the consultants. How labor rates are determined varies, depending on the contract mechanism. Many IQCs have fixed labor rates at various skill and experience levels, and these rates are published in the IQC materials. These fixed rates already include overhead or indirect costs and fee (if there is any). A fairly accurate labor cost estimate can be developed, then, by multiplying the total number of team labor days by, for example, the two highest fixed labor categories.

When using external consultants, remember to factor in some days at the beginning of the project, prior to consultant travel to country, to allow time for the consultant(s) to read background materials for the assessment.

- **Travel and Per Diem.** For travel expenses while in the region, Missions are required to use the U.S. State Department travel guidelines to determine the per diems for their country, found at <http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/prdm>. The biggest single travel expense is often international airfare. In-country travel, particularly when internal flights are required, is an important budgetary consideration.
- **Other Direct Costs (ODC).** Other direct costs include taxis, interpreters and other local assistance, supplies, insurance, copying, equipment and facilities rental, postage and shipping, and communications (i.e., telephone, fax, and internet access). If the Mission uses a mechanism in which indirect costs are not already included in fixed labor rates, indirect costs may be added on top of these general expenses.

6. Step Six: Review Decisions

It is easier to take all factors into consideration before the assessment begins than to make adjustments in mid-stream. Now that preliminary objectives are set and staff and financial resources are determined, it is useful to review some of the decisions that have been made about level of effort, availability of information, and cost and timing among others. Below are some questions to help guide your review of decisions made thus far.

- Are the assumptions that have been made about the length of time required realistic?
- Are the assumptions about level of effort realistic?
- Are the assumptions about the availability of information realistic?
- Are the assumptions about the costs realistic?
- What adjustments would you expect the rapid appraisal team to make if their initial findings show that another sector (not the one that they have been hired to look at) is really where new programs are needed?
- What if the team reaches conclusions contrary to your initial hypothesis?

7. Step Seven: Stakeholder Involvement

Before finalizing the scope of work, it is important to obtain agreement by the stakeholders to the overall plan of action. The Mission should consider inviting all of the youth assessment stakeholders, who have been described in detail earlier in this chapter, to a meeting to discuss the draft scope of work. The agenda might include the following:

- Presentation of a four- to five-page summary of the assessment criteria, including objectives and strategies, key assessment questions, time frame, funding sources, and a brief status report.
- Discussion of the assessment design. Listen to all points of view and attempt to reach consensus on priority goals for the assessment (if such agreement has not already been reached), whether the rapid appraisal team should be comprised of external, internal members or both, data collection methods, and resources that each stakeholder might be able to the assessment.

Following the meeting, the Mission should prepare a one- to two page summary of the meeting to share with all of the attendees.

8. Step Eight: Next Steps—Drafting the Scope

Having gone through the above steps, Mission staff will be ready to prepare the necessary components of the scope of work. The SOW describes the purpose of the assessment, specifies the area(s) and population(s) to be considered, lists key questions the assessment should answer, identifies the major tasks, and lists the deliverables. To review, the main components of the scope of work are:

- **Background and purpose.** Summarize in a paragraph the topic to be assessed and describe the purpose of the assessment, including who will use the results and how.
- **Assessment questions or objectives.** List the major questions the assessment should answer, specify the area and population to be considered, and if possible, the kinds of measurement to be used.
- **Assessment methods.** Describe the overall assessment approach and data collection methods, providing as much guidance as possible (e.g., data collection instruments, procedures and analysis) and identify sources of available data.
- **Composition of the assessment team.** Identify the skills and experience required to carry out the assessment (e.g., education, field and rapid appraisal experience, knowledge of subject, and language proficiency), distinguishing between desired and required skills, and specify the respective roles of the rapid appraisal team and the client.
- **Schedule and plan major tasks.** State the specific tasks the rapid appraisal team is responsible for and a preliminary schedule. For example, suggest that the team meet with certain officials early on and provide a work plan for review.
- **Deliverables.** List products to be delivered, to whom and when, specify what should be in the report, and indicate whether or not the report should be translated.
- **Financial requirements and logistical support.** Give the budget for the assessment, including reporting requirements about financial matters, and identify logistical support available.

Appendix E to this manual illustrates the key components typically included in a scope of work, and a sample scope of work from Macedonia (to assess educational needs of minority youth) shows how those components might be addressed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conducting the Assessment

This section reviews the research methodologies available to the rapid assessment team for the youth assessment, including many of the pros and cons of each approach. Strategies for determining who should be informants and how to structure the conversations as part of the youth assessment are also covered. Supporting documentation can be found in the appendices.

A. Research Methods

The rapid appraisal's methodology is the consistent application of one or several research tools or methods. As discussed in Chapter II, the rapid appraisal methodology utilizes a variety of research methods from which the team can choose in order to best meet the requirements of the assessment. Among these are the following, which are discussed in detail in this section of the manual:

- Using and synthesizing available information that has already been produced by USAID, other donors, and other sources – reports, demographic analyses, studies, etc.;
- Identifying and using key indicators to guide the setting of priorities;
- Identifying key informants and stakeholder analysis;
- Conducting in-depth interviews with key informants and stakeholders;
- Conducting focus groups;
- Implementing mini-surveys;
- Employing systematic observation; and
- Other research methods and strategies.

It is important to adopt research methods that will collect the data you need for the rapid assessment of youth. There are many methods and tools to choose from, and they will yield different types of data. If the data collected do not answer the questions asked, the analysis will be incomplete and further effort and resources will be necessary to collect the remaining data.

Table 4.1 shows what types of data each methodological tool produces, as well the advantages and limitations of each.

**Table 4.1
Common Rapid Appraisal Research Methods/Tools**

Methods	Data Provided	Advantages	Limitations
Literature Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about existing or previous youth programs or initiatives sponsored by USAID, other donors, or the host country • Statistics on youth (demographics as well as statistics on education, employment, health, and other issues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevents “reinventing the wheel” and gathering data already collected • Can provide qualitative or quantitative data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be time-consuming and cause the team to lose focus if a lot of information is available for review
Key Informant Interviews and Stakeholder Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, descriptive data • Understanding of attitudes and behaviors • Suggestions and recommendations • Information to interpret quantitative data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides in-depth, inside information • Flexibility permits exploring unanticipated topics • Easy to administer • Relatively inexpensive • Takes 4-6 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not generate quantitative data • Susceptible to interviewer and selection bias
Community interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village/community level data • Views on activities and suggestions for improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits direct interactions between evaluator and large numbers of individuals • Can generate some quantitative data on community characteristics, behaviors, opinions • Participants tend to correct each other, providing more accurate information • Inexpensive and quick (5-6 weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be manipulated by elites or monopolized by individuals • Cultural taboos or norms may inhibit discussion of certain topics
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer views on services, products, benefits • Information on implementation problems • Recommendations for improving activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be completed rapidly (5 weeks) • Very economical • Group discussion may reduce inhibitions, allowing free exchange of ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not provide quantitative data • Discussion may be dominated by a few individuals • Susceptible to moderator biases
Mini-surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative data on narrowly focused questions for a relatively homogeneous population • When probability sampling is difficult • Data on attitudes, beliefs, behaviors of customers or partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can generate quantitative data • Reduces non-random sampling errors • Requires limited personnel and is quick (5-6 weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings are less generalizable than those from sample surveys • Susceptible to sampling biases • Requires statistical analysis skills • Inappropriate for gathering in-depth, qualitative information
Direct Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on physical infrastructure, supplies, conditions • Information about an agency’s delivery systems, services • Insights into behaviors or events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phenomenon can be examined in its natural setting • May reveal conditions or problems of which informants are unaware • Can be completed in 3-4 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susceptible to observer bias • Act of observing can affect behaviors • Distortions can occur if sites selected are not representative

Source: USAID, *Using Rapid Appraisal Procedures*, p. 4.

B. Safety, Culture and Language

You have the team, you have an SOW, and the assessment is almost ready to begin. There are three important issues you and the team should consider:

- **Safety.** Safety may be an important issue for some team members. In many countries, simply being identified as a Westerner or an American can cause one to be targeted for crime or harassment. In some areas, female team members need to be especially careful of how they conduct themselves and be aware of the precautions they should take. Rapid appraisal requires researchers to work at the local level in areas that are often well away from the capital and Mission resources that might otherwise be available to them. They also may examine areas that make people wary or sensitive, for example, drug habits and trade or trafficking, in spite of assurances that the respondents' answers are confidential. Safety of the team should be paramount and regular briefings may be necessary to keep the team updated if a country is experiencing civil unrest or isolated conflicts. The team should also have emergency contact information for Mission staff in the event they need to make contact.
- **Cultural Issues.** The choice of research methods and lines of questioning are partially dependent on the cultural setting in which they will occur. The rapid appraisal team members should be attuned to local norms and customs, as well as the socio-cultural context, and capitalize on them to facilitate dialogue whenever possible. Recent research demonstrates that taking culture into account can improve the assessment of decentralized governance, economic and social development, and educational situations.¹²
- **Language(s) of the study and use of interpreters.** Ideally, a rapid assessment would be conducted in the native language of the country. However, many technical specialists lack the requisite language skills. When interpreters are used, the researchers may miss the cultural cues that arise in speech patterns and body language.

Key informant interviews can be conducted effectively with an interpreter. For focus groups, community interviews, and administered surveys, the moderator or administrator should be a native speaker. The recording or text can be translated and the rapid appraisal team can observe the focus group, but these tools are too stilted to be useful when conducted through an interpreter.

C. Conducting Interviews

Interviews – one-on-one discussions with key informants – are an indispensable part of any rapid appraisal. They may follow a variety of forms, including:

- Structured interviews,

¹² Klitgaard, Robert. "Including Culture in Evaluation Research" in Robert Picciotti and Ray C. Rist, eds. *Evaluating Country Development Policies and Programs: New Approaches for a New Agenda. New Directions for Evaluation*, No. 67. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. pp. 135-136.

- Semi-structured interviews, and
- Unstructured interviews.

The most common forms of interviews are those conducted in-person, over the telephone, or by mail. Depending on the research needs and on the feasibility, the team could also conduct interviews via the Internet (web-based surveys), using a tape recorder, or through video-conferencing. Of importance to remember is the fact that not everyone in the region may have a telephone or others have. It may be difficult to contact a representative sample of your target population if your contact strategy relies solely on phone calls. Data quality may be less reliable when interviews are conducted over the phone as well. E-mail is also problematic, in that it has fewer subscribers than telephone service. This section discusses the most common interview forms but also includes an example of a tape-recorded interview.¹³ Appendix G, Interview Protocols for Stakeholders and Informants, provides a sample Evaluation Primer which includes sample interview protocols (questionnaires) and instructions to local researchers.

If the appraisal includes hard-to-reach populations, or hidden populations not identified in the stakeholder analysis, other recruitment techniques may be needed. A common technique for finding respondents within these groups is called snowballing. Simply, one respondent identifies and refers the researchers to others. While these samples are not representative, it is usually a reliable way to reach vulnerable or isolated social groups. Snowballing works best in exploratory, qualitative, and descriptive research, making it well-suited to rapid appraisal work. The most important characteristic of snowballing is that it can reduce distrust among respondents and has been used to research gang behavior, drug use, prostitution, pick pocketing, and HIV/AIDS incidence.¹⁴

1. What are the differences among Structured, Semi-Structured, and Unstructured Interviews?

Structured Interviews. Structured interviews – that is, formal interviews using a detailed interview questionnaire designed to provide data for a quantitative survey – are likely to play a relatively small role in a youth assessment because formal surveys are not well-suited to the time constraints of a rapid appraisal. However, there may be occasions for their use in interviews with federal, state, and local officials.

When a Structured Interview Might Be Useful

For example, if the assessment includes interviewing youth regarding their views of a USAID-sponsored anti-drug campaign, the team may want to hire a local researcher – perhaps a youth – to conduct these interviews. To make sure that bias does not enter into the questioning (“Wouldn’t a radio campaign be better than newspapers?”), having questions written out in advance would help the interviewer and ensure reliability of answers.

¹³ For examples of web-based surveys, visit <http://www.supersurvey.com> or <http://www.zoomerang.com>.

¹⁴ Rowland Atkinson and John Flint. “Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies,” Social Research Update, no. 33. University of Surrey, <http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/SRU33.html>

It *may* be more valuable to the data gathering to conduct small surveys with a structured interview of certain key subgroups, so that some quantitative data may be reported. The structured interview format also allows the team to ensure commonality of questioning – particularly important if team members “split up” to conduct interviews or hire a local researcher to interview before or after the team arrives.

A Structured Interview Example: Political Party Membership

An assessment team decided to conduct face-to-face interviews of youth who are active members of political parties. They asked the following questions:

- With which political party are you affiliated?
- What motivated you to become a party member?
- Do you intend to run for a political office some day?
- To what degree do you think your peers are interested in politics?
- Do you participate in any kind of volunteer or community work?

Semi-Structured Interviews. Semi-structured interviews, or guided interviews, use lists of questions, issues, and follow-up probes to frame a one-on-one conversation. In contrast to the structured survey, in which each question is pre-determined in its order and phrasing, the interviewers have a list of topics to be covered, but they have considerable freedom in the sequence of questions, how they are phrased, and how much time they spend. Semi-structured interviews are important for collecting information from individuals on their perspective and experience while allowing areas of emphasis to be covered and new issues to arise naturally. Since specific questions develop as a result of the conversation, each semi-structured interview may bring to light different, yet related, issues to the topic being assessed. A composite picture is built up over the course of a number of interviews.

Unstructured Interviews. Unstructured interviews, also known as informal interviews, are essentially opportunistic conversations with a variety of people about specific issues. The purpose of the informal interview is to gain an adequate understanding of the situation in order to begin to formulate ideas about the overall nature of the phenomenon and to test out hypotheses and ideas. Unstructured interviewing is most effective when there is little or no information available on the issue to be investigated. In terms of assessing youth issues in the Europe and Eurasia region, these interviews may be an assignment best suited to a local researcher working with the rapid appraisal team.

Joint interviews are another tool that researchers may want to use. Two people are interviewed together to allow for greater exploration of the issues, reconciliation of differing viewpoints, or to encourage better understanding between the parties.

Some of the advantages and disadvantages of interview types are provided in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2
Advantages and Disadvantages of Types of Interviews**

	Structured Interviews	Semi-Structured Interviews	Unstructured Interviews ¹⁵
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide quantitative data that can be easily compared • Can be extrapolated to the entire cohort, if the sample is large enough • Interviewers require little training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow a trained interviewer to guide the discussion • Interviews can track the interviewee's interests and may, therefore, capture unexpected responses • Allow interviewer to explain or help clarify questions, increasing the likelihood of useful responses • Allow interviewer to be flexible in administering interview to particular individuals or circumstances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a trained interviewer, may yield richest data, details, new insights • Provide opportunity to explore topics in depth • Afford ability to experience the affective as well as cognitive aspects of responses • Allow interviewer to explain or help clarify questions, increasing the likelihood of useful response • Allow interviewer to be flexible in administering interview to particular individuals or circumstances
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not allow interviewer to follow up on provocative or unexpected responses • Respondent may tell the interviewer what he thinks she wants to hear, especially if topic is sensitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need well-qualified, trained interviewers • Interviewers may probe different topics and get different answers • Data, then, may require more analysis or may not be comparable at all • Respondent may tell the interviewer what he thinks she wants to hear, especially if topic is sensitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need well-qualified, highly trained interviewers Flexibility can result in inconsistencies across interviews • Volume of information too large; may be difficult to transcribe and reduce data • Respondent may tell the interviewer what he thinks she wants to hear, especially if topic is sensitive

2. The Interview Process

What Kinds of Questions Should Be Asked?

One of the team's primary tasks in preparing for the RA is to draw up the questions that will be asked in interviews. The resulting "protocol" will be more or less structured depending on the team's goals for the interviews, the key assessment questions, the informants being interviewed, and the preferences of the interviewers. Some team members may be less comfortable being given only broad topics and having to devise questions during the interview.

In meetings with government officials, an unstructured interview may work best. The protocol, then, would be a list of topics to cover in the meeting. For interviews with youth about their employment opportunities or experiences in the labor force, the protocol will be more structured and perhaps even include the exact questions to be asked. Table 4.3, *Sample Protocol Topics*,

¹⁵ Frechtling, Joy and Laure Sharp (eds.), National Science Foundation, Directorate for Education and Human Resources, Division of Research, Evaluation and Communications, User Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations, http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/CHAP_3.HTM#Exhibit%203

provides examples of the types of protocols that might be appropriate for semi-structured (stakeholders) and structured interviews (youth).

Table 4.3 Sample Protocol Topics—General	
Semi-structured	Structured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are stakeholders' perceptions of the project, issue, need? • What do stakeholders know about the project, issue, need? • What thoughts do stakeholders have concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes? • What are stakeholders' expectations? • What are stakeholders' recommendations for future activity or for changes in current activity? • What are projects or planned projects of the stakeholder's organization? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information (name, address, phone) • Demographic information (age, marital status, income) • Level of education obtained • Future plans for education (ED) • Perceived educational opportunities (ED) • Perceived value of education in job market (ED/EGAT) • Employment status, number of jobs, and duration of employment • Field of work, sector of work • Future plans for employment, employment prospects (EGAT) • Attitude towards economy, prospects for economic development (EGAT) • Attitude towards government (all levels and branches), prospects for democratic development (DG) • Personal involvement in politics • Attitude towards media (DG) • Attitude towards NGOs, prospects for civil society and its role (DG) • Personal involvement in civil society • Access to medical care (PHN) • Access to public health information • Knowledge of / prevalence of alcoholism and drug use among peer group (PHN) • Knowledge of / prevalence of STDs among peer group (PHN) • Knowledge of / prevalence of abortion among peer group (PHN)

Table 4.4 suggests some sample protocol topics that might be appropriate for the Health area.

Table 4.4 Sample Protocol Topics – Health	
Semi-structured	Structured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in your community? • Do you think that there is a need to provide additional HIV/AIDS training to youths? • Do you know of any existing projects or NGOs that address the issue of HIV/AIDS among youths? • What do you think youths should know about HIV/AIDS? • Where would be the most effective place to reach youths on this issue? • Are there local experts or organizations who could implement this kind of program? • What do you think a program like this could accomplish in a year? Five years? • What are the recommendations for future activities from the stakeholders? • What other projects or planned projects of other organizations are addressing similar issues? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your contact information (name, address, phone) • Demographic information (age, marital status, income) • What is the highest level of education you have obtained? • What is your employment status? How many jobs do you hold? • What is your field of work? • What impacts has HIV/AIDS had on the local economy? • What are the government's attitudes towards HIV/AIDS? Does the government have any health education programs on this topic? Any towards teens? • How do the media portray issues of HIV/AIDS, particularly among teens? • What role do NGOs play in HIV/AIDS issues in your community? What programs do NGOs provide on this issue? • What access do youths who have contracted with HIV/AIDS have on the public health sector? • What is the prevalence of STDs among teens? • Where do you think teens could get information or training on HIV/AIDS?

Whom Should the Team Interview?

Key informants – persons the team will want to interview during the RA – will vary depending on the research questions being explored and will follow as information on specific knowledgeable individuals is gained as a further step from the Stakeholder Analysis. When selecting interviewees, the team should:

- Interview a range of informants within different groups (i.e., government officials, NGO officials, and youth), giving a more complete view of the issue;
- Be careful not to interview only those with a positive (or negative) view or attitude toward the issue(s) in question;
- Try to have interviews arranged as early as possible in the process, in some cases (where sufficient information is available on the part of the Mission and the local team members) even in advance of the rapid appraisal team’s arrival in-country;
- Work with local researchers to conduct some or all of the interviews, depending on judgments of sensitivities and openness, as well as interview purpose; and
- Translate, if necessary, the interview questionnaires and/or responses.

Depending on the information sought, interviews may be conducted with a small subset of stakeholders (see Chapter III) or large numbers of primary and secondary stakeholders. Table 4.5 provides a snapshot of sample informants.

Table 4.5 Sample Key Informants			
Youth	Individuals who Interact with Youth	Community Members	Officials
Youth	Parents	Representatives of Relevant NGOs	USAID Mission Staff
Youth Leaders	Teachers/Professors	Business Owners/ Potential Employers	Host Country National Government Officials
University Students	School/University Administrators	Representatives of Religious Institutions	Local Government Officials
Out-of-School Youth	Employers		Law Enforcement Officials
	Direct Service Providers		Representatives of Other Donors

Who Should Conduct the Interviews?

Interviews are only as good as the people administering them, so care should be given to selecting, training, and supervising interviewers. Professional researchers, university students, health workers, teachers, government officials and community workers may be considered. The interviewers should have a technical background that qualifies them to address the survey population. They should speak the local language fluently and have good listening and writing skills.

Because the team is conducting a *youth* assessment, the question of who will conduct the interviews is more important than it might be otherwise. Youth in the host country may be distrustful of adults or authority figures, or they may be afraid of criticizing the government or what is perceived as a government-sponsored program or activity. They may also have limited experience with foreigners or with speaking freely with adults.

The team may, therefore, want to use youth interviewers. Youth are more likely to establish rapport with their interviewees. They may have knowledge and experience that allow them to probe in ways adults would not consider. In most cases, using youth interviewers would mean that interviewers must be *trained* – in interview techniques, the purpose of the assessment, possible probes, and how to write up the interview – prior to beginning the assessment. In addition, a *structured or semi-structured questionnaire* might be the most appropriate protocol to use because it would guide the interviewer's questions and ensure that the topics of interest to the team are explored.

Another factor to consider is gender. If the tradition of the host country restricts the interaction of girls and women with men, be sure the rapid appraisal team includes female interviewers.

Former State Department Fellows as Potential Interviewees and Collaborators

The U.S. Department of State has, since the early 1990's, implemented a series of fellowship and exchange programs throughout the E&E region. In these programs, young people apply to be selected to spend an entire year in the United States, studying at a U.S. institution of secondary or higher education. To be selected, they demonstrate leadership qualities, have a good academic record, and have gained proficiency in English. The individuals selected to go (as well as those who achieved "semifinalist" status but who were not awarded the fellowship) are bright, motivated, and generally well informed. Those who spend a year abroad return to their home countries with a heightened understanding of the United States and, typically, an interest in maintaining some relationship with Americans. They are often superb cultural brokers, able to look at their own society and to translate what is happening there for outsiders.

Many of the thousands of participants in these programs are in the prime age group targeted by the rapid appraisal. The following list describes several of these programs.

- **Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program** is targeted at high school students throughout the 13 countries of the CIS and has been in existence since 1992. It provides an opportunity for high school students from NIS countries to experience life in the United States and learn firsthand about the civic responsibilities of a democratic society. Students are selected after an open, merit-based competition. Approximately 11,000 students from the former Soviet Union have spent one academic year attending schools and living with host families throughout the United States.
- **FREEDOM Support Act Undergraduate Program** offers scholarships for one year of undergraduate study in the U.S. to students from the Eurasian region. Students are placed at community colleges and universities throughout the country. The students' academic studies are enhanced by community service activities, a practical internship and a midyear workshop.

- **Ron Brown Fellowships** offer support for graduate study at the Master's degree-level in the U.S. for students and professionals from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro), Macedonia, Romania, and Slovenia. Students study at U.S. universities and participate in campus life.
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina Undergraduate Development Program** offers scholarships for one year of undergraduate study in the U.S. to students from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the fields of agriculture, American studies, business, criminal justice, economics, education, environmental management, journalism/mass communications, and political science.
- **Edmund S. Muskie Ph.D. Fellowship Program** selects citizens from Georgia, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine to study on the doctoral level in the U.S. in the fields of business administration, economics, public administration, and public policy. As a condition of participation in the Muskie Ph.D. Program, fellows must perform one year of service in their home countries for every year their study is supported by the program.
- **Russian Young Leadership Fellows for Public Service Program** was established in 1998 for Russian college graduates who demonstrate leadership skills and an interest in public service. The program provides one year of intensive academic and professional training to young Russian leaders. Russian students select a concentration in community affairs, governmental affairs or corporate affairs.

The alumni of these programs may be excellent informants for the rapid appraisal team, both in articulating the situation of various groupings of youth as well as being resources on *local knowledge*. Information on the current addresses of the participants can be obtained from the in-country offices of the implementers of these programs – the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the American Councils for International Education (ACTR/ACCELS), the Institute of International Education (IIE), and the Fulbright Program.

When Should the Team Conduct Interviews?

A rapid appraisal is not the appropriate mechanism for large-scale surveys. However, interviews are a valuable research technique, and most, if not all RAs, will employ at least one type of interview for at least one type of informant.

Encouraging Youth to Respond to Sensitive Questions

The rapid appraisal team should be creative in order to get answers to sensitive questions (such as questions about sex or drug use).

The Census Bureau tested a structured questionnaire administered by tape recorder; some youth in the pilot study reported they would be more comfortable answering sensitive questions using the tape recorder rather than speaking with an interviewer.¹⁶

¹⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Teens Talk: Are Adolescents Willing and Able to Answer Survey Questions?" (1998) at <http://www.sipp.census.gov/spd/workpaper/aapor98.htm>.

Interviews are most helpful:

- When qualitative, descriptive information is needed for decision-making;
- When there is a need to understand motivation, behavior, and perspectives of participants. In-depth interviews of program planners and managers, service providers, and beneficiaries concerning their attitudes and behaviors about an activity can help explain its successes and shortcomings;
- When a main purpose is to generate recommendations, key informants can help formulate recommendations that can improve an existing program's performance; and
- When quantitative data collected through other methods need to be interpreted. Key informant interviews can provide the how and why of what happened.

D. Conducting Focus Groups

What is a Focus Group?

Focus groups are small group discussions usually involving seven to ten participants and lasting between one and two hours. They are well-suited to elicit qualitative information by asking the participants a pre-determined set of questions that will encourage them to share their honest opinions and perspectives relevant to the topic and goals of the assessment. While focus groups have become well known for product marketing, they are excellent tools for researching social issues, such as evaluating a program's impact or the attitudes different stakeholders hold about an organization's policies or functioning. Focus groups tend to provide a "public" view on issues, although the dynamics also often reveal the lines of debate and conflict within groups.

Appendix F provides focus group guidelines tailored to USAID's requirements for assessing youth and to the conditions commonly found in Europe and Eurasia. These guidelines include timelines, samples, and checklists that can be further adapted to each Mission's circumstances.

Who are Participants in Focus Groups?

Anyone can participate in a focus group although, typically, focus groups are held with actual or proposed beneficiaries of a project or members of the general public. The team is unlikely to arrange a focus group with government ministers because 1) the ministers' schedules will not coincide; 2) the team will usually prefer to have more in-depth conversations with each minister; and 3) the dynamics of having government officials speak in groups may impede reliable data collection (i.e., Will they speak honestly in front of other officials? Is there a hierarchy so that more junior officials will be less likely to voice an opinion?).

Arranging focus groups for youth makes a lot of sense in the RA context. After two or three focus groups, the team will have information from as many as thirty youth.

Participant groups are normally homogeneous. Most focus groups will not be successful if participants' backgrounds and experiences are too disparate. For example, depending on the culture of the host country, the team may have to arrange focus groups based on gender. Age is

another factor: *youth* is defined as persons ages 15-24, but a mixed group drawing participants from that age range may mean that younger participants are less likely to be heard. There are times, however, when a heterogeneous group is appropriate, such as when trying to tease out the differences between two cohorts, or when interventions seem to have had little effect.

What Kinds of Information Can Focus Groups Provide?

Focus groups are particularly useful for:

- Understanding the family and community context, beliefs, perceptions and customs;
- Securing background information for planning;
- Generating ideas and hypotheses for the design of services or programs;
- Getting feedback from beneficiaries;
- Assessing responses to recommended innovations;
- Interpreting available qualitative and quantitative data;
- Investigating implementation problems;
- Monitoring; and
- Evaluation.¹⁷

Focus groups provide qualitative, as opposed to quantitative, information. After the focus group, the RA team will not be able to say definitively that “58 percent of non-college bound youth reported finding jobs within one year of finishing secondary school.” Because focus groups are not large samples and are not representative of the population of youth, the team will not be able to extrapolate focus group findings to all youth. The focus group will, however, provide information about the youth in the group and can lead to real insights. For example, the team may explore why youth leave school early and hear:

- “I left school because there was no money for books.”
- “My family needed me to work instead.”
- “My father is afraid that if I get an education, I’ll leave the village like my brother did.”
- “I didn’t leave school, but my brothers had to. They work to support our family. My sisters and I go to school.”

How Will the Team Use the Information Gained in Focus Groups?

Focus groups will allow the team to explore the hows and whys of information they have already gathered. Following the example above, the team may know that the secondary school attrition rate is high. In focus groups, the team can explore why and ask for views on how to keep youth in school.

The team might then use this information to:

- Formulate additional research questions to be answered during the appraisal;
- Make recommendations for new or refined programming;
- Explain quantitative data in the YRA report; or

¹⁷ Kumar, 1987.

- Provide contextual anecdotes and stories in the YRA report.

What are the Steps Involved in Organizing Focus Groups?

Generally speaking, there are five main steps to organizing a focus group:

- **Developing a plan.** The rapid appraisal team should prepare a focus group plan first that outlines the topics to be discussed in the group, the types of participants, how the participants will be recruited, suggestions for places to hold the focus group, and suggested arrangements for incentives and refreshments.
- **Writing the focus group protocol.** Based on the focus group plan, the team will prepare focus group protocols. There may be different protocols for different groups (say, if participants in Group One are beneficiaries of a program and participants in Group Two are youth who are not beneficiaries). A sample focus group protocol can be found in Appendix F.

Incentives for Focus Group Participants

Recruiting participants for a focus group is time-consuming. People are more likely to participate in a focus group if they have a connection to a program, activity, or agency. Still, finding participants for focus groups is often difficult: people work, there are child care arrangements to be made, and transportation can be problematic.

To increase participation, incentives are usually offered. Cash payments (the amount will vary based on what is appropriate in the host country) are one type of incentive. If cash is culturally inappropriate, some other token may serve as an incentive.

- **Developing the focus group screener.** Particularly when drawing from the population at large, it is important to develop a screening questionnaire (or screener) that will identify the characteristics you want and do not want in your focus group. For example, at times it will be appropriate to screen by gender, age, ethnicity and years of schooling. The screener must identify those factors and state the desired parameters for those contacting potential participants.
- **Organizing the focus group.** Organizing the focus group and recruiting participants are often the most time-consuming tasks. The team (specifically, the local administrative/logistics staff person) must:
 - Find a place to hold the focus group. There should be a round or rectangular table, not classroom-style chairs.
 - Recruit participants and follow-up with them to remind them to attend.
 - Arrange for translation, as necessary.
 - Arrange for tape-recording or note-taking.
 - Provide honorarium.
 - Provide refreshments.

The rapid appraisal team may use youth to recruit their peers for focus groups (and interviews). Once a youth has been interviewed, he or she can suggest friends to participate in interviews or can help invite friends to a focus group. This method of recruitment is particularly useful when the assessment focuses on behavior (such as risky sexual behavior) since friends may have similar behaviors. Because RAs do not provide statistically significant results that can be generalized to an entire population, this method of recruitment works well.

- **Conducting the focus group.** A team member, or another trained specialist, will conduct the focus groups. Focus groups are discussions and are generally conducted in the native language (unless the participants are fluent in English). Translation slows the discussion and is not recommended.

The time required to complete all focus groups varies depending on the number of focus groups, distances between the focus groups, and the size of the focus groups. Focus groups may incorporate some of the tools described in the preceding sections – mapping, using diaries, correspondence analysis, etc. They may also require use of visual props, such as photographs or videos, to stimulate a discussion. Another technique that is particularly effective with youth is the use of *realistic* vignettes or scenarios, which allows for some abstraction and perhaps less embarrassment when discussing sensitive issues. A skilled focus group moderator may be able to use these tools to elicit beliefs, opinions and attitudes.

Each of these tools has a drawback as well. Discussions may be less focused than desired if the moderator is unable to use the tool effectively. If the stimuli are not realistic, the participants will feel disconnected and will be less forthcoming than desired. The drawback to the use of vignettes is that responses may center on what the participants think the hypothetical individual should do rather than what they would do.

- **Analyzing the results and reporting.** The focus group leader should prepare a summary of the focus group, analyzing the topics of discussion. You may want to request a transcript of the focus group or a copy of the tape recording if any is made. The focus group results will, of course, feed into the overall data-gathering process by the team.

When Should Focus Groups or Interviews Be Conducted?

While focus groups and interviews often provide the same sort of qualitative data, choosing one or the other is going to depend on several factors, including the circumstances and types of information the researchers wish to elicit. Table 4.6 provides a side-by-side comparison of focus groups and interviews.

Table 4.6 Which to Use: Focus Groups or In-Depth Interviews?¹⁸		
Factors to consider	Use focus groups when...	Use in-depth interviews when...
Group interaction	Interaction of respondents may stimulate a richer response or new and valuable thought.	Group interaction is likely to be limited or nonproductive.
Group/peer pressure	Group/peer pressure will be valuable in challenging the thinking of respondents and illuminating conflicting opinions.	Group/peer pressure would inhibit responses and cloud the meaning of results.
Sensitivity of subject matter	Subject matter is not so sensitive that respondents will temper responses or withhold information.	Subject matter is so sensitive that respondents would be unwilling to talk openly in a group.
Depth of individual responses	The topic is such that most respondents can say all that is relevant or all that they know in less than 10 minutes.	The topic is such that a greater depth of response per individual is desirable, as with complex subject matter and very knowledgeable respondents.
Data collector fatigue	It is desirable to have one individual conduct the data collection; a few groups will not create fatigue or boredom for one person.	It is possible to use numerous individuals on the project; one interviewer would become fatigued or bored conducting all interviews.
Extent of issues to be covered	The volume of issues to cover is not extensive.	A greater volume of issues needs to be covered.
Continuity of information	A single subject area is being examined in depth and strings of behaviors are less relevant.	It is necessary to understand how attitudes and behaviors link together on an individual basis.
Experimentation with interview guide	Enough is known to establish a meaningful topic guide.	It may be necessary to develop the interview guide by altering it after each of the initial interviews.
Observation by stakeholders	It is desirable for stakeholders to hear what participants have to say.	Stakeholders do not need to hear firsthand the opinions of participants.
Logistics geographically	An acceptable number of target respondents can be assembled in one location.	Respondents are dispersed or not easily assembled for other reasons.
Cost and training	Quick turnaround is critical, and funds are limited.	Quick turnaround is not critical, and budget will permit higher cost.
Availability of qualified staff	Focus group facilitators need to be able to control and manage groups	Interviewers need to be supportive and skilled listeners.

¹⁸ Frechtling, Joy and Laure Sharp (eds.), National Science Foundation, Directorate for Education and Human Resources, Division of Research, Evaluation and Communications, User Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations, http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/CHAP_3.HTM#Exhibit%203

E. Surveys

This section provides a very brief introduction to survey methods. In general, large-scale, formal surveys are not useful rapid assessment tools. Small-scale surveys may be appropriate in some cases.

Surveys, or structured, self-administered questionnaires, are useful for providing reliable quantitative data that can be generalized for a target population. In general, survey questions are close-ended (and are thus easier to collate). Questions must be carefully constructed such that respondents are not influenced by the biases and opinions of the writer. In addition, they should be carefully written to avoid the tendency to ask many questions when one or two might suffice. Surveys may also generate more questions and new directions for rapid appraisal research.

Self-completion surveys are usually mail surveys. They may also be distributed to organizations for completion by participants (for example, to an NGO providing direct services to youth under a USAID grant).

There are distinct advantages and disadvantages to using either structured interviews or self-completed surveys, and these are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews and Surveys		
	Structured Interviews	Self-Completion Surveys
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow for observation as well as collection of quantitative data. • Can be used to reach illiterate populations, who could not participate in self-completed surveys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymous, which may encourage frank answers to questions.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susceptible to interviewer bias. • Reluctance of respondents to discuss private topics, such as contraception, with a stranger. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely low response rates, seldom over 30 percent (may be lower if mail is not reliable). • Possible selection bias. Those who return the surveys may not be representative of the group as a whole unless the returned number of surveys is statistically significant.

F. Observation

Observation generally means that observers record what they see and hear during a site or program visit, using a detailed observation form. The observation may be of physical surroundings or of on-going activities, processes, or discussions. Observation may also employ photography and videotaping to share the observations with fellow team members or to be used as a basis for qualitative discussions later.

Although the rapid appraisal process will be quite time-limited, observation may be used to supplement data collection from documents, individual interviews, and focus groups.

“Participant observation” as understood by anthropologists would not be generally feasible. Nevertheless, observation may help the team add another dimension to its information-gathering. People often have beliefs about their values and activities, which do not correspond with reality. Therefore, observing what is actually occurring is an essential component of rapid appraisal.

Observation Example—Health Sector

As part of the data collection strategy, the RA team conducts focus groups at several polyclinics in neighborhoods where the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among young women has been increasing. The logistics person set the focus group meetings up and the local researcher attended the focus group sessions to assist as needed. While waiting outside the room for the RA team to complete its focus group with young women who were at the clinic to receive check ups, the local researcher observes the nurse taking blood from other patients. She sees that the nurse, although she is aware the all patients coming through her door are infected with HIV/AIDS, does not wear gloves while removing the sample. She then proceeds to place the needle in a tray, and uses it on the next patient. This observation led the team to re-consider other ways that HIV/AIDS was being transmitted to youths in the region – namely the health facilities themselves.

Such observations provide context for interpreting statements made by individuals. For example, teachers, parents, and school officials may all report that there are enough textbooks for secondary students. However, the team notes in a school visit that each student is sharing a book in the classroom with his neighbor. Observational information thus contradicts the stated reality and can lead rapid appraisal team members to further questions and insight (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8
Advantages and Disadvantages of Observation¹⁹

Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direct information about behavior of individuals and groups • Permit evaluator to enter into and understand situation/context • Provide good opportunities for identifying unanticipated outcomes • Exist in natural, unstructured, and flexible setting
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Need well-qualified, highly trained observers; may need to be content experts • May affect behavior of participants • Selective perception of observer may distort data • Investigator has little control over situation • Behavior or set of behaviors observed may be atypical

G. Other Rapid Assessment Tools

1. Mapping Exercises

Mapping generally refers to a participatory exercise whereby the community “maps” its boundaries, its resources, and its problems. Mapping can be geography-based or asset- based. For example, a youth mapping exercise might be conducted to identify what is important to

¹⁹ Frechtling, Joy and Laure Sharp (eds.), National Science Foundation, Directorate for Education and Human Resources, Division of Research, Evaluation and Communications, User Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations, http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/CHAP_3.HTM#Exhibit%203

youth about the community. One result of the mapping might be the identification of places where street children sleep or houses/areas where drugs can be purchased. An asset-based mapping exercise would identify the resources youth in the community have and how those resources can be utilized for community development.

Mapping Example—Health Sector

In the focus groups with young women, the rapid appraisal team asked what challenges kept them from maintaining their ARV drugs. In addition to the expense, the length of the trip to the clinic, particularly when they did not feel well, determined whether or not they went to the clinic to get their drugs. In the follow up in-depth interviews, the team decided to ask which clinic the youth went to and how far it was. They plotted these clinics on a map and saw that certain clinics were not being used to their full potential. Therefore, the team included in its recommendations, some ways for the clinics to have sub offices on certain days in neighborhoods closer to those youths who regularly missed doses.

Mapping is a community development tool; it is not used commonly in rapid assessment. Instead, mapping requires a facilitator or team of facilitators who involve the entire community in the process. However, the RA team may integrate the results of any previous mapping exercises into its analysis.

2. Diaries

Diaries are akin to mapping in that the participants create a record for the researcher that reveals what is important to them and what their daily routines are. Diaries are used infrequently in a rapid appraisal process, because of the short time frame for the assessment.

Normally, diaries (miniature notebooks, normally) would be distributed to the target audience at a focus group, community meeting or a location institution frequented by that group. Participants are asked to record their routines, thoughts and feelings for three to seven days as they would in a personal journal and to return the diaries to the researchers at a designated place and time. Diaries may be structured or free-form. Common forms of diaries include a time-budget schedule, in which participants detail how they spent their time each day, and a standard day diary, which delineates a typical day in the life of a member of a particular group or community.

The use of diaries in assessments has several benefits. First, researchers can collect data in many places at once with a relatively low cost tool. Diaries can be used as observation records, giving the rapid appraisal team many more eyes and perspective than they would otherwise have. Participants may be more honest about their opinions or feelings when expressing them in a journal than when expressing them in front of a group of peers. Events are also recorded closer to when they happened, improving the accuracy of details. By using them across social groups, diaries also may provide more insight into routines and behaviors than observation, focus groups or interviews.

Diaries also present challenges for the researcher in that it is difficult to corroborate what has been written in a diary. If participants use this as an opportunity to practice their creative writing skills, unnecessarily spurious information is introduced into the appraisal. Illiterate participants will be excluded from this form of data collection. Further, there are the expected logistical problems of collecting the diaries at the end of the designated period and language barriers since youth often use their own slang terms that may be regional as well.

Diaries pose another problem, which may make them less than desirable for rapid appraisals; they are extremely labor-intensive to analyze. Responses will need to be coded, as one would a survey, which also means free-form diaries are particularly labor-intensive.

3. Beneficiary Assessment

Beneficiary Assessment is the systematic listening to clients with four precepts:

- Increasing the validity of information;
- Being useful to decision makers;
- Being credible to the architects of development programs; and
- Directing the learning to make development interventions more effective and sustainable.²⁰

Because the direct beneficiaries of youth programs, youth and perhaps their parents, are generally unorganized, one-on-one interviews are not a particularly useful tool except in special circumstances (i.e., one particular family was excluded from a school, a club, or a government entitlement). These stakeholders will usually be interviewed through focus groups, and it is often helpful (both in terms of logistics and trust level) to have local organizations arrange those for the assessment team.

What a Beneficiary Assessment Might Reveal about a Social Fund

Interviewing beneficiaries of a social fund, for example, might reveal that in nearly one-third of the villages surveyed, one or more of the leaders of the communities receiving the grants have diverted funds for their own use. This finding might then lead donors to institute tighter supervision of funds in the program.

A second finding might concern the interrelationship between NGOs involved with the social fund program and participation in the beneficiary communities. Certain NGOs, notably those affiliated with religious organizations, may be more paternalistic than participatory, yet manage public works well, leading to high-quality construction and sound maintenance of schools, health centers, and the like. Other NGOs, say parent-teacher associations, may be good at fostering participation in decision-making and communal activity but found deficient in the quality and maintenance of constructed or repaired work.

The Beneficiary Assessment could then lead to a decision to pair NGOs to bring out their complementary skills towards the commonly shared end of increasing the community's ability and confidence to help itself.²¹

²⁰ Picciotti, p. 149.

²¹ Picciotti, p. 151.

H. The Iterative Process

Since a rapid appraisal's methodology is the consistent application of some or several of the tools listed above, the team needs to ensure that they are indeed being used consistently. Regardless of which of the above-mentioned research methods or tools the team employs, the iterative process remains the same.

The team begins the process during the team building time they have before beginning the assessment, by discussing their understanding of the issues and available data (and preliminary diagnostic if one was completed). As the team moves out into the field, the process continues with daily meetings, during which team members share what they did and what they learned. As a team, they consider what new information has been obtained and what it means given the socio-cultural and sectoral context. This constant review and revision of what has been learned helps the team triangulate the data. If the team splits at any point, this debrief will occur when they come back together. This process also helps the team to refine its objectives in the successive interviews and focus groups.

Once they have completed the field work, team members will return to the Mission with the raw data and discuss it further, brief the Mission staff, and allow the Mission to provide input as appropriate.

I. Objectivity

The team should be aware that whatever research methods it employs will be subject to some form of bias. Bias can come from the researchers or the respondents. There are several types of bias that may materialize during the course of the assessment. Below is a partial list, organized by the origin of the bias.

- **Researcher-introduced bias.** Poor listening skills, such as inattentiveness, pseudo-listening, rehearsing or hearing what is expected, can bias the information recorded by the interviewer. Training interviewers in effective interviewing skills is one way to mitigate this bias. Another is to provide adequate facilities where interviewers and respondents will not be distracted. Occasionally, the researcher is not well versed in the current events or history of the country and may take comments out of context. Sampling biases are many and varied, though most apply to quantitative methods not described in this manual. One that is relevant is cluster sampling, in which too many people from one place or of one profile are recruited and thus skew the results. A thorough stakeholder analysis should minimize misunderstandings and sampling errors. If the team chooses to weight its research sample, it should be clearly stated in the report along with the reasons behind it.
- **Respondent-introduced bias.** The most common respondent-introduced bias is self selection bias. In many cases, people will most likely only participate if they feel strongly about the issue to be discussed or have a vested interest in the area. Mission influence in obtaining interviews with government officials and incentives for focus group participants (cash or a token gift) can minimize or, in some cases, eliminate self

selection bias. Another major problem is that interviewees may respond as expected, as opposed to honestly. Triangulation can reduce some of the bias introduced by dishonest answers.

- **Translator-introduced bias.** Translation can introduce other forms of bias into the data. Regional cultural or linguistic differences may cause inaccurate or over/understated translations. In addition to these unintentional biases, translators may intentionally introduce others. Untrained translators may ask why the researcher is asking a question to which s/he already knows the answer or may tell the researcher her/his answer in lieu of the respondent's. Other problems may arise when a translator particularly likes or dislikes the individual being interviewed, either on a personal basis or because of some group membership. Training translators to simply act as intermediaries without questioning the process is one solution. Another is to have local researchers conduct as many as the interviews as possible to minimize the interaction through translators.

A final note of caution for the team is to remain focused on the system level rather than becoming absorbed in the details of how youth interact with and within their society. Many of the areas that can be explored using a rapid appraisal are fascinating at the micro-level, but this will not be useful for the Mission in its strategic planning and programming.

J. Field Notes

Missions sometimes request that assessment teams turn in field notes, but this is not recommended. Field notes are the raw, unprocessed data from interviews and observations kept by team members that are summarized and synthesized by the team as they develop their conclusions and recommendations. Field notes often record information that is unverified, inaccurate, and even untrue. Such incorrect information will be substantiated or verified by the team with other informants in a triangulation of data collection, yet the original statements will still remain recorded in the notes. It is important to keep in mind that the goal of data collection, guided by the stakeholder analysis and using many open-ended qualitative methods, is to capture the information, perspectives, opinions, and even prejudices of those who are interviewed.

Field notes normally contain both a researcher's unadulterated views and impressions of an interviewee, an organization, or a situation as well as the interviewee's opinions expressed on the basis of a promise of confidentiality. Field notes must not be treated as public information and care should be taken to ensure that notes are safely filed or otherwise secured.

As a condition of conducting many of its interviews, the team may well have to ensure confidentiality to its informants, so that they will feel able to speak frankly and openly. A review of the field notes by an outsider may make it possible to identify the individuals who provided the information, a violation of that assurance. Every effort should be made to ensure that the notes remain confidential. The Mission should therefore request to review the field notes of the assessment. Field notes from the assessment should have the same inviolability as those of an anthropologist with their informants or a journalist with their sources.

CHAPTER FIVE

Understanding and Integrating the Results

With its return from the field with the data, the rapid appraisal team's next step is to organize and analyze the field notes and data. Usually when a team reports back from its field visits, it presents an oral debriefing to the Mission which includes some preliminary findings. Having previously developed a draft report outline or table of contents, it is appropriate for the team to review the draft again with the Mission staff in light of new information that may have surfaced.

The team will meet to discuss and share findings and look for patterns or trends in the data. Writing assignments are made to the various team members in the areas of their expertise and/or geographical area of research. Team members begin to draft their sections of the report. If the team members have brought back survey instruments, the data must be coded, entered into a database, and tables developed. With training, a local hire may be able to do the coding, data entry, and produce data tables.

With the results of their field notes, interview notes, focus group reports, observational notes, and the survey data, team members are ready to analyze the information, confirm findings, triangulate for verification of information and begin to draft their respective sections of the report. The team leader is key to seeing that this is done in an organized, collaborative and constructive process. If questions arise about the information or data, the team leader should consult with the appropriate Mission staff for verification or validation of the information or return to the source of the information for confirmation.

A draft report along with an oral debriefing is the next order of business. In a debriefing with appropriate Mission staff, the data are explained, the findings are presented, and the conclusions and recommendations are supplied. The Mission staff may respond immediately to certain portions of the debriefing, asking questions and suggesting clarifications. However, within a specified period of time following the debriefing (one to two weeks, depending on the length of the report and the number of reviewers), the Mission should provide the team leader with written comments on the draft report. Within a reasonable amount of time (one to two weeks), the team leader and such team members as are needed will draft the final report incorporating the suggestions, clarifications, or ideas of the Mission staff. When this step has been completed, the report is considered to be final and is published as such. Frequent dialogue with the cognizant Mission staff throughout the process of the assessment should forestall recommendations of the rapid assessment team that may seem to the Mission to be inconclusive, overly ambitious, or unattainable with the limited funding available to the Mission.

A. Understanding the Results

Analysis of the data (both quantitative and qualitative) is one of the most important steps in the youth assessment. Analyzing data entails summarizing the information gathered and organizing it in order to draw conclusions. Statistical methods are appropriate for quantitative data; however, analysis for the RA should include both quantitative and qualitative factors.

Findings should respond to the assessment's key questions. The team describes the situation, compares it to what was expected, explains the reasons for the outcome, and provides recommendations to inform program or policy decisions. For findings to be credible and persuasive, they flow clearly from the data and be backed up by the evidence collected as part of the assessment. The following discussions describe the ways a rapid assessment team might analyze and present its findings. These are the types of analyses the Mission can ask for and expect from its assessment team.

1. Quantitative Data

The preliminary steps in analyzing quantitative data are to check the survey questionnaires (if any) for consistency and errors. If inconsistencies or errors are found, these data should be substantiated or not be included in the analysis. For open-ended questions, it is helpful to group the responses into discrete categories before counting. The data are then coded and entered into the one of a number of computer programs available to help organize, tally, and analyze it.

The next step is to list the results and display them in tables or figures (i.e., bar or pie graphs). The purpose of organizing the data this way is to:

- help show the key information quickly;
- make it easier to show comparisons;
- illustrate patterns and trends; and
- take up less space than narrative text.

The team should present data using more commonly understood kinds of statistical analysis, such as percentages, averages, frequency distributions, and cross-tabulations. Complex statistical analysis should be avoided for this kind of assessment. Descriptive statistics describe quantities and situations that enable a conclusion to be drawn from the numbers.

2. Qualitative Data

Analysis of qualitative data also organizes the information into categories and displays the results systematically. To compile the qualitative data, the assessment team should review its field notes, observation notes, informant interviews, and focus group findings and select the key points by looking for patterns and relationships. To organize and present qualitative data, it is helpful to create matrices and categories, including a checklist matrix, a conceptual matrix, and subcategories.

A checklist matrix collects similar information about several different groups and/or sites and reports it in a chart. Table 5.1 is an example of such a matrix.

Table 5.1 NGO Program Offerings for Unemployed Youth						
Youth NGO	Resume Training	Interviewing Skills	Individual Counseling	Life Skills Training	Technical Training	Certification Possible
Youth for Freedom Padnau	✓	✓			✓	✓
Concerned Mothers Swietla		✓	✓	✓		
Helping Youth Seltsham			✓	✓	✓	
Children and Youth Organization Tepbitz		✓	✓	✓		
Youth Opportunity Prosetsz	✓		✓		✓	
Health and Home Teltsch			✓		✓	✓
Reach for the Stars Zlin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Another type of matrix, the conceptual matrix, can suggest relationships between two dimensions of a problem (e.g., the level of participation of youth in community events – high, medium or low – and their geographical distance from the town). This kind of matrix (see Table 5.2) helps to explain relationships and reasons for situations.²²

Table 5.2 Patterns of Youth Participation in Community Events			
Distance from Center	Low Participation	Medium Participation	High Participation
0.00 to 0.40 km		Respondent F	Respondent C Respondent E
0.41 to 0.80 km	Respondent J		Respondent L
0.81 to 1.20 km		Respondent A Respondent N	Respondent P
1.21 to 1.40 km		Respondent D	
1.41 to 1.80 km	Respondent M	Respondent G	Respondent K
1.81 to 2.20 km	Respondent B Respondent I		
2.21 to 2.60 km	Respondent H Respondent O		

²² UNICEF (refers to White 1986).

By organizing the qualitative data into subcategories of the most important variables and the factors that exert a positive, negative, or neutral influence on the subcategory, the researcher helps to determine the reasons for apparently inconsistent behavior. For example, the reasons that parents do or do not want their daughters to attend school can be listed in order of importance or frequency mentioned, and compared to a similar list of reasons given for their son’s attendance or absence from school. Table 5.3 shows the reasons why (both positive and negative) youth may not have sought HIV/AIDS tests.

Reason	Girls	Boys
Stigmatism if someone found out	-4	-4
Parental notification required	-4	-3
Distance to the nearest clinic	-3	-3
Government notification required	-2	-3
Scared to know the results	-2	-1
Cost of the test	-2	-1
Needed for a visa	0	0
Didn't know there was a test	0	0
Girlfriend/Boyfriend asked me to	+3	+1
Girlfriend/Boyfriend was diagnosed	+4	+3
Test was free	+2	+1
Test was confidential	+4	+3
Needed to participate in drug rehabilitation program	+3	+4

B. Recommendations

The following is some general guidance for the assessment program manager to recommend to the rapid assessment team to help focus and organize its report.

- When drawing up recommendations, start with the findings. Make suggestions for action based on each finding (e.g., do nothing, start a new program, or modify an existing program). Then, check to see if the recommendations address the assessment’s objectives.
- Recommendations should be directed to different kinds of decision makers (or stakeholders).
- Avoid vague, general, or impractical recommendations. Sometimes, it may be better to provide options or alternative suggestions. In such a case, the primary suggestion may be general, followed by several concrete recommendations from which the Mission can choose. It may also be helpful to identify which recommendations are short-term, mid-term, and long-term.
- List recommendations in order of priority.
- When possible, include estimates of the financial and organizational costs to implement the recommendations.

C. Reporting Results

The Mission's scope of work typically requests a final report from the assessment team. An *interim report* may be required as well, but because of the short timeframe involved in RA, interim reports are likely to slow down the assessment (the team will be writing and editing instead of gathering and analyzing information). If there are specific requirements for the interim report, these should be limited and be specified in the scope of work.

Although there are many variations in format and content based on what the Mission has requested, the *final report* will communicate the assessment team's findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and usually addresses these main points:

- Title page – including name of firm and authors.
- Table of Contents – detailed enough so that the Mission can easily locate information.
- Acknowledgments – optional, but typically used to thank people who helped along the way.
- List of Acronyms – optional, but helpful to an unfamiliar reader.
- Executive Summary – a brief summary of the report, particularly findings and recommendations. The length of the summary, of course, depends on the length of the overall report, but it may be 2 to 5 pages.
- Introduction – purpose of the assessment and background information on the issue.
- Assessment Objectives and Methodology – objectives, key research questions and data collection methods used.
- Findings – the data gathered during the rapid assessment.
- Discussion and Recommendations – the team's analysis of the data and its recommendations for Mission programming.
- Annexes or Appendices – list of people interviewed, protocols, and extant data reviewed.

Common Mistakes in Reporting

- Writing too much.
- Presenting only general or subjective opinions rather than quantifying statements.
- Omitting an explanation of setbacks that are reasons for not accomplishing what was planned.
- Not identifying ways to deal with constraints or new opportunities.
- Leaving out proposed revisions to objectives and activities in light of the above.
- Not consulting staff or beneficiaries while preparing the report.

During the drafting process, the team leader should provide feedback and review the quality of the assessment results. A draft report should be given to the Mission, counterparts, and others as appropriate. The team leader and Mission should discuss the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and the Mission should provide comments to the team before the report is finalized. Such discussions can bring out new perspectives on the meaning of the assessment

results or add information to rectify any factual errors. The report, once finalized, should either be written in or translated into the official language of the country.

An important step that is often underestimated is the editing process. As mentioned earlier, the Mission will want to review a draft of the team's report. The Mission may want to assign a limited number of staff to review the report. The reviewers should include a variety of staff, including those who were involved and those who were not involved in the assessment itself. However, the more reviewers that are included, the longer the process is likely to take. One week is generally an adequate amount of time to review a technical report.

It is important to set deadlines for comments so that the assessment team can incorporate them into the final report. Comments may range from grammatical to technical to organizational. Comments may also include questions for clarification. It is helpful for page numbers to be provided with the comments. Depending on the extent and complexity of the comments, as well as the length of the report, the team should be able to respond to the Mission's comments within one to two weeks.

It is important, however, that the team maintain its independence at all times during the discussions and be prepared to decide what modifications to introduce to the draft report. Any dissenting views should be properly recorded in the report. In the case of a team with members from outside the country, the main conclusions and recommendations should be finalized within two weeks after the conclusion of the assessment. Appendix I contains the outline of a sample report.

D. Integrating the Results

The next step is for the Mission staff to integrate the results into Mission's strategy, programs, and/or monitoring plan, including:

- Looking at the broader program through the "optic" of youth issues:
 - Workforce issues
 - Education reform at secondary/technical level
 - Engagement in political life; local governance
 - Health focus;
- Planning for possible future activities: social safety net, health, education, etc.; or
- Other uses of the information.

1. Using Youth Assessment Results for Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is one of the main uses of results from a youth assessment. The approaches used and information gathered during the assessment can be applied at all stages of the strategic planning process: strategy development, strategy implementation, and strategy refinement.

Strategy Development

At the strategy development stage, Missions may be considering adding youth-focused strategic objectives or goals to their portfolio. However, the Mission may lack specific knowledge of the

issues facing young people in the country and so are uncertain which areas, appear to require technical assistance from USAID and what the priorities should be. The results of the rapid assessment will help the Mission to: 1) designate a new programmatic area; 2) design a program that addresses the concerns of youth; and 3) set baseline data for year one from which benchmarks for subsequent years can be estimated.

For instance, as we have discussed previously, general unemployment and labor market concerns might have led Mission staff to conduct a youth assessment to determine what employment challenges youth face. The assessment team then reviews the situation that youth confront as they attempt to complete their education, search for job training and employment opportunities, contribute income to their parents' household or their own, and make decisions about emigrating, participating in the underground economy, or perhaps starting their own business. The results should provide sufficient information to assist the Mission in reviewing and possibly reformulating its economic development portfolio to address issues of youth unemployment, to see how and where there may be ways to fine-tune programming to increase the support for youth.

The E&E Bureau's Strategic Objectives in the following Table 5.4 have been used by many Missions as a guide for establishing their own strategic framework.

Table 5.4 Europe and Eurasia Strategic Objectives²³	
1.1	State-owned assets are being transferred to the private sector at an acceptable rate
1.2	Fiscal policies and management are sound
1.3	Private enterprises are growing and developing at an accelerating rate
1.4	The private financial sector is increasingly competitive and market responsive
1.5	The energy sector is economically sound and environmentally sustainable
1.6	Environmental management capacity supports sustainable economic growth
2.1	Informed citizens participate actively in political and economic decision-making
2.2	Legal systems support democratic processes and market reforms
2.3	Local government is effective, responsive and accountable
3.1	Strengthened humanitarian response to crises (formerly "improved response to and management of humanitarian crises")
3.2	Increased promotion of good health and access to health care (formerly "improved sustainability of health and other social benefits and services")
3.4	Mitigation of adverse social impacts of the transition to market-based democracies
4.2	Special Objectives

In light of the results of its youth assessment, a Mission might consider amending its S.O. 3.4 in its next Annual Report to add an Intermediate Result, such as, "Youth are increasingly employable upon completion of education and job training."

Strategy Refinement

Those Missions that already have an active youth component in their program may want to conduct a rapid assessment of their youth-oriented strategy to get a rough idea of its impact or to

²³ USAID, "From Transition to Partnership: A Strategic Framework for USAID Programs in Europe and Eurasia," Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, December 1999.

re-assess its emphases. Missions might also conduct a youth assessment when a strategy has stalled in the implementation process or is being refined due to new priorities but for which there is no anticipated increase in development funding.

USAID efforts to support democratic reform might provide such an example. An earlier assumption was that youth, who grew up either under a withering socialist system or a newly liberalized state, would be more open to reform and less rigid in their attitudes and approaches than their parents. Yet, considerable evidence suggests that they may have borne significant burdens during the past decade, as their parents struggled under uncertainties and economic privations. Current regimes do not seek the support and approbation of youth as they attempt to ensure their own longevity, and youth often appear disenchanted and uninterested in taking part in the political process. Given these potential needs to determine both where youth stand in terms of their political attitudes and their likelihood to participate in civil society, a Mission might choose to undertake a youth assessment focusing on youth and civil society to determine if it would be appropriate to include this focus as a possible element in a new strategy.

Often these small corrections to strategy are completed by editing existing strategic objectives or intermediate results. In the Mission’s next Annual Report, these changes might be made by including a statement such as the following: “We intend to make a minor change to the wording of Indicator 2.1.4 from ‘Citizens’ understanding of the role of civil society is improved’ to ‘Citizens, particularly those under age of 30, have a better understanding of the role of civil society.’”

2. Using Rapid Assessment for Program Development

In many cases, the Missions in the E&E region have been active in addressing the needs of youth. Some Missions are just beginning technical assistance and training programs for youth, while others are at a point where it is necessary to re-evaluate the effectiveness of their current programs. Rapid assessments may assist Missions in these areas and also help them identify technical areas where regional cooperation on programs might be more efficient for programs targeted at youth in the region.

Table 5.5 lists examples of USAID/Ukraine’s SOs, IRs, and programs for children and youth.

Table 5.5 Ukraine Mission SO 3.2, IRs and Programs for Youth		
SO	IR	Program Description
SO 3.2	3.2.1 Improved Health Care Service Delivery	Health Information Systems and Management Reform Program monitors vaccine use and immunization data in children’s vaccination campaigns.
SO 3.2	3.2.1 Improved Health Care Service Delivery	Birth Defects Surveillance and Prevention Program examines probable increases in birth defects secondary to the Chernobyl accident by training Ukrainians.
SO 3.2	3.2.2: Reduction of Public Health Risks	Chernobyl Children’s Illness Program has 4 clinics screening for thyroid tumors and psychosocial problems of children exposed to the Chernobyl accident.
SO 3.2	3.2.2: Reduction of Public Health Risks	STI/HIV/AIDS Prevention and Awareness Program uses the NGO sector to arrest the spread of HIV through prevention interventions in high risk groups, including youth.
SO 3.2	3.2.2: Reduction of Public Health Risks	Tuberculosis Control and Prevention Program works with other donors to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Directly Observed Treatment Short Course.

Developing New Programs

Perhaps the Mission has included youth focused activities in its strategic planning and is now ready to design technical assistance and training programs. Rapid assessments can be very helpful in targeting interventions to effectively address the root problems, rather than the symptoms.

An example might be that a Mission finds its earmarked funding increased for activities relating to HIV/AIDS, which leads Mission leadership to revise significantly the country strategy. In practical terms, this means that a new SO focusing on HIV/AIDS would be required, with the expectation that programming will increase significantly in that area. Since public health experts report that the most vulnerable group for contracting AIDS is women under 25, the Mission may decide that a youth assessment highlighting health concerns (and attempts to assess the health risks that youth actually face) would be useful in helping to decide how to program the funds most effectively. In such a case, the team would focus on issues of health-related lifestyle choices and examine the infrastructure and services that currently exist to serve the youth population.

Refining Existing Programs

Many Missions in the E&E region have programs that include components addressing the needs of youth. In some cases, a project may have successfully completed one activity and the next is just beginning. In others, progress may have halted due to changing social and economic conditions. By applying rapid assessment techniques, Missions can identify areas where they could deepen current programs, determine the continued need for the programs, or find out that the program might require some tweaking to be more effective. For example, a Mission may have a training program targeting 20 to 24 year-olds. The rapid assessment team finds that many younger people who have dropped out of school could benefit from this kind of training as well. So, the Mission might choose to expand the program to include 15 to 20 year-olds.

Informing Regional Programs

In addition to helping Missions develop country-specific programs, rapid appraisal assessments can assist in the design of region-wide programs. For example, if each Mission is collecting the same data on youth, then patterns in their needs may emerge by region. Behavioral anomalies by country, ethnic group, or sex may also emerge. In some areas, such as trafficking, HIV/AIDS, and drug abuse, it might be particularly useful to take a regional approach to program development.

For example, several Missions may have found that the preponderance of migrant workers in some areas is contributing to the rise in HIV/AIDS other sexually transmitted diseases in rural youth. The Mission can contract a rapid appraisal team to review the situation and make recommendations on how Missions could work together on a cross-border safe sex community.

Afterword

This manual has been designed to assist Mission staff and their consultants to provide technical assistance to USAID in the design and implementation of rapid appraisals of youth. You may pick and choose among the suggestions and techniques offered in the manual – to use those sections that seem helpful and appropriate to your Mission and to review or skip those parts that provide information that is already known or not appropriate to your situation. It is hoped that the manual contributes to your Mission’s efforts to assess and understand the status of youth in your country.

Your suggestions can help improve this manual. Please let the authors know what parts were most helpful, and what sections might be superfluous, missing, or in need of revision. Suggestions, techniques, or approaches that you found to be useful in your own country are welcome. In addition, any real-life examples of youth rapid appraisals would be beneficial to other Missions.

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APPENDIX A

Three Scenarios for Rapid Appraisals

This Appendix contains examples of how a Mission might structure youth rapid appraisals in the areas of employment, democracy, and health. These examples are purely illustrative and are not necessarily models for how a Mission should construct its youth assessment.

**Employment Example:
What Might a Rapid Appraisal Design for Youth Employment Look Like?**

Within Mission X, the Economic Growth SO Team assigns the development of a draft scope of work for the RA and subsequent support and backstopping to a Foreign Service National economist, who has taken a special interest in the economic situation of the youth cohort. She accomplishes her first task, a draft scope, by drawing on suggestions within the Youth Manual and through two meetings of the SO Team to discuss the key questions to be reviewed, suggested level of effort, and how the team might be structured.

The draft scope that she produces calls for the “outside” expertise of a labor economist with experience in youth unemployment in Western Europe; a specialist in secondary education and technical training, and a sociologist with expertise in research among youth, especially U.S. or European school-to-work programs. Expertise from within the country includes an educator who has worked with the youth cohort for most of his career and who now directs a small NGO devoted to youth issues, and the Mission FSN economist, who will work largely full-time on the assessment. A researcher will also be identified who can analyze data already available. In discussions with the IQC contractor, appropriate candidates are identified. These decisions on proposed staffing, LOE, key assessment questions, and budget are sufficient for the scope to be completed and the Mission to be able to issue a task order under the IQC.

The specialist in technical training will be the Team Leader, based on experience in the region and with past management of teams. The first step of the Team Leader, working with the Mission economist and with Mission participation and concurrence, is to identify long-distance a local social researcher who can begin to work immediately on collecting information that will support the RA. The researcher is tasked with compiling and summarizing available information and reports from international donors and foundations working in the country, as well as relevant census data. Guiding the initial data collection will be the key youth indicators described in the Youth Manual, especially those relating to labor markets and education, and the review of any reports funded by international donors or the government (such as relevant UNDP, World Bank, or Ministries of Labor, Education, or Youth). The Team Leader completes most of her work in time for the arrival of the team.

The contractor also selects a logistics assistant before the activity begins. The logistics assistant works by e-mail with the Team Leader and the Mission Economist working on the activity to receive guidance for setting up the initial round of meetings and interviews with key informants in the area of labor market, unemployment, technical and vocational education, and non-profit advocacy groups. The logistical person will also begin to work with the Team Leader to develop a strategy to ensure participation by youth representatives.

On arrival, the team will meet with the Economic Growth SO Team to understand its perspective and program. The team will have prepared a short workshop which it will propose to conduct with the SO Team to examine the youth issues through the lens of the Mission strategy and current programming, to ensure that the team is able to focus on the issues that will be most relevant for the Mission in the future. The objective of the workshop is to present the general approach to be taken in the RA, sharpen the specifics of the terms of reference of the assessment so that the RA team can hear any special Mission interests or concerns, present the initial findings of the local social researcher, and to seek additional guidance from SO Team members about important contacts, context, and priorities.

The team then carries out interviews, focus groups, and other data collection activities over the next two and a half to three weeks. Ideally, the team meets every evening to discuss its evolving understanding of the dynamic of youth unemployment and labor market conditions in the country, and it develops a series of findings and recommendations related to potential programming. These are presented in semi-final form in a report and at a final workshop or briefing before the team departs the country. The Team Leader then works with other team members to incorporate comments and discussions into a final report. Recommendations are further discussed with the SO Team as they propose future programming.

With respect to the level of effort involved to carry out this RA on youth, such an assessment would have the three international and two host country team members (one of whom is USAID staff) working about 20 to 25 days. Other Mission staff would have the bulk of their time commitment in the initial workshop, in some meetings, and in a final debriefing. The in-country social researcher would be contracted for up to 30 days, and the logistics person would work 20 or fewer days.

**Democracy Example:
What Might a Rapid Appraisal Design for Democracy and Youth Look Like?**

Mission Y decided it would be useful to obtain information on youth's views of democracy and civil society and their development, as its Strategic Objective Team considers a new democratic initiatives program.

The Mission requests that a grantee conduct the appraisal under an existing grant agreement. According to the manual's guidelines, the Mission finds it needs a team of two international experts, two local experts, and two local assistants for a three-week activity. The international experts are social scientists specializing in sociological research, particularly focus groups, and political analysis; the local experts are a sociologist and a political scientist, and the two assistants are logistics specialists. No Mission staff person is available to be a member of the team.

The political scientist collects data that are available about the country's political situation, structure of government, current and past administrations, and intra-governmental relations. S/he also provides comprehensive information about the country's political parties, their platforms, geographic strongholds, and membership. This work is completed and sent to the team before it meets in-country.

The assistants arrange initial meetings with Ministry of Youth officials, Ministry of Education officials, and international donors, in coordination with USAID Mission staff. They also begin planning for visits to eight cities of varying size where focus groups and interviews will be conducted. When the team arrives in-country, the international and local experts brief the Mission on the chosen methodology and discuss any potential problems that might arise during the course of the appraisal and what the potential solutions might be.

The team conducts a stakeholder analysis with the Mission staff and agrees upon contact strategies for each type of stakeholder. The Mission staff briefs the team on the relationships the Mission has with any stakeholders, particularly with government partners and potential grantees.

The team conducts visits to two of the cities, the largest ones, together. They then split and a team comprised of an international expert, a local expert and an assistant visits four cities each. The assistant contacts the major organizations with which the team will meet in advance to schedule interviews. In each city, the experts meet with representatives of the major political parties and social movements, elected officials, NGOs (particularly those working with youth), teachers, university staff (if there is one), and other identified stakeholders to conduct structured interviews. As they learn of major attractions, special events, or common gathering places for youth, they will go and observe the youth's behavior and areas of interest.

While the experts are meeting those people listed above, the assistant organizes focus groups of university students, high school students, recent graduates, early school leavers, and parents. These groups would be asked what they perceived to be the biggest problems youth face, the most important assets youth have in meeting future challenges, the state of democracy and their political system, the state of civil society, and whether and how they might get involved in politics and civil society. They may also be asked to write postcards to political party or civil society leaders and elected officials to suggest how they might get youth more involved in meeting the needs of the community.

Each evening, the team regroups to review what they learned.

These visits may require four to five days in the capital or a large city, but will require significantly less time, usually two days, in smaller towns. After completing the assessment in the three towns, the team regroups in the capital to review what was learned in those sites. The experts write the report and debrief the Mission with their findings and recommendations.

**Health Example:
What Might a Rapid Appraisal Design for HIV/AIDS and Youth Look Like?**

Mission Z decides to meet rising earmarks for combating the HIV/AIDS problem by shifting its programming emphasis to reach youth, since it concluded that women under age 25 are the highest risk group. The Mission chooses to conduct the youth assessment by issuing a task order under an available IQC. Using the Youth Manual guidelines for developing an RA scope of work, the Mission determines that it needs a team of four international consultants for the four-week activity. The team to be recruited will consist of a health policy expert as team leader, a specialist in social services for young adults, and a specialist in HIV/AIDS who is also a health social marketing specialist. The Mission decides as well to permit its primary public health program officer, an FSN, to dedicate her time to the activity as the fourth full-time team member. The Health SO Team will work closely with the team during the three weeks of in-country field research.

The Team Leader and IQC contractor, with Mission participation and concurrence, contract a local social researcher and a logistics assistant before the activity begins. The researcher is tasked with compiling and summarizing available information and reports from international donors and foundations working in the country, as well as relevant census data. She completes most of her work in time for the arrival of the team. The logistics assistant works by e-mail with the Team Leader and the Mission Health Officer to receive guidance for setting up the initial round of meetings and interviews with key informants in the public health arena, especially those who have worked on HIV/AIDS topics.

The team begins with initial Mission meetings and conducts a one-day workshop for the Health SO Team and other interested Mission personnel. The objective of the workshop is to present the general approach to be taken in the RA, sharpen the specifics of the terms of reference of the assessment so that the RA team can hear any special Mission interests or concerns, present the initial findings of the local social researcher, and to seek additional guidance from SO Team members about important contacts, context, and priorities.

The team then carries out interviews, focus groups, and other data collection activities over the next two and half to three weeks. The team meets every evening, if possible, to discuss its evolving understanding of the dynamic of HIV/AIDS in the country, and it develops a series of findings and recommendations related to potential programming. These are presented in semi-final form in a report and at a final workshop or briefing before the team departs the country. The Team Leader then works with other team members to incorporate comments and discussions into a final report. Recommendations are further discussed with the SO Team as they propose future programming.

Such an assessment would have the three core team members working about 20 to 25 days. The Mission's Health Officer would provide a similar time commitment, and Mission staff would have the bulk of their time commitment in the initial workshop, in some meetings, and in a final debriefing. The in-country researcher would be contracted for up to 30 days, and the logistics person would work 20 or fewer days.

This example provides one possible scenario for conducting a youth assessment. If the USAID staff person could not participate, a second in-country professional consultant could assume her role. Adding yet another consultant with appropriate skills might reduce the period of fieldwork somewhat. The deliverables would consist of the initial and final workshops and the assessment document itself, as well as any other memoranda or documents (such as focus group summaries) that the Mission may request.

APPENDIX B

CDIE Youth-Related Publications

This annotated bibliography has been adapted from a strategy paper, written by the E&E Social Transition Working Group.

General Discussion of Youth and Transition

Balsis, Catherine. 2000. *Youth in Transition Countries: An E&E Bureau Discussion Paper*. USAID Bureau for Europe and Eurasia. Washington D.C.

The author begins this paper by providing a rationale for designing development programs that target youth in the transition countries of Europe and Eurasia. She describes the following major challenges facing youth in the region: 1. Lack of skills and mechanisms for participating in civil society 2. Corrupt behavior and a decline in morality 3. Violence and armed conflict 4. Unemployment and poverty 5. Lack of educational resources and opportunities and an education system that does not respond to market needs 6. Substance abuse, suicide, and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases 7. Lack of social programs or social safety nets. The author then outlines major USAID's programs in the region and concludes the paper by recommending future steps for E&E youth-related programming.

Barker, Gary and Fontes, Miguel. July 1996. *Review and Analysis of International Experience with Programs Targeted on At-Risk Youth*. World Bank Human and Social Development Group for the Latin America and Caribbean Region. Washington D.C. PDF file available at: [www.wds.worldbank.org/pdf content/0000092653961214152251/multi page.pdf](http://www.wds.worldbank.org/pdf/content/0000092653961214152251/multi%20page.pdf)

The authors analyze the experiences of 23 programs working targeted at the at-risk-youth around the world. The lessons learned and collective experiences of these programs are presented in this report to provide program planners with information for developing effective youth programs in the future. The report outlines the key features and central accomplishments of each program and highlights best practices. The report closes with broad conclusions and recommendations for designing programs and addressing the needs of at-risk youth.

Gantcheva, Roumiana and Alexandre Kolev. 2001. *Children in Bulgaria: Growing Impoverishment and Unequal Opportunities*. UNICEF Innocenti Research Center, Working Paper 84. Florence. PDF file available at: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/>

The social and economic changes in Bulgaria since the beginning of transition naturally raise concern about their impact on child well-being. This paper examines the changes that have occurred over the last decade, focusing on three fundamental child welfare rights - economic well-being, health, and education. The paper concentrates specifically on vulnerable groups of children - those born of teenage and single mothers and those living in

institutions. The data show that the human cost of economic transition has been high and children are among the most vulnerable groups in society.

International Youth Foundation. 1995. *Policies, Programs, and Philanthropy for Children and Youth in Slovakia: An Overview*. FOCUS, the Center for Social and Market Analysis. <http://www.iyfnet.org/document.cfai/45/section/2621>. Bratislava, Slovakia.

The report framework provides an overview of issues affecting young people and the cultural and environmental factors that have an impact on their welfare. It includes a profile of the political and economic climate, civil society, local philanthropy, the nonprofit sector, government policies, regional and international linkages, and organizations working with children and youth. Some of the key issues influencing the development of the nation's youth, which emerged from the study, include: educational reform, unemployment, health education, and tolerance.

International Youth Foundation (IYF)'s *YouthActionNet.org*, is a web site for youth leadership worldwide. The purpose is to provide a virtual space where young people can share lessons, stories, information, and advice on how to lead effective change. The site provides up-to-date information resources, and tools to - strengthen their work. IYF developed YouthActionNet in consultation with a task force of eight young leaders from around the world. Sponsored by the Nokia Corporation, YouthActionNet is part of the Make a Connection program, a global, multi-year partnership between Nokia and IYF to promote positive youth development by giving young people an opportunity to "make a connection" to their communities, to their peers, and to themselves. <http://www.youthactionnet.org>.

International Youth Foundation's Polish Children and Youth Foundation. 1995. *The Situation of Children and Youth in Poland*. Warszawa, Poland. PDF file available at: <http://www.iyfaet.org/pdf/poland.pdf>

This report documents the situation of Polish children and youth, describing the issues and trends influencing their development. From 1988-1992, Polish children and youth were exposed to great social and economic upheavals. The report describes the following challenges that youth face as a result of this enormous political and economic change: 1. Decline in the quality and supply of education. 2. Poor and deteriorating health conditions. 3. Low youth involvement in community issues, problem solving, and civic groups. 4. Youth who place low value on creativity and independent thinking and problem-solving. 5. Widespread unemployment.

Langan, Patricia E., Ed. 1998. *Policies, Programs, and Philanthropy for Children and Youth in Russia*. International Youth Foundation. Baltimore. PDF file available at: <http://www.iyfaet.org/pdf/Russiapdf>

Russian young people, who make up roughly 24 percent of the nation's population, find themselves between two cultures, Soviet and post-Soviet. This document discusses the major challenges affecting youth in modern Russia and describes NGO/civic organization activities that address the pressing needs of youth. These groups are taking on issues such as civic

education and empowerment, youth leadership development, teen health, and reformation of the education system.

The Search Institute concentrates on youth issues, often with a US-domestic focus. To read more about the Institute, go to: <http://www.search-institute.org/aboutsearch>. To look at its catalog of publications go to: <http://www.search-institute.org/catalog/index.html>.

UNDP Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues. 2000. *Human Development Report: Bosnia and Herzegovina 2000 Youth*. Sarajevo. PDF file available at: <http://www.undp.ba/pdf/report.pdf>

This is a comprehensive report on issues affecting youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This report provides an overview of the challenges facing youth in Bosnia Herzegovina and pinpoints the areas that have the greatest influence over the lives of young people.

UNICEF. 1999. *After the Fall: The Human Impact of Ten Years of Transition*. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. Florence. PDF file available at: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/afterthefall.pdf>

This publication, created to mark the tenth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, looks back at the impact of ten years of transition. It argues for a new focus on the human aspect of transition, and a rededication to creating a better quality of life for every citizen in a humane and democratic society.

UNICEF. 1997. *Children at Risk in Central and Eastern Europe: Perils and Promises*. Regional Monitoring Reports, No. 4. Innocenti Research Centre. Florence. PDF file available at: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/index.html>

The report examines the changes in risks facing the 100 million children in the 18 countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The eight types of risk are: poverty; war and dislocation; environmental degradation; health and health service deterioration; changes in family formation including rising family breakdown rates; falling access to education and rising truancy; youth lifestyle and health including an increase in drug abuse and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases; and juvenile crime. The report also indicates that institutional care, foster care and adoption remain in need of sweeping reform and emphasizes the preventive role of family support policies.

UNICEF. November 2000. *Young People in Changing Societies*, Regional Monitoring Report No. 7. <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/monee7/index.html>. The Monee Project CEE/CIS/Baltics. Florence.

This regional report examines the advantages and the obstacles youth encounter as they grow up in rapidly transforming societies in the CEE/CIS/Baltics region. The report covers a broad range of issues, including the participation of adolescents in education and of young men and women in the political lives of their nations. It examines the special problems of young people in the area of health and in the labor market. It notes trends among youth in conflict with the law. The report also includes an extensive bibliography that covers issues

related to the education, health, employment, and political participation of youth in the region.

USAID/Uganda and Zambia and USDA. *Youth Capacity Building: Best Practices Guidelines to Consider for Youth in Development Activities.*

Although the concept of "youth as resources in development" is becoming increasingly acknowledged, the practice of engaging youth in development activities as full partners is still not fully accepted. The "Youth in Development Initiative," piloted in Uganda and Zambia, developed a beginning list of best practices, offered for consideration to those who are planning activities that focus on the resources youth development activities.

World Bank. September 2000. *Making Transition Work for Everyone: Poverty and Inequality in Europe and Central Asia.* Washington, D.C. PDF file available at:

http://www-wds.worldbank.org/pdf content/00009494600092305354068/multi_page.pdf

This book explores the different responses to this collapse and their implications for poverty and inequality. It also addresses the policy actions needed to reduce poverty and create inclusive societies. While this book does not focus on youth exclusively, it provides in-depth information about issues, which greatly affect this segment of society. It describes poverty in the region, income inequality, and poverty reduction efforts related to areas such as health and education.

Education

Amhold, Nina. 1996. *Education for Reconstruction: Report for the Overseas Development Administration.* The Centre for Comparative Studies in Education, University of Oxford. London.

The report considers some of the issues, which have to be addressed by the various development agencies concerned with the process of educational reconstruction in countries, which have experienced war, natural disaster, or political and economic upheaval. The process of reconstruction is discussed in terms of physical, ideological and psychological rebuilding. Problems concerning human resources, demography and the curriculum are also discussed. Bosnia and Rwanda are used as case studies to highlight problems facing developing countries and by the Eastern and Central European "states in transition."

Beresford-Hill, Paul. 1997. "Markets and Education in Eastern Europe and the Baltic Republics." *Oxford Studies in Comparative Education*, Volume 7 No. 2; pg. 97.

Berryman, Sue. 2000. *Hidden Challenges to Education Systems in Transition Economies.* World Bank. Washington D.C. PDF file available at:

www.wds.worldbank.org/pdf content/00009494600092105321215/multi_page.pdf

This book addresses problems in the education systems of countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. ECA education systems now are not producing graduates able to adapt with

flexibility to the skill demands of interconnected market economies or vigorous civic societies. It proposes ways to reframe ECA's systems of education to fit these new realities.

Eirzea, Cesar. 1996. "Education in a World in Transition: Between Post-Communism and Post-Modernism." *Prospects*, Volume 26 No. 4; pg. 96.

Cerych, Ladislav. 1995. "Educational Reforms in Central and Eastern Europe." *European Journal of education*, Volume 30 No. 4.

DevTech Systems 2000 Global Education Database (GED) Online version of the GED: <http://gesdb.cdic.org/ged/index.html>. To download the GED to your desktop: http://www.usaid.gov/edue-training/ged_download.html

The Global Education Database (GED) was developed by USAID's Center for Human Capacity Development to provide the Agency and its development partners with selected statistical data on international education in an easy-to-use electronic format. The GED uses an interactive program for accessing education data compiled by USAID, from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). Users can access UNESCO data to measure the performance of a specific country over time. With over 200 countries represented, the database is also a useful tool for cross-country comparisons of education indicators.

European Training Foundation. 1999. *The Role of Technical Vocational Education and Training in Transition Countries: The Case of Central and Eastern Europe and the New Independent States*. Turin, Italy.
<http://www.w.etfeu.int/etfweb.nsf/0546f5a278d8c604412566260034025e/cb036be91a3bf713c1256a1800476021?OpenDocument>

The European Union grants financial support through the Phare and Tacis programs for reform of technical and vocational education programs. The current vocational education and training (VET) reforms in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and New Independent States (NIS) are noted for having achieved both exceptional breadth, range, and depth and for being exceptionally rapid. Increased demand for training and retraining has resulted from industry restructuring, absorption of surplus labor from other sectors and industries, and pressure to raise level of competitiveness. Although the countries share a common starting base for reforms, large differences do exist in the state of VET reforms.

Heyneman, Stephen P. 1998. "The Transition from Party/State to Open Democracy: The Role of Education." *International Journal of Educational Development*, Volume 18 No. 1.

Kitaev, IV. 1994. "Russian Education in Transition: Transformation of Labor-Market, Attitudes of Youth, and Changes in Management of Higher and Lifelong Education." *Oxford Review of Education*, Volume 20; pg. It I- 1 30.

Despite more democracy in Russian society and transition to a market economy, the education system remains strongly centralized and largely dependent on decision-making

and finance at the national level. The trend in higher and lifelong education in Russia is to copy Western educational standards and degrees. The present challenge is to avoid the temptation of an unprepared decentralization of the Russian education system and to gradually build institutional and local capacities by the ever-persisting centralized means. Development of innovative skills, problem-solving abilities, initiative-taking, and creativity--which were effectively suppressed by the former Soviet schools--should also be considered in the creation of a new education system.

Micklewright, John. 2000. *Education, Inequality and Transition*. Innocenti Research Centre Working Paper 74. Florence. PDF file available at: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/aboutIRC/index.html>

In this working paper, evidence is considered on differences in access to education and in learning achievement within the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Pastuovic, Nikola. September 1993. "Problems of Reforming Educational Systems in Post-Communist Countries." *International Review of Education*, Volume 39; pg. 405-18.

This article identifies the main challenges of educational reform in post-communist countries by using an interactive model of education and developmental dimensions of society. The author suggests that the stalemate in the transformation of ownership and political modernization and ideological conservatism will impede the Europeanization of education in Eastern European countries.

Roberts, K. October 1998. "School-to-Work Transitions in Former Communist Countries," *Journal of Work and Education*, Volume I 1; No. 3.

Slomczynski, KM and Shabad, G. 1998. "Can Support for Democracy and the Market Be Learned in School? A Natural Experiment in Post-Communist Poland." *Political Psychology*, Volume 19; pg. 749-779.

This paper focuses on a sample of students, ages 14 and 15, who participated in the civic education program in Poland and contrasts them with students subjected to the traditional civics program. The main analysis of cross-sectional data reveals two countervailing effects: Relative to students in the control group, students in the treatment group were less likely to take extreme anti-democratic or extreme anti-market positions, and they were less likely to take extreme pro-democratic or extreme pro-market positions. Additional analysis of panel data supports the conclusion that active participation in civic education results in students' political attitudes regressing toward the mean, that is, in their rejection of extreme stances.

UNICEF International Child Development Centre. 1998. *Education for All? The Monee Project CEE/CIS/Baltics*. Florence.

This report examines whether every child has access to schooling in the region, or whether "education for all" is a reality in transition countries. It also explores central trends in

education and describes the following challenges facing the region: rising costs of education; decline in the quality of schooling; drops in enrollment and attendance; decreased social support provided by schools; disrupted education for thousands of children due to war and conflict; and high unemployment for many young people upon leaving school.

World Bank. 2001. *Decentralizing Education in Transition Societies: Case Studies from Central and Eastern Europe*. Washington, D.C. PDF file available at:
http://www.wds.worldbank.org/pdf_content/0000949460104210950255/multi_page.pdf

This book focuses on the reform of education systems in Central and Eastern Europe with emphasis on decentralization and management.

Economic Growth, Unemployment, and Workforce Preparedness

Carter, Richard. 2000. *The Silent Crisis: The Impact of Poverty on Children in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. The European Children's Trust. London. PDF file available at:
<http://www.everychild.org.uk/The%20Silent%20Crisis.pdf>

This report explores the crisis of poverty in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. Poverty has had a particularly negative affect on children. This paper highlights the plight of the millions of children living in these countries and estimates that at least 50 million children are living in poverty in the region. Three crucial strategic issues are highlighted: 1. Poverty is not just a question of the lack of material possessions, but has very severe social consequences. 2. These consequences especially impact the family. 3. Western governments have failed to recognize the seriousness of the problem.

Center for Workforce Development, Education Development Center, Inc. 1998. *Investing in Tomorrow's Workforce*. Prepared for the Center for Human Capacity Development, USAID.

The study examines how five countries (India, Namibia, Peru, Philippines, and Tanzania) are responding to the pressures and challenges posed by the widening gap between job-seekers and the number of opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. The study points to the following investments as among those that bring about the biggest payoffs: creating more job opportunities, training opportunities, and opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. Information is available at www.etf.eu.int.

European Training Foundation. 2000. *Regional Seminar on Youth Unemployment in Southern Eastern Europe*.

The report presents the outcomes of a two-day seminar dedicated to raising awareness of the magnitude of the unemployment problems facing the youth in South Eastern Europe and to assist countries to develop concrete projects using the experience others brought to the workshop. The report devotes separate chapters to the youth unemployment situation in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Slovenia, to the experience of donor countries (France, Germany, Ireland, and Portugal) and to a discussion of priority areas for action.

FaMnghan Jan. 2000. *From Security to Uncertainty: the Impact of economic Change on Child Welfare in Central Asia*. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Working Paper 76. Florence. PDF file available at: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/@guassist/publications/pdf/iwp76.pdf>

This paper discusses the possible pathways between macroeconomic change and child welfare and develops a typology of the risks that children may face at different stages of the lifecycle. The indicators discussed include both economic measures of poverty based on incomes and expenditures, and selected capability-based indicators that reflect the health, education, and personal development of children and their degree of social inclusion/exclusion. The available evidence concerning recent trends in the material poverty of children in Central Asia is reviewed in Section Four, and trends in capability welfare are discussed in Section 5.

International Labor Organization. 2000. *Employing Youth: Promoting Employment- Intensive Growth*. Geneva. PDF file available at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/skills/targets/youth/download/uk-youth.pdf>

This paper provides a synthesis of reports developed by the Action Programme on Youth Unemployment. As the present employment situation throughout the world shows, few countries have managed to generate decent employment for their youth, let alone their adult population. One thing is clear: sustainable, job-enhancing economic growth remains an indispensable component of any strategy to eradicate youth unemployment. While the bulk of this paper discusses the broad topic of youth unemployment, Chapter Five specifically addresses the issue of youth labor markets in the transition economies of the former Soviet Union.

International Labor Organization. "Employing Youth: Promoting Employment- Intensive Growth," statistical tables of country unemployment figures. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/skills/targets/youth/sympo/id5n.html>

This web site includes two tables that describe the extent to which the young are jobless by country and over time. Changes in the relative size of the youth population aged 15- 24 are compared with the older age group 25-54 and are reported in Table 1. The youth population is increasing in most of the transition economies.

Table 2 presents an examination of overall unemployment rates, with minimum and maximum ages variously defined. Overall rates vary from as high as 38.8 per cent in Macedonia to as low as 0.4 per cent in Uzbekistan. This illustrates the difficulty of interpreting the unemployment rate in developing and transition economies.

Keune, Maarten. *N. d. Youth Unemployment in Hungary and Poland*. International Labor Organization Action Programme on Youth Unemployment. Geneva. PDF file available at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/pubi/etp20.html>

This paper is a contribution to the ELO's Action Programme on Youth Unemployment. Youth unemployment has increasingly been gaining attention in transition countries. This paper presents an overview of the labor market situation of young people in two transition countries, Hungary and Poland, with particular attention to youth unemployment and the respective attempts to address this problem.

USAID/USDA. May 2000. *Rural Youth Capacity Building: 4 Models for Enhancing Economic Sustainability with Youth as Partners*. Washington D.C.

USAID launched a rural youth initiative to strengthen the capacity of youth organizations so that youth can become significant contributors to national development in the future. In all of USAID's pilot activities, planners designed programs that engage youth as full participants and partners; apply experiential learning; use a "train the trainer" approach; and prepare youth organizations to sustain and continue activities that contribute to community and national development. This report includes a listing of youth capacity building best practices and comprehensive descriptions of several youth capacity building projects. The report concludes with a results section and outlines key recommendations for designing youth capacity building initiatives. The publication is an ideal resource for project designers and for those interested in learning about the importance of involving youth in development.

Democracy and Youth Political Participation

Hansen, Kirsten; Kaufmann, Roxanne and Saifer, Steffen. Nd. *Education and the Culture of Democracy: Early Childhood Practice*. Open Society Institute and Children's Resources International. New York.

The Open Society Institute developed a methodology for teaching young children the key principles of democracy and launched a democracy education program called Step by Step. Program methodology focuses on issues such as self-initiative, self-efficacy and empowerment, shared control, freedom of thought and speech, power versus respect, and appreciation of differences and similarities. The methodology also calls for parent involvement in school decision-making and the creation of a child-centered classroom learning environment. This book provides a framework for understanding the relationship between early childhood education and democracy and offers clear guidance, examples, methods, and language for fostering a democratic environment in the classroom.

Patrick, John; Metcalf, Kim; Vontz, Thomas. 2000. *Project Citizen and the Civic Development of Adolescent Students in Indiana, Latvia, and Lithuania*. Center for Civic Education. Washington, D.C. PDF file available at: <http://www.civiced.org/>

Project Citizen is an instructional product that is used by teachers and their adolescent students in the U.S. and in more than 30 countries in different regions of the world. Project Citizen engages students in learning experiences designed to affect positively their civic development, which involves three basic components of democratic citizenship: civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions. A study was designed to evaluate the effects of Project Citizen on the civic development of adolescent students in Indiana, Latvia, and

Lithuania. This report presents study findings and includes recommendations for improving civic education programs.

Soule, Suzanne. 1999. *Beyond Communism and War: The Effect of Civic Education on the Democratic Attitudes and Behavior of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Youth*. Center for Civic Education. Washington D.C. PDF file available at: <http://www.civiced.org/>

This report provides evidence of the effectiveness of the program based on a comparison of those who participated in the program and those who did not. The results indicate that civic education favorably affects students' political knowledge and participatory skills, as well as attitudes and core values.

HIV/AIDS, Health, and Lifestyles

Amirkhanian, Yuri; Tiunov, Dennis; and Kelly, Jeffrey. May/June 2001. "Risk Factors for HIV and Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases among Adolescents in St. Petersburg." Allan Guttmacher Institute. *Family Planning Perspectives*, Volume 33 No. 3. PDF file available at: <http://www.agi-usa.org/pubs/journals/3310601.html>

This article describes the sharp increase in the prevalence of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases among young people in Russia. The authors also explore adolescent behavior and attitudes that influence their risk of acquiring these infections. Researchers found that youth exhibit many indicators of risk for HIV and STD infection. Sexually active teens tend to have several partners, have a cavalier or ignorant attitude toward HIV infection, and take little precaution in preventing the contraction of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. At the conclusion of the article, the authors recommend developing sexuality education and behavioral intervention programs for addressing risky behavior among youth.

Baker, Peter. "HIV Cases in Russia Rise Sharply." Washington Post Foreign Service. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articies/AI181-2001Jul28.html>. July 29, 2001.

Baker's article describes how the AIDS epidemic has begun to wreak havoc on Russia and its Eastern European neighbors. The spread of HIV is closely tied to the growing drug problem that has developed in the region since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Eurocare: Advocacy for the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Harm in Europe. September 2000. "Central and Eastern Europe & Commonwealth of Independent States-Country" Profile. Alcohol Abuse: An Old Habit with New Followers." <http://www.eurocare.org/profiles/cee-cis-alcohol.html>.

This web site provides a concise overview of the problem of alcohol abuse among youth in the E&E region. The Eurocare site includes data charts on adolescent alcohol use and makes the case that in Russia and other countries in the region, a worrisome trend is emerging. Data show that the incidence of adolescent alcohol abuse is on the rise in the E&E region.

Henshaw, Stanley; Singh, Susheela; Haas, Taylor. January 1999. "The Incidence of Abortion-Worldwide." Allan Guttmacher Institute. *Family Planning Perspectives*, Volume 25 Supplement. Article available at: <http://www.agi-usa.org/pubs/journals/25s3O99.html> for further information on this topic, also check: <http://www.agi-usa.org/pubs/journals/2506899.html>

Henshaw, Singh and Taylor examine the incidence of abortion throughout the world. Among the sub-regions of the world, Eastern Europe had the highest abortion rate (90 per 1,000) and Western Europe the lowest rate (11 per 1,000). Abortion rates are not lower in areas where abortion is generally restricted by law than in areas where abortion is legally permitted.

Koupilova I, Leon DA. 1998. "Health of Children and Youth during the Transition in Eastern Europe." *Eurohealth*; 4(6 Special Issue): 10-12.

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights. Publications Web Link. September 2001. <http://www.mnadvocates.org/Home%2OPage%2OLinks/public.html>. Publications page.

This Minnesota Advocates publications link includes several documents on the problem of domestic violence in the E&E region. The organization lists 7 country-specific documents, describing the problem in the following countries: Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Albania, Bulgaria, and Macedonia. Each document begins with a summary of country-specific findings and recommendations. The next section provides historical information, a description of the transition from communism, evidence and causes of domestic violence, and country responses to domestic violence. Section three includes information about each nation's constitution, criminal laws, and family/marriage codes. The final section of each paper, chapter four, sets out each country's obligations to combat domestic violence under international law.

Olcott, Martha and Udalova, Natalia. 2000. *Drug Trafficking on the Great Silk Road - The Security Environment in Central Asia*, Working Paper No. I 1. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Washington D.C. PDF file available at: <http://www.ceip.org/files/publications/pdf/drugs.pdf>

This paper analyzes the situation based on the conference proceedings and aims to raise international and regional awareness of the seriousness of the problem. It describes how Central Asia has emerged as a major international drug trafficking center and how drugs are endangering the health and progress of newly independent states in a number of ways.

Open Society Institute. 2001. *Drugs, AIDS, and Harm Reduction: How to Slow the HIV Epidemic in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*. New York. PDF file available at: <http://www.soros.org/>

The International Harm Reduction Development (HiRD) Program of the Open Society Institute, in partnership with Soros foundations, has supported 162 harm reduction programs at 128 organizations to provide drug users with access to clean needles/syringes, substitution drug therapies, sexual health education, and a variety of social care services. This report

highlights these programs and describes the nature of the crisis, effective interventions, and how harm reduction approaches exemplify open society values.

Singh, Susheela and Darroch, Jacqueline E. January/February 2000. "Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing: Levels and Trends in Developed Countries." Allan Guttmacher Institute. *Family Planning Perspectives*, Volume 32 No. 1. PDF file available at: <http://www.agi-usa.org/pubs/journals/3201400.pdf>

Singh and Darroch find that the level of adolescent pregnancy varies greatly across developed countries, from a very low rate in the Netherlands (12 pregnancies per 1,000 adolescents per year), to a very high rate in the Russian Federation (more than 100 per 1,000). A group of five countries-Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania, the Russian Federation, and the United States-have pregnancy rates of 70 or more per 1,000 adolescents.

UNAIDS. *Epidemiological Fact Sheets by Country*. June 2000.
<http://www.unaids.org/hivaidinfo/statistics/juneOO/fact-sheets/index.html>.

The Epidemiological Fact Sheets on this web site contain the most recent country-specific data on HIV/AIDS prevalence and incidence, and information on behaviors that can spur- or stem the transmission of HIV. The data include prevention indicators originally developed by WHO's Global Program on AIDS, which aim to measure trends in knowledge of AIDS, relevant behaviors, and a host of other factors influencing the epidemic. For country-specific data on the E&E region, click on the map provided or click on the appropriate letter at the bottom of the web page. Each country fact sheet contains data that are disaggregated by age, revealing the trend of HIV infection among youth in the region.

University of California at San Francisco, HIV InSite web site. September 2001. "Eastern Europe and Central Asia." <http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/InSitejsp?page=@cr-02-06>.

This web site provides an update on HIV/AIDS prevalence in the E&E region and includes links to related UNAIDS documents, New York Times articles, and Washington Post articles. The site also includes several links to HIV/AIDS fact sheets for the region and key organizations working on the problem in Eastern and Central Europe.

Human Trafficking

Caldwell, Gillian; Galster, Steven; and Steinzor, Nadia. "Crime and Servitude: An Expose of the Traffic in Women for Prostitution from the Newly Independent States." Global Survival Network. http://www.globalsurvival.net/femaletrade/971_Irassia.html. 1997.

This report details the findings of a two-year investigation by the Global Survival Network into the trafficking of women from Russia and the Newly Independent States. This report represents a critical first step toward developing cooperative and transnational relationships to address this massive violation of human rights.

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights. 2000. *Trafficking in Women: Moldova and Ukraine*. Minneapolis. PDF file available at:
<http://www.mnadvocates.org/women/publication.s/TraffickingReport.pdf>

The purpose of this research was to investigate and expose human rights violations associated with trafficking by focusing on Moldova and Ukraine, which are attempting to address the problem. This report includes the findings from both countries and highlights the significant similarities in the situation for women who have been trafficked into the commercial sex industry. The report also describes how Moldova and Ukraine are failing to protect the human rights of trafficked women and are not in compliance with their international obligations to human rights treaties.

One Hundred Sixth Congress of the United States of America. January 2000. *Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000*.
<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/traffic/tvpa.pdf> Washington D.C.

The Violence Protection Act describes the nature and magnitude of the international trafficking crisis, outlines the abuses that victims face, and explains how existing laws inadequately address the trafficking problem. The Act defines trafficking and related terms and describes anti-trafficking standards that the U.S. expects economically assisted countries to follow. The document also sets out how the U.S. will engage in anti-trafficking activities geared at prevention, protection of victims, and prosecution of offenders. In the final section of the Act, writers describe how the U.S. will assist foreign countries with the elimination of trafficking and set out actions that the U.S. will take against nations that do not comply with minimum trafficking elimination standards.

Spevacek, Anne. "Trafficking in Russian Women: Sexual Exploitation as a Growing Form of International Trade." <http://www.american.edu/TED/traffic.html>. May 2000.

This web site includes useful information and links related to trafficking in Russia. The author describes the techniques of traffickers, the scope of the problem, and the short and long term effects on trafficking victims and Russian society. The author includes links to country-specific descriptions of trafficking and links to international legal mechanisms that prohibit trafficking. The web site provides a list of demand or "receiving" countries and describes the flow of Russian trafficking victims to other countries. Finally, at the end of the site, the author lists numerous literature and references related to trafficking in Russia and the NIS region.

Changes in Family Structure

Centeno, Miguel Angel. 1996. "The World They Have: An Assessment of Change in Eastern Europe." *Social Research*, Volume 63; pg. 369-402.

The writers discuss the political, economic, social, and cultural consequences of the transition to democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. Although social inequality with regard to class, ethnicity, gender, and age has increased, the populations of some countries

appear to have devised strategies to survive these social costs and to maintain standards of living.

Fajth, Gaspar. 1994. *Family Support Policies in Transitional Economies: Challenges and Constraints*. Innocenti Occasional Papers, Economic Policy Series 43. Florence.

This paper looks at how family support policies of the former Soviet Union have fared in nine of the countries that have undergone the transition to the free-market economy. It asks whether the positives that did exist prior to 1989 have survived to benefit the children of today. It concludes with a discussion of what can be done to improve matters for families of the region, arguing for an approach that would utilize the already existent infrastructure of care that remains as a relic of the old regimes.

Krus, David. December 1997. "Changes in Crime Rates and Family-Related Values in Selected East European Countries." *Psychological Reports*, Volume 81 No. 3; pg. 747- 51.

Some of the emerging trends in the Czech Republic, former East Germany, and Russia pertaining to general areas of public health, family, and crime are described. Effects of these changes are discussed within the framework of a recently proposed multiple regression model of criminal behavior in which criminality is attributed to the confluence of gross inequalities in the distribution of wealth and to the disintegration of the traditional family.

Scheer, SD; Unger, DG. 1998. "Russian Adolescents in the Era of Emergent Democracy: The Role of Family Environment in Substance Use and Depression." *Family Relations*, Volume 47; pg. 297-303.

Many of the findings were similar to studies with U.S. youth: (a) Russian youth who viewed their families as conflictual, non- supportive, and without close relationships with their parents reported feeling more depressed; and (b) substance users were not as close to their parents and families as non- users. There were also findings that may be unique to Russian youth and warrant further research.

UNICEF. 1999. *Women in Transition*. Innocenti Research Centre, Monee Project Regional Monitoring Report No. 6. Florence. PDF file available at: <http://www.eurochild.gla.ac.uk/Documents/monee/pdf/MONTEE6/monee6.html> or at: <http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/monee6/annex.pdf>

This report focuses on the rights and well-being of the 150 million women and 50 million girls who make up half the population of the 27 countries in the Eastern European region. While the report does not specifically address the impact of transition on youth, Chapter 3, describe changes in family structure that directly impact young people. This chapter examines how the family dimension of women's lives has changed appreciably, and often unexpectedly, during the transition and how family-related policies have been adjusted. It shows the strikingly high fertility rates among teenagers in the transition region-up to several times higher than the rates in Western Europe. An appendix is included that lists data tables on issues such as child population, births to mothers under 20, youth suicide rates, HIV infection rates, and other trends.

Orphaned Children

Calabresi, Massimo. June 24, 1996. "Ceausescu's Orphans: Romania's Last Dictator Left Behind a Society Unable and Unwilling to Take Care of Its Children." *Time International*, Volume 147 No. 26. PDF file available at:

<http://www.time.com/time/international/1996/960624/romania.html>

This Time article portrays the bleak life of an orphaned street child in Bucharest, Romania. The author introduces the reader to Alina, a 16 year old girl who struggles to survive in the sewers of Bucharest. He describes how young people like Alina, who are the product of abandonment during the transition period of the early nineties, are vulnerable to disease and abuse and often must resort to pimping and prostitution in order to survive.

Human Rights Watch. 1998. "Abandoned to the State: Cruelty and Neglect in Russian Orphanages." Article available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports98/Russia>

This report documents how, from the moment the state assumes their care, orphans in Russia are exposed to shocking levels of cruelty and neglect. Human Rights Watch calls on the Russian Federation, which has long prided itself on the education of its children, to stop all medical personnel from pressing parents to institutionalize newborns with various disabilities, and reallocate resources spent on institutions to develop humane, non-discriminatory alternatives.

Hunter, Susan and Williamson, John. Nd. *Children on The Brink - Strategies to Support a Generation Isolated by HIV/AIDS*. Health Technical Services Project and USAID, Washington D.C. PDF file available at: <http://www.dec.org/pdf/does/PNACC519.pdf>

While this report does not specifically address the issue of orphans in the European context, it does offer lessons for the E&E region. The study includes estimates of maternal and double orphans caused by AIDS and by other causes in 23 countries, as well as complementary estimates of the population of paternal orphans. The report also describes how the burden of increased orphaning is affecting individuals, families, and communities and what the response has been by those affected as well as by governments and aid organizations. Finally, the authors provide guidelines for assisting children, families, and communities affected by HIV/AIDS and outline six intervention strategies for governments, NGOs, and donors.

World Bank. September 2001. "Urban Development/Street Children Initiative" web site. <http://www.worldbank.org/html/40urban/st-child/st-child.html>.

This web site provides background information on street children in the former Soviet Union and Central & Eastern Europe. It describes the factors that gave rise to the emergence of street children and the conditions that these children must endure. The web site also lists numerous links to organizations and resources related to this issue.

APPENDIX C

The Stakeholder Analysis

How is a stakeholder analysis conducted?²⁴

The stakeholder analysis (introduced in Chapter III) becomes one of the first steps in carrying out a rapid appraisal, and the answers gained in the five steps described in this setting are provisional. In fact, the initial effort will likely raise more questions than it answers, and much of the data collection of the assessment will be based on the effort to fill in the gaps that the stakeholder analysis reveals. The stakeholder analysis becomes a means and first step to going out to the stakeholder groups to ask the right kinds of questions about their views, their interests, and what they see as the strengths and weaknesses of alternative proposals to improve the situation of youth.

It is expected that the team will conduct the SA at the beginning of its appraisal, after initial meetings that the team would hold with USAID. There are as many prescriptions of how to do a stakeholder analysis as authors writing on the subject. However, given the exploratory nature of the rapid appraisal of youth, the following simple model that focuses on the relative power of different groups will help the assessment move forward quickly.

Step 1: State the purpose of the assessment and the proposed procedures of analysis, and then sketch the initial understanding of the system.

The purpose of the rapid appraisal of youth should already be developed in the scope of work. It can be further articulated and expanded in the initial meetings between USAID staff and the team, with an increased focus on one or more of the critical issues that involve youth in the region: employment and career opportunities, education, crime and quality of life, generational health issues, access to public goods, etc. For the purposes of the youth stakeholder analysis, it will be important to work with USAID staff – both staff that form part of the rapid appraisal team as well as other USAID experts – to delineate a number of possible programmatic options that can be used to orient the stakeholder analysis exercise. These options may be actual initiatives that the Mission is considering and wishes to test the receptivity of different groups during the assessment, or options that the Mission might advocate to other donors or to the host country government. They may even be preliminary ideas that need to be “floated” to see if they are even feasible.

Step 2: Identify key stakeholders.

The team will start with the preliminary list of stakeholders in the scope of work and the understanding gained in Step 1. It will then conduct a general brainstorming session to discuss

²⁴ This discussion draws upon guidance on stakeholder analysis developed by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the International Center for Development-oriented Research in Agriculture (ICRA), and the Social Assessment team of the World Bank.

who are the people, groups and institutions that are most involved in current conditions and who would be affected by or who would have an impact on new initiatives in youth. The social categories should be grouped according to the objectives and purposes of Step 1. A matrix, such as that in Table C.1, may be useful here to make the review systematic.

Table C.1 Identifying the Stakeholders	
Stakeholder (Group)	Primary/Secondary Stakeholder?
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

The idea of primary and secondary stakeholders is introduced in Table B.1. Primary stakeholders are those people and groups who are ultimately affected by the situation or by new initiatives that may be introduced, as beneficiaries or as a group negatively affected. In the case of the rapid appraisal of youth, primary stakeholders are the subgroups of youth themselves, as well as their families and other closely affiliated social groups that would be affected by initiatives undertaken by governments or funders. Secondary stakeholders are those entities that serve as intermediaries in the process of initiating change or delivering aid to the primary stakeholders. They may be categorized as funding, implementing, monitoring, and advocacy groups; or they may governmental, NGO and private sector organizations.²⁵

The following types of questions can help complete the matrix:

- Who are the actors in the youth-related arena under discussion (e.g., youth unemployment)?
- Who is adversely affected by the current situation?
- Who benefits from current conditions?
- Who would benefit from the various programmatic initiatives under consideration?
- Who has a decision-making or policy role to change current practices?
- What groups might oppose changes in the current conditions?
- What organizations or groups have taken the lead to highlight, denounce, support, or challenge the current conditions?

It is worth noting that to answer the fourth question, “Who would benefit from the various policy initiatives under consideration?” it may be necessary to develop parallel stakeholder tables as different alternatives are developed.

²⁵ These distinctions are suggested by the Overseas Development Department’s “Guidance Notes on How to Do Stakeholder Analysis of Aid Projects and Programmes,” 1995, <http://www.euforic.org/gb/stake1.htm>.

Step 3: Investigate stakeholders' interests, characteristics, and circumstances.

Stakeholder groups will stand in a particular perspective in relation to the situation of youth and the specific issues highlighted in the rapid appraisal. The identification of the stakeholder groups goes hand in hand with examining the each group's principle interests.

The interests of some groups will be clearer and easier to identify than others. In some cases, interests are obvious and easy to articulate. In many cases, the interests of a group may be mixed and internally contradictory. The interests may be difficult to define and even covert, especially if they are seen to be prejudiced or to run counter to broadly held values. Stakeholder analysis can be sensitive and political, since certain interests will not reflect well on the groups who hold them. The groups' characteristics and current circumstances also shape where they stand in relation to the youth target groups.

The following questions can guide the inquiry into the interests of each stakeholder group:

- What are the stakeholders' understanding of the situation and their expectations about the role that they can play?
- What benefits are there for the stakeholder under different action alternatives?
- What stakeholder interests conflict with other groups and with possible alternative actions or initiatives?
- What resources might the stakeholder be willing and able to mobilize in favor of different alternatives?
- What constraints circumscribe the stakeholder in pursuing his/her interests?

Table C.2 Stakeholder Interests	
Stakeholder (Group)	Group Interest
Secondary Stakeholders	
1. Ministry of Education Technical Education Unit	Controlling budgetary expenditures Ensuring minimal coverage for target population Expanding influence in Ministry Developing revised curricula for technical schools
2. Technical School Teachers Association	Maintaining high attendance levels Ensuring ongoing funding for teacher salaries Resisting move towards curriculum reform
3. Jobs for Youth NGO	Training selected youth in job-relevant skills Expanding programs to new regions beyond capital Broadening funding sources
Primary Stakeholders	
1. Current Technical School Students	Receiving relevant training that will result in jobs Mentorship or apprenticeship programs Assurance that institutes will function efficiently
2. Unemployed, out of school youth (15-20)	Job training and jobs

Step 4: Determine stakeholders’ power and potential roles.

Beyond their interests, the power and influence that a stakeholder group has at its disposal can shape which initiatives have the possibility of success and which will encounter strong obstacles. An understanding of stakeholder power also helps the team understand fully what conditions may need to be in place for different recommendations to be achievable in the short or long run. Power and influence are, by definition, relational, so it is important, of course, to think of the interrelationships among various key stakeholder groups. These kinds of questions may be most helpful:

- Among various stakeholder groups, who has power over whom? Who is dependent on whom?
- Which stakeholder groups are organized to articulate or defend their interests? How can that organization be influenced or built upon?
- Who has control over resources – human, financial, and physical? Who controls the flow of information?

The analysis of the relative power and influence of stakeholder groups will give the team a greater understanding of the kind of support that would be needed for alternative actions and where potential opposition and obstacles may lie. A consideration of the stakeholder’s interest and of the group’s perceived power and influence allows the team to consider also its *importance*, obviously referring to its importance to the issue at hand. That is, relatively powerful groups may not be of particular interest in the specific arena under consideration. On the other hand, groups with very little real influence or power will be of significant interest to the analysis, since those groups are the ones that may receive benefits from any program choices made.

By this point, it will be possible to expand the matrix to include the relative power and interest of groups and their importance to the rapid assessment (see Table C.3).

Table C.3 Assessing Influence and Priority			
Stakeholder (Group)	Interests	Influence: Potential Impact on alternatives (+/-)	Relative Interest Priority - Youth (1-5)
Secondary Stakeholders			
1. Ministry of Education Technical Education Unit	Controlling budgetary expenditures Ensuring minimal coverage for target population Expanding influence in Ministry Developing revised curricula for technical schools	3	4
2. Technical School Teachers Association	Maintaining high attendance levels Ensuring ongoing funding for teacher salaries Resisting move towards curriculum	3	3

	reform		
3. Jobs for Youth NGO	Training selected youth in job-relevant skills Expanding programs to new regions beyond capital Broadening funding sources	4	5
Primary Stakeholders			
1. Current Technical School Students	Receiving relevant training that will result in job Mentorship or apprenticeship programs Assurance that institutes will function efficiently	2	5
2. Unemployed, out of school youth (15-20)	Job training and jobs	1	5

Step 5: Assess options and use the conclusions to make progress.

The initial stakeholder analysis will elicit a range of important actors and potential actors in the youth sector. By examining the groups who are taking part and their roles and power, the team can set priorities for the data collection that follows. The SA carried out at the beginning of the rapid assessment should be considered provisional and preliminary. The issues raised by the stakeholder analysis will provide considerable fodder for the rapid appraisal team to consider – who to contact first, which groups are most likely to be interested in change (and which will most resist it), and who best can provide information and insight into the current situation of different segments of the youth population. The team will need to then return to their initial conclusions to revise and update them as more information becomes available. The tables of the stakeholder analysis then become “living documents” that help the team to conceptualize the social complexities they encounter.

APPENDIX D

Considerations in Recruiting, Organizing and Training a Rapid Appraisal Team

A. Recruiting a Rapid Appraisal Team

The purposes and methods of the youth assessment determine, in many ways, whom to recruit for a rapid appraisal team. The size of the assessment also affects the size the rapid appraisal team. The composition, organization, and preparation of the team are other serious considerations. The success or failure of the assessment to gather appropriate and relevant information often depends upon the qualifications of the team.

In addition, assessments of this kind can be conducted by internal or external rapid appraisal teams or, as is often the case, by a combination. A well-balanced combination of internal and external assessors may be preferable for many reasons, which are further explored in this section of the manual. Mission staff should carefully consider the extent of their participation on the rapid appraisal team itself. In addition, it may be useful for the Mission to create a skills matrix to determine the final composition of the team in order to maximize the qualifications and strengths of the potential candidates.

1. Composition of the Rapid Appraisal Team

Your aim, in assembling a team, should be to select a diverse team, such that each member views the information gathered from a different perspective and asks different questions. This diversity of perspective results in a richer set of responses. Experience has shown that rapid appraisal teams comprised of members from a variety of backgrounds with a variety of skills are successful. Whenever possible, the team should also include local people and a mix of male and female members. It is also helpful to have at least one team member who has conducted a rapid appraisal before. In selecting the team, consideration should be given to what each member will contribute to the assessment not only in terms of their expertise and experience, but also their ability to function as a member of the team.

Knowledge and Skills Diversity

Having a team with diverse backgrounds and knowledge bases is particularly well-suited to assessing the needs of youth, which often include a variety of interconnected issues. Education backgrounds that might be useful to include in a youth assessment are (note that this list is not exhaustive):

- anthropology,
- education administration,
- curriculum development,
- labor economics,

- vocational education or skills training,
- public health,
- social work;
- sociology,
- training of trainers, and
- social marketing.

What Should Missions Look for in Assembling a Rapid Appraisal Team?

- Rapid appraisal skills (e.g., knowledge and practical application of rapid appraisal methodologies)
- Knowledge of the subject, region, or country
- Subject matter expertise in the relevant area of the Mission's mandate (or SOs)
- Analytical skills
- Facilitation skills (if a facilitator is needed)
- Familiarity with the Mission and USAID
- Team leadership skills
- Language proficiency
- Good drafting skills
- Demonstrated performance levels (check references)

Recruiting team members who speak the local language and have experience in the country or region will significantly strengthen the team. Including at least one team member with appraisal experience is important for managing the assessment, but also for providing guidance in implementing these methodologies.

Age Diversity

In the case of a youth assessment, it will obviously be important to incorporate the insights and perspectives of the youth cohort from the beginning. It may be possible to recruit at least one person in the youth age cohort with relevant skills for the team, such as a young social scientist who recently completed a Master's degree or a *kandidatski*, who can guide the team as a knowledgeable informant as well as take part as a researcher.

Gender Diversity

For the same reasons that diversity of knowledge and skills is desirable, you will want a gender-diverse team: having team members of different backgrounds and experiences helps ensure that the team's analysis is broad and deep. Gender, of course, affects experience, and having team members of only one gender unnecessarily constrains the team.

Yet, there are circumstances for which a one-gender team may be necessary. For example, if the RA is intended to investigate safe sex practices among girls, girls may not respond honestly – or at all – with men present in the interview. It may also be culturally inappropriate to have men interview women alone or to have a team of only women traveling through some rural areas.

National and Ethnic Diversity

Due to the high levels of education in the E&E region, many countries may have highly regarded specialists in various technical fields. Inclusion of in-country experts in the assessment is often useful and can enrich the exercise. In addition to local technical experts, the team may include local cultural experts who understand the context of the assessment and know the local language, the customs, the taboos, and the hangouts for youth of which no outsider could be aware. Moreover, inclusion of national consultants on the rapid appraisal team can act as a catalyst for greater local “buy-in” into the assessment results.

Illustrative Team Requirements for an Assessment Focusing on Labor Market Issues

In addition to a Program Officer, Contract Officer or Procurement Specialist, a strong Team Leader, and a Logistics Assistant, the following skills would contribute significantly to the effectiveness of a rapid appraisal of youth around labor market issues.

- Labor Market Specialist – have the analytical and research skills to understand the changing conditions of the labor market;
- Local Sociologist – able to draw upon, synthesize, and contextualize any research already carried out on youth and especially youth unemployment;
- Youth Specialist – have practical experience in working with “at risk” youth or young people attempting to move into the labor force;
- Anthropologist/Sociologist – provide experience and perspective on approaches to conducting research on key youth segments, including ethnic minorities, women, economically disadvantaged, etc.
- Specialist in Vocational Ed or Technical Training– contribute special expertise on the appropriateness of current technical training and recommendations for reform.

For assessments focusing on minority youth (an assessment of services for Roma children) or involving youth of different ethnic backgrounds (a school drop-out assessment that includes interviews with youth from the Bulgarian majority as well as Turkish and Roma minorities), the team should include local cultural experts.

National consultants can be full team members (technical experts, for example). However, inclusion of national consultants on the rapid appraisal team does not necessarily mean that the person participates in exactly the same way as the rest of the team. For example, the team could:

- employ the assistance of local students to collect information already publicly available
- hire youth from ethnic minority groups to assist with arranging interviews and focus groups with minority group members,
- hire a local researcher to schedule initial interviews and arrange focus groups, or
- contract with a local survey firm to conduct structured interviews by telephone or mail (for a longer, more comprehensive appraisal).

Table D.1 lists some of the advantages and disadvantages of using firms versus individual consultants to conduct rapid appraisals.

Table D.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Hiring Firms versus Individual Consultants		
	Firms	Individuals
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees are normally fixed, unless the SOW is changed • May be able to use a single award IQC/LWA or a purchase order • Hiring procedures are usually easier • Firm is responsible for quality control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be less expensive than a firm • Allows the Mission to handpick the team members • May be able to use a purchase order
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firms are often more expensive than individuals • May have to bid a contract or compete a task order for a multiple award IQC/LWA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule changes usually require additional costs • Bringing together a new team requires more time dedicated to team-building

2. Organization of the Rapid Appraisal Team

As mentioned before, the rapid appraisal team should (ideally) be comprised of three to five specialists, depending on the scope of the assessment. Flexibility in the organization of the team is one of the strengths of this methodology; however, it also makes it more difficult for the Mission to prescribe a predetermined team.

It is difficult and not feasible for one or two individuals to fulfill all of the responsibilities of the team. For example, it does not make economic sense for a senior evaluation specialist to schedule appointments and arrange for travel when a local hire could more effectively and efficiently provide administrative and logistical support to the team at a much lower cost.

Team members can participate in the assessment in various capacities – as managers, as evaluators, or as providers of information. It is essential to delineate clearly the roles and responsibilities among the various parties and to understand what kinds of skills each team member should have (see Table D.2).

Table D.2 Roles, Responsibilities, and Skills of the Rapid Appraisal Team Members		
Team Position	Roles of Specialists	Skills
Team Leader	To manage the Team and assessment process, lead relations with the Mission, conduct briefings, and provide overall technical guidance.	Communications, human resource management, organization. May also have technical expertise.
Rapid Appraisal Specialist	To help select appropriate data collection methodologies for the RA and lead team discussions on data analysis and data gaps.	Experience conducting RAs, research skills. May also have technical expertise.
Technical Area Specialist (e.g., education, health, labor)	To provide guidance to the team on appropriate research questions and data collection, and the types of data already available.	Technical knowledge of a specific subject area such as education, health, or labor. Knowledge may be gained through education or experience.
Researcher	To gather already-collected data from government Ministries, other donors, NGOs; assist team with interviews and	Research skills, local knowledge.

	focus groups. May also serve as translator, if local staff.	
Administrative/Logistical Support	To make logistical arrangements and schedule meetings.	Organizational skills, local knowledge.
<i>Note that the specialists and the team leader will all collect data, conduct data analysis, and participate in briefings and report writing.</i>		

3. Mission Involvement with the Rapid Assessment Team

Mission staff may choose to conduct the youth assessment themselves, to hire a team comprised completely of outside consultants, or to have a mix of Mission staff and consultants. There are advantages and challenges to each of these configurations, as shown in Table D.3.

Table D.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Mission-led and External Teams²⁶		
	Internal Teams	External Teams
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the organization • Understand organizational behavior and attitudes • Are known to staff • Are less threatening • Often a greater chance of adopting recommendations • Are less expensive • Build internal evaluation capability • Contribute to program capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective • No organizational bias • Fresh perspectives • Broader experience • More easily hired for longer periods of time • Have technical expertise • Not part of the power structure • Can bring in additional resources • Trained in assessments or evaluation • Experienced in other assessments or evaluations
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectivity may be questioned • Structure may constrain participation • Personal gain may be questioned • Accept the assumptions of the organization • Full participation may be constrained by usual workload • May not be trained in assessment or evaluation methods • May lack special technical expertise • May lead to the assessment not having outside credibility • May have difficulty avoiding bias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not know the organization • May not know of constraints affecting recommendations • May be perceived as an adversary • Expensive • Contract negotiations may take time • Follow-up on recommendations is not always there • Unfamiliar with environment

Mission Management of the Rapid Appraisal Team

If the Mission decides to hire an outside firm or consultant for the rapid appraisal, a program manager must oversee the assessment. Some of the responsibilities that a program manager might undertake are listed in Table D.4.

²⁶ ALNAP, Training Modules: Evaluation of Humanitarian Action.
http://www.alnap.org/modules/m1/pdfs/3_9.pdf

Table D.4 Mission Program Manager's Typical Rapid Appraisal Tasks	
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the purpose and users of the assessment results • Determine who needs to be involved in the assessment process • Define assessment concerns and questions • Draft the scope of work for the assessment • Identify the mix of skills and experiences required for the rapid appraisal team • Oversee the collection of existing information/data • Supervise the preparation of any background materials and ensure their timely delivery • Select, recruit and brief the rapid appraisal team • Decide whose views should be sought • Develop any additional information collection procedures and instruments (unless the team is contracted to do this) • Ensure a variety of data gathering methods to enhance the validity and credibility of the assessment • Propose an assessment field visit plan • Ensure availability of funds to carry out the assessment • Brief the team on the purpose of the assessment and review work plan
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the team has full access to files, reports, publication and other relevant information • Ensure adequate administrative and logistical support • Follow the progress of the assessment • Arrange for a meeting with the rapid appraisal team to discuss the draft report • Approve the end product
Follow-Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the performance of the rapid appraisal team • Disseminate the youth assessment results • Promote the implementation of the recommendations and use the results in present and future programming • Monitor regularly to make sure the recommendations are acted upon

Mission Involvement as Part of the Team

Because the Mission will design the rapid appraisal and use the results, it would be ideal for one or more Mission staff to be actively involved in the appraisal process. Mission staff can take on any of the roles of the team members, from Team Leader to facilitator or resource person to be called on as necessary.

The following are some questions to consider regarding who should manage the Youth Assessment:

- Who will be available during the proposed timing of the youth assessment?
- Who has a program management background?
- Who has evaluation experience to apply in managing the youth assessment?
- Who can access stakeholders for the rapid appraisal team?
- Who is responsible for any existing youth programs, and who will be responsible for future programs for youth?
- What organizations and experts are involved with youth?
- What organizations might have staff to assist in the youth assessment?

<p>Who Will Manage the Youth and Democracy Assessment?</p>	<p>Who Will Manage the Youth and Health Assessment?</p>
<p><i>Who will be available during the proposed timing of the youth assessment?</i> The program manager and assistants will be in-country for the duration of the implementation period. Although they will not travel with the team, they will be available to respond to questions or situations as they arise.</p> <p><i>Who has a program management background?</i> The program manager has significant experience in managing teams of consultants and the program assistants have some experience in that area.</p> <p><i>Who can access stakeholders for the team?</i> The program manager makes many of the initial contacts. Some Mission colleagues may also be called upon to make initial contacts if they have closer working relationships with the stakeholders. Many stakeholders will also be contacted by USAID contractors or grantees on the ground working in youth areas. Some contacts the team will have to make cold, such as pulling in random members of a community or university students.</p> <p><i>Who is or will be responsible for any existing and future youth programs?</i> There are currently no youth programs, but the DG program manager will be responsible for any future programs for youth in the civil society area.</p> <p><i>What organizations/experts are involved with youth?</i> Other international donors have taken on health issues among youth. The program manager at the Mission will contact them out of courtesy, but since the areas are not closely related, there will be little involvement from them. The Mission will contact Ministry of Youth and keep them apprised of the team's progress. The Ministry has been asked for input on local experts who might be appropriate for the team. The Ministry recommended four people, one of whom the Mission approved for the team.</p> <p><i>What organizations might have the staff to assist in the youth assessment?</i> Universities have staff that work with youth regularly and have the skills required for conducting research and focus groups. Community-based, youth-serving organizations are also useful in setting up, recruiting participants for and hosting focus groups. Any political parties that have youth branches or activities are also important sources.</p>	<p><i>Who will be available during the proposed timing of the youth assessment?</i> The Mission in this example is fortunate enough to have a dedicated Health SO team, comprised of the Deputy Director for Programs who has over 20 years of USAID experience, a full-time expatriate health reform expert, and a public health program officer who is a foreign service national. All will be available for the period of the assessment.</p> <p><i>Who has a program management background?</i> The Deputy Director's dedication to building the qualifications of her local hire staff leads to the decision to permit the primary public health program officer to dedicate his time to the activity as the fourth full-time team member. The expatriate health officer will work with the FSN to manage the assessment. In addition, the Mission has a highly-qualified contract specialist who is familiar with issuing task orders through IQCs. Therefore, the Mission has the staff and the resources to prepare for the rapid appraisal and manage the contractor during the rapid appraisal.</p> <p><i>Who can access stakeholders for the team?</i> The long-term work in health means that the SO Team can call on in-country cooperators to assist the assessment team in identifying and contacting the principal stakeholders in the arena.</p> <p><i>Who is or will be responsible for any existing and future youth programs?</i> The Mission has no current programs for youth. If an initiative is undertaken in health, it would be the Health SO Team's primary responsibility.</p> <p><i>What organizations/experts are involved with youth?</i> The same cooperators are prime sources of information on organizations and experts. Likewise, other donors will make suggestions. UNAIDS staff may contribute staff time, and the Ministries of Health and of Education, Youth and Sports will be involved in providing background information and articulating their interests. During the three weeks of in-country field research, the Health SO Team will work closely with the team. Simultaneously, the contractor is responsible for the internal functioning of the team, ensuring that they meet their deadlines and provide high quality deliverables.</p>

As one would expect, there are both advantages and challenges to Mission staff participation in each of these roles. When determining whether a Mission staff person will participate on the team and in what position she or he should serve, the program manager might consider the following characteristics.

- **Perceptions and Realities: Bias.** If the team leader is a Mission staff person, the rapid appraisal may not be perceived by stakeholders or participants as objective. The Team Leader may also, in reality, subtly guide the assessment to particular research questions, data collection methodologies, or informants – giving the team the answers or recommendations the team leader wants.
- **Guiding the Assessment: Control.** Having a Mission team member will allow the Mission more immediate control over the assessment. It will also assist the team: the Mission staff person can answer questions about Mission needs and interests, help get appointments with interested stakeholders or donors, and serve as a expert on the team (particularly as a technical, subject-matter expert).
- **Getting accurate information: Participation.** You should plan, also, for the effect Mission staff may have on participants. Depending on the interviewees and the questions being asked, participants may not feel comfortable criticizing USAID programs or suggesting new areas of emphasis with Mission staff present.

4. Hiring the Rapid Appraisal Team

Having provided information on the organization and composition of the rapid appraisal team, in reality the final selection of the team members is often determined and limited by the rapid appraisal methodologies selected and the resources available to the Missions.

Assistance with recruitment of consultants can be sought from USAID colleagues, including the E&E bureau, universities (American and local), international donors, international NGOs, and local institutions. There are also a number of different types of organizations that can provide the services requested, including international consulting firms, international consultants, local research firms, local consultants. Each of these is discussed in more detail below.

International Consulting Firms

International consulting firms are frequently selected for this type of activity because they often have regional expertise or comparable experience in other countries. They often have access to teams of experts that can be mobilized quickly and will work well together. Such firms should be accustomed to working with USAID Missions and familiar with the challenges of working in-country. A Mission would want to brief the team and monitor the RA process, but should not have to provide any training or more than minimal logistical support. The Mission should be prepared, however, to assist the consultants with meeting government officials and, possibly, providing background documents.

International Consultants

In the event that a rapid appraisal is being undertaken in an area that requires highly specialized or technical knowledge, an international consultant or a team of independent international consultants may be the appropriate choice. The Mission, however, then has to take on the responsibility of contracting with each consultant, coordinating consultants' schedules, organizing logistical support, and allowing time for team building.

Local Research Firms

Hiring a local research firm to implement or assist in the assessment is an option for Missions to consider. Highly-qualified research firms are located in most Europe and Eurasian countries, but they often require frequent interaction and reminders about the implementation process. In some cases, it might be necessary to conduct a brief training of local evaluation companies hired to implement the assessment or local staff hired to assist on the assessment.

Local Consultants

Missions may decide that local consultants with technical competence and local knowledge are the best fit for conducting the rapid appraisal. As with international consultants, the Mission should expect to contract with each consultant, coordinate consultants' schedules, and allow time for team building. Logistical support should be minimal for a local expert.

5. Initial Team Briefing

Once the contract is finalized and the team is ready to begin the youth assessment, it is important to ensure that all team members understand the objectives of the assessment and agrees on the approaches to be used. Missions are encouraged to hold an initial team briefing, sometimes called a team building meeting, at the beginning of the assessment, probably the first working day the team is in-country.

Initial briefings, or meetings, usually include some or all of the following components:

Organizing the Assessment

Because the members of the team are most likely from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds and bring a variety perspectives and viewpoints to the assessment, it is very important to achieve agreement – early in the process – on the objectives of the assessment and how the team will accomplish its goals.

Briefing discussions should include:

- Understanding the program context and the rapid appraisal purpose and approach;
- Reaching final agreement on the appraisal design (data collection methodologies to be used, persons to be interviewed);
- Reviewing the data collection instruments and the schedule of activities;
- Answering questions;
- Reviewing final arrangements for administrative and logistical support and making any necessary adjustments;
- Discussing the format and content of interim and final reports (and any other required deliverables); and
- Planning for any Mission debriefing following the assessment.

6. Training Rapid Appraisal Team Members

In cases where a local firm or individuals are hired to work on the assessment, it is advisable to conduct a brief training. This training would cover an introduction to the project, the rapid appraisal methodology, the protocols to be used, and Mission requirements for deliverables. If the local firm or individuals are hired directly by the Mission, financial reporting and invoicing should also be discussed.

The following section is an illustrative example of training given to researchers undertaking a rapid assessment of opportunities for out-of-school youth in Bulgaria. It contains many excellent suggestions and forms that might be useful to the team members.

TRAINING FOR RAPID APPRAISAL RESEARCHERS²⁷ USAID/BULGARIA

Introduction

Welcome to USAID/Bulgaria's Rapid Assessment (RA) of Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth. We are pleased to have you as part of our team in collecting data on views and needs of youth in Bulgaria. This primer contains several useful pieces of information: descriptions of the Rapid Assessment Team Members involved in this project, the contact strategy for interviewees, instructions for administering the questionnaires, and preparing questionnaires for data entry and analysis.

Privacy

The information you collect is not to be distributed to any other person or organization for any reason. Protecting the participants' privacy also means that notes and questionnaires are not left unattended where other people might see them. Notes should be returned to the team leader as soon as possible after completing the interview.

Contact Information for Team Members

1. Team Leader (cell phone, hotel telephone and room number, email address)
2. Technical Expert (cell phone, hotel telephone and room number, email address)
3. Technical Expert (cell phone, hotel telephone and room number, email address)
4. Mission (contact person, telephone number at office, email address)

Background/Description of Rapid Assessment

Despite recent economic growth, unemployment in Bulgaria remains high – even for those with advanced degrees. Youth who do not complete secondary school face serious obstacles to finding a job and are unlikely to be employed in jobs with advancement potential or paying salaries large enough to support a family.

USAID/Bulgaria has requested this rapid assessment to learn what obstacles youth face regarding staying in school, what kinds of jobs they find after leaving school, what kinds of training employers that hire these youth would like the youth to have, and what kinds of training employers that do not hire these youth (employers requiring a secondary diploma) would like their employees to have. A major focus of this RA is to determine whether secondary schools meet the needs of these youth or whether vocational training outside of school would better prepare them for available jobs. The information gathered in this assessment will be used to

²⁷ These instructions assume that the local researcher is experienced in conducting interviews. If inexperienced researchers or youth are employed to conduct interviews, a more regimented survey-type questionnaire should be used to help guide the interviewer in asking questions.

design a project funded by USAID to assist youth to stay in school or to acquire skills outside of school (depending on the results of the assessment).

The RA team, therefore, will interview youth, employers, teachers, parents, and government officials.

As a local researcher, you have been hired to help the team recruit youth to participate in interviews. You will also conduct interviews with these youth in Bulgarian and provide English translations of your interviews to the Team Leader. The team leader and other members of the team are available to answer any questions you may have.

Step 1: Recruitment

Because this study focuses on out-of-school youth, interviewees should be youth – ages 15 to 24 – who did not complete secondary school.

We suggest you begin searching for youth by contacting secondary schools in your assigned area (Sofia, Varna, or Dimitrovgrad) and asking for names and contact information for school drop-outs. We will provide you with a letter from the Ministry of Education and USAID explaining the study and requesting this assistance from the school administrator.

The number of completed interviews varies by city:

- If you are responsible for Sofia, please complete 30 interviews
- Varna, 20
- Dimitrovgrad, 15

Contact these youth by telephone or through personal visits to their homes.

Once you have established contact with a youth and obtained his consent to participate in the interview, we suggest you use a *snowballing* recruitment technique: ask the youth to suggest friends who are also drop-outs who may be interested in participating.

Step 2: Administering the Surveys

First, introduce yourself and the purpose of the questionnaire. Tell the interviewee how long the questionnaire will take. Assure him that his name will not be used or reported to the government in any way.

Find a quiet place to talk where you will not be interrupted for at least 30 minutes. We prefer that you conduct the interviews in your office, not in cafes or restaurants. Try to establish a rapport with each interviewee and make him comfortable. We will provide funds so that you may offer your interviewees refreshment, such as juice, soda, water, coffee, tea, or cookies.

The questionnaire should take approximately 30 minutes to administer. Be sure to ask all the questions of each interviewee and to collect the demographic information on the Interviewee

Data Sheet (the Data Sheet is provided below). Follow the probes on the questionnaire if your interviewee is not very talkative.

In the questions that require opinions from the participant, please avoid commenting or explaining with examples that may influence the opinion. This may cause the participant to respond in a way that they think you would like to hear. Try to capture the essence of those opinions as much as possible in the exact words of the participant. Remember to write the answers immediately so as not to lose any data. One effective way of not losing control of the interview (and to verify the response) is to repeat the answer as you are writing it down.

You may hand-write or type the interviewee's responses during the interview.

Once more, at the end of the interview, thank the participant for his/her cooperation. Ask the participant if she/he has any questions about the study.

All interviews must be complete by _____.

Step 3: Reviewing the Completed Questionnaires

Read over what you have written as if you were not at the interview. Write or type any explanation or clarification that would be necessary for the team to understand the information that you wrote as a whole. Clarify all the responses so that comments are precise, taking into account the other persons that have to read and understand them afterwards.

Step 4: Analysis

Your written report to the team leader should include:

- Originals of your completed interviews.
- English translations of interviews.
- English analysis of your interviews, summarizing interviewee responses to each question and identifying areas of agreement and disagreement between interviewees.
- Interviewee Data Sheets for all interviewees.

Your report is due to the team leader no later than _____.

Step 5: Billing

We have included an itinerary and expense report. For all travel (including local travel), please complete the itinerary. The expense report should be submitted to the team leader no later than _____, with receipts attached. Your individual scope of work contains a description of the types of expenses for which we will reimburse you.

Thank you very much for your assistance with this important research project. Our success in presenting accurate information is dependent on you and we thank you for the time you have

taken to read this manual. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact the team leader at 1.202.555.5555 or teamleader@yahoo.com. We wish you the best of luck.

INTERVIEWEE DATA SHEET FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ASSESSMENT	
a. Date of Interview	
b. Interviewer Name	
c. Interviewee Information	
Age	
Gender	Female Male
Ethnic group	Bulgarian Turkish Roma Other _____
City where interviewee resides	Sofia Dimitrovgrad Varna Other _____
Housing	At home with parents With roommate Alone
Employment	Employed full-time Employed part-time Looking for work In vocational training Receiving government cash benefits (list type) _____
Household Income	Total Amount: _____ Amount youth earns through work: _____ Amount of government cash benefits: _____

ITINERARY			
Place	Date	Time	Comments
Departed			
Arrived			
Departed			
Arrived			
Departed			
Arrived			
Departed			
Arrived			
Departed			
Arrived			

EXPENSE REPORT				
Location	Date	Comments/Explanation	Receipt #	Amount

APPENDIX E

Components of a Scope of Work and a Sample Scope of Work for the Educational Assessment of Minority Youth

This Appendix provides a sample scope of work (SOW), describing an illustrative fictional assessment²⁸ of secondary education for minority youth in Macedonia. The table below summarizes the key components typically included in a scope of work, and the sample SOW that follows provides an example of how these components might be addressed. Chapter III of the manual describes scope of work development in greater detail.

Key Components in a Typical Scope of Work	
I. Background and Purpose	The sample SOW summarizes the topic to be assessed and describes the purpose of the assessment, including who will use the results and how.
II. Assessment Questions or Objectives	The sample SOW lists the major questions the assessment should answer. It also specifies the area and population to be considered and if possible, the kinds of measurement.
III. Assessment Methods	The sample SOW describes the overall assessment approach and data collection methods. The SOW provides some guidance on data collection instruments, procedures, and analysis (e.g., “consultative participatory process with all stakeholders represented”) but leaves the contractor to determine which methods will best accomplish this goal. The SOW also identifies data the Mission will provide to the team (i.e., USAID-produced documents).
IV. Composition of the Assessment Team	The sample SOW identifies the size and composition of the team. It also outlines the skills and experience required to carry out the evaluation, including the education, experience, knowledge of subject area, and language proficiency. Note that the SOW distinguishes between desired and required skills and specifies the roles of the team and client (i.e., Mission participation on the team).
V. Schedule and Major Tasks	In this part of the sample SOW, the specific tasks the team is responsible for are clearly identified. It also provides a preliminary week-by-week schedule.
VI. Deliverables	The sample SOW lists the deliverables, including when they are to be delivered, to whom and when. It also specifies what components should be in the final report.
VII. Financial Requirements and Logistical Support	Usually a SOW gives the budget for the assessment, but the sample SOW does not. This information was included in the contract awarded to the consulting firm hired to do the work. The contract, not the sample SOW, included the reporting requirements about financial matters. Like most scopes, the sample SOW identifies logistical support available from the Mission.

²⁸ The sample does not necessarily reflect a real issue being discussed in Macedonia.

SAMPLE SCOPE OF WORK

A RAPID ASSESSMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF MINORITY YOUTH IN MACEDONIA

I. BACKGROUND

A. Country Context

The poorest country of the former Yugoslavia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), was the only republic to gain independence peacefully. The Kosovo conflict had direct, immediate effects on Macedonia's society and economy. Government expenditures to cover the impact of hosting approximately 350,000 Kosovar refugees threatened the fiscal balance. Many businesses in Macedonia had to scale down operations, creating a situation of "temporary layoffs" and increased unemployment, as a result of Macedonia's dependence on Serbia as a major market and transportation corridor. Commerce disrupted by the conflict constituted 30 percent of the country's GDP (i.e., 70% of the exports were to or through the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

Macedonia's democratic institutions and practices are fragile. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are not yet effective mechanisms through which citizens can identify their interests, negotiate conflicts, and influence government policy-making. Public administration is often inefficient, and potentially undermined by the rapidly changing composition of the country's ethnic populations. Addressing ethnic tensions in Macedonia is key to sustaining its evolution as a democracy, and maintaining stability in FYR Macedonia is a key element of US government efforts in the former Yugoslavia and the Balkans.

Building a critical mass of Macedonia's key government institutions, civil society organizations, and political parties will help reduce ethnic tensions and lead to a stronger, more transparent and responsive democracy by increasing citizens' participation and awareness. Moreover, targeting secondary education will strengthen the capacity of the government institutions that specialize in human resource development and provide a cadre of future leaders and agents (teachers) in the education system. However, both language barriers and tensions caused by ethnic differences and prejudice are critical educational issues that need to be addressed more effectively at an earlier stage in the educational system. Education is not only the shortest route out of poverty; it is the shortest route out of prejudice as well. An active citizenry with increased tolerances for diversity can help resolve ethnic tensions and contribute to a generally more productive society. Assisting civil society groups and NGOs to become better organized and more active in addressing the educational needs of their communities will also help to resolve current ethnic strife.

The Problems and Context

The laws and guidelines governing education, minority rights, and the use of various languages in education are of paramount importance, both real and symbolic, in Macedonia. The current law pertaining to secondary and higher education dates from 1974, and has no allowances for minority rights and languages. The Minister of Education has said that passage of a new Law on

Secondary Education is his top priority. Present Macedonian law on secondary education has been debated for more than one year, and will soon be revised to allow for the independent operation and official recognition of minority secondary education. Ratification of the proposed legal revision is expected sometime between now and December 31, 2000, and is expected to contribute to relieving present ethnic tensions. The adoption of a new Law is the necessary first step toward solving the issue of secondary education in minority languages.

B. Purpose of the Assessment

This task order is designed to provide a rapid assessment of the educational needs of minority youth in secondary schools in Macedonia, emphasizing minority language education. Services require an understanding of education law in the Central and Eastern European region, and particularly that body of law in Macedonia, along with an understanding of the potential impact of pending changes. Knowledge of education policy; education administration; teacher training methodologies; bilingual or minority language training; university partnerships; and the politics of education, including minority rights are also required. Experience in these disciplines within the Europe and Eurasia region is critical. Recommendations will be included for a strategic approach to developing a collaborative program design in conjunction with other donors committed to supporting the education sector in Macedonia, and will take into consideration those needs or activities identified by counterpart organizations as key to institutional strengthening.

II. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

The following questions are intended to guide the rapid appraisal team. The list is not exhaustive, and it is anticipated that during the development of instrumentation additional questions will be generated, just as it is anticipated that clarifying questions will arise as experience is gained during the interviews and observations.

1. To what extent are minority language courses or schools available to youth (grades 9-12)?
2. To what extent do minority language youth require courses or schools dedicated to instruction in their native language (to what extent are students bilingual)?
3. What will be the impact of the new education law on bilingual or minority language secondary instruction?
4. To what extent are bilingual or minority language secondary teachers available?
5. What kinds of teacher training are necessary to meet the requirements of the new law?
6. What are the political implications of the new law – which minority groups oppose, support the law?
7. What are the team's recommendations for USAID/Skopje actions in the area of minority language secondary instruction?
8. What NGO or civil society groups are engaged in providing language and ethnicity training?
9. What resources do NGOs or civil society groups need to become more active in this area?

III. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The methodology to be used in conducting this evaluation will be framed by current thinking and USAID policy. It shall be a consultative participatory process with all stakeholders represented. The evaluation team is requested to submit a detailed plan of the methodology it proposes for the evaluation, bearing in mind the broad strategy and need noted above. The detailed plan of the methodology to be employed, draft instruments developed for information/data collection, the approach to analysis, and the reporting format must be submitted to USAID before the commencement of field work. The team should utilize a mix of rapid appraisal techniques, including focus groups, key informant interviews, observation, and literature review.

Existing Information Sources

USAID/Skopje has the following documents and will provide these to the team:

- Draft secondary education law
- USAID/Skopje strategic objectives related to youth and the Kosovar minority
- Prior education evaluations/assessments commissioned by USAID/Skopje or other donor agencies

IV. TEAM COMPOSITION AND PARTICIPATION

Respondents should propose an appropriate team of short-term personnel to carry out the services described in this Scope of Work.

The evaluation team will comprise a senior evaluation specialist who will act as a **team leader**. This person's qualifications might include:

- a doctorate degree in evaluation/education;
- a minimum of five years' evaluation or related experience in Eastern Europe and/or the NIS;
- knowledge of overall trends in secondary education in Eastern Europe;
- contract administration or project administration/management experience; and
- previous team supervisory experience.

The team leader will be responsible for all deliverables, manage all project personnel, lead the team, and coordinate all activities of the evaluation. The leader will also serve as a point of contact between the evaluation team and USAID.

Four additional specialists with graduate qualifications and extensive experience in content related to program focus areas, including, but not limited to:

- secondary education;
- educational planning and/or policy analysis;
- international development;
- educational evaluation;

- previous or current work in Eastern Europe with NGOs, contract organizations, and/or international donors working in Eastern Europe; and
- if not utilizing a local in-country specialist, a language requirement may be necessary for at least one team member.

All team members will have strong interpersonal skills, be proficient in English, have demonstrated excellent report writing skills, and be familiar with USAID-funded projects.

The team members will furnish their own laptop computers and be proficient in the use of Windows 2000 and Microsoft Word, Excel, and Access.

Because of the participatory and consultative nature of this assessment, an Assessment Reference Group will be selected composed of representatives of the Ministry of Education, USAID/Skopje, and other donors. This group will review drafts of the report and advise the contractor on how to proceed if contentious issues.

V. SCHEDULE AND MAJOR TASKS

Tasks

Specifically, the rapid assessment team will do the following:

- Become familiar with the legislation passed by the Government of Macedonia (GOM) affecting secondary education reform;
- Identify and discuss with key national and international stakeholders and donors their involvement and plans for supporting reform of secondary education in Macedonia;
- Conduct focus groups with minority youth and parents of youth in each oblast of Macedonia to determine their educational needs; and
- Develop an action plan for design and implementation of USAID’s support for secondary education in Macedonia.

Illustrative Schedule of Activities	
Week 1	Team arrives – meets with USAID secondary education team and Assessment Reference Committee; reviews reference documents; develops assignments/work plan for the team based on review of respective competencies; develops plans, methodology, and instruments; contacts and appointments and logistical arrangements commence. Roles and responsibilities are defined.
Weeks 2, 3	Field work is carried out.
Week 4	Interviews with appropriate officials and personnel with Ministry of Education, USAID, and NGOs. Work on the final report commences.
Week 5	Draft of final report is completed and disseminated for comment. Workshop is prepared and presented; all but team leader depart by week’s end.
Week 6	Team leader finalizes report.

VI. DELIVERABLES

The assessment team will be responsible for the following deliverables:

- **Work plan** detailing the methodology to be utilized, the data collection instruments, the approach to the analysis of the data, and the format of reporting documents. This plan will also include reference to all major activities required by the assessment.
- **Schedule** of all fieldwork and appointments insofar as possible, noting that the schedule is a fluid document.
- **Draft report** to be presented to USAID. Once approved by USAID the contractor will send copies of the revised draft report to the Ministry of Education for comments.
- **Workshop** with partners. After USAID has approved the draft report, the contractor will organize and fund a one-day workshop (with the costs charged to the contract) to present key evaluation findings and recommendations.
- **Final report** in the following format:
 - **an executive summary** concisely stating the most critical elements of the larger report;
 - **an introduction** encompassing the purpose, audience, and assessment questions;
 - **findings** pertaining to the assessment questions;
 - **conclusions** stating interpretations and judgments based on the findings;
 - **unresolved issues** addressing what remains to be done and/or unanswered questions;
 - **recommendations** to include proposed actions;
 - **lessons learned** to include broader implications for similar programs in different settings or for future activities.

Appendices to the report should contain supplementary information or more detailed information regarding certain of the evaluation activities (e.g., interview lists, statistical tables).

Ten (10) bound copies of the report should be submitted (5 in English and 5 in Macedonian), as well as the electronic versions of the report in Microsoft Word format (a version in English and a version in Macedonian).

VII. FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Financial requirements are contained in the contract.

USAID/Skopje will help arrange meetings with Ministry of Education officials and recommend lodging and in-country travel methods to the team while in-country.

APPENDIX F

Focus Group Guidelines

I. PURPOSE

These guidelines have a dual purpose: first, they provide background for Mission staff unfamiliar with the focus group research methodology and help Mission staff evaluate the types of information that focus groups can provide; and second, the guidelines can be used as an outline and reference for training inexperienced rapid assessment team members or as a resource for more experienced team members.

The guidelines, while brief and not intended as a manual to thoroughly prepare inexperienced team members, are designed to provide guidance on:

- The elements involved in the planning stages and the specific steps to prepare and organize each focus group;
- The procedures for moderating and observing focus groups; and
- The process for analyzing and reporting the results.

At the end of this Appendix, the reader will find a number of Appendices, to include planning tips, screening questionnaires, recruitment strategies, and tips for moderating and managing a focus group. These Appendices are divided roughly into functional areas of responsibility and may correspond to the division of tasks among the members of the assessment team. It is important for the program manager and the team leader to assign and carefully monitor these tasks. Open and frequent communication among these Mission and the team members will facilitate the completion of these tasks in an efficient and timely manner.

- Appendix F.1: Planning a Focus Group
- Appendix F.2: Focus Group Participant Screening Questionnaire
- Appendix F.3: Recruitment of Focus Group Participants
- Appendix F.4: Pilot Testing Focus Group Protocols
- Appendix F.5: Sample Confirmation Letter to Recruited Participants
- Appendix F.6: Moderating the Focus Group
- Appendix F.7: Agenda for Training Local Researchers in Focus Group Techniques
- Appendix F.8: Focus Group Note-Taking Tips

These illustrative tasks can be tailored to meet the specific needs of the rapid appraisal team.

II. INTRODUCTION

Quite well known in product marketing research, focus groups are also useful for researching social issues, such as evaluating a program's impact or the attitudes different stakeholders hold about an organization's policies or functioning. Focus groups are small group discussions

usually involving seven to ten participants and lasting between one and two hours. Focus groups are used for qualitative research – participants are asked a pre-determined set of questions chosen to elicit responses relevant to the topic and goals of the assessment. The focus group methodology is not useful for gathering quantitative data. At the end of the focus groups, the RA team will not be able to extrapolate findings to entire populations or report quantitative results. For example, a focus group will tell the team about the attitudes toward voting of participating youth. The group will not tell the team how many youth in Ukraine vote or how often.

Focus groups are useful for researching issues involving hard-to-reach populations, including youth. To address this task, this manual takes into account the specific social, cultural, access and logistics issues that can be particularly challenging in doing successful research with youth. (These guidelines can also be useful for working with more traditional groups of research subjects.)

III. DEVELOPING AN OVERALL PLAN

Goals and Purposes of Focus Groups

The first step in planning focus groups is defining and clarifying the specific information in which the Mission is interested and which the rapid appraisal will attempt to gather through focus groups. By defining the information the focus groups should elicit early on, the team can design appropriate questionnaires and target groups.

Appendix F.1: Planning a Focus Group (page 13) is intended for the rapid appraisal team leader. It is a general guide to the process of planning, conducting, and reporting of the focus groups.

Composition of the Group(s)

Based on the objectives of the groups, the RA team will define the target populations and the number of focus groups to be held. Each group's composition should also be determined, keeping in mind that homogeneous groups usually allow for a higher comfort level among the participants and increased participation.

Groups may be composed based on:

- Demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age, marital status, family composition, income brackets, educational level, occupation, location or residence, ethnicity, etc.).
- Relevant experiences, participation or membership in some organization or activity (e.g., beneficiaries or participants in an existing USAID program, sexually active youth, unemployed youth).
- Attitudes and opinions (e.g., belief that elections lead to real changes in government, belief in own ability to control events in life).

Geographic Areas where Focus Groups will be Conducted

The areas in which focus groups will be held are determined by the objectives of the rapid appraisal. Does it include research in both rural and urban areas? Are particular projects or programs being assessed in certain cities or villages?

Focus Group Composition

The rapid appraisal team is investigating sexual activity among youth and decides to hold four focus groups with unmarried teens in four cities with high rates of STDs:

- Girls ages 15-20
- Boys ages 15-20
- Girls ages 21-25
- Boys ages 21-25

The groups are segregated by gender and age to ensure that:

- Bravado does not affect responses
- Girls feel comfortable talking
- Responses of younger participants are not influenced by the (probable) greater experience of older participants

Time Line

The focus groups may last between one to two hours. Recruiting the participants and writing the focus group reports take significantly longer. Travel to conduct focus groups around the country will also increase the time needed.

Although the time line will be specific to the rapid appraisal, the following can serve as a starting point for planning the time frame for one or a small number of focus groups to be held at the same location²⁹:

- 1 week for planning,
- 2 weeks for recruiting,
- 1 week for conducting the groups (less if only one group is held), and
- 2 weeks for analyzing and reporting the results.

Focus Group Report (Top Line Report)

The Mission and assessment team should determine, prior to the focus groups, whether a separate focus group report is required and what it should contain. Options to consider are:

- Providing a separate focus group report with an analysis of all the groups conducted.
- Including the analysis of the focus groups in the overall final report, but not providing a

¹Focus Groups: When and How to Use Them: A Practical Guide, by Prudence Breitrose, Health Promotion Resource Center (1988), p. 10.

separate focus group report.

- Including the focus group analysis in the overall report along with a verbal briefing or transcripts of the focus groups, but not providing a separate focus group report.

Keep in mind that providing a separate focus group report will slow the team's research and completion of the overall report as the team concentrates on preparing the focus group report.

Mission Observance of Focus Groups

Where facilities permit, focus groups are often arranged so that observers can view the group unobtrusively (through the use of one-way mirrors). These facilities may not be available in the country in which the rapid appraisal is conducted. If an observation window is not available, the Mission and team should consider whether observers will attend. Observers are persons (other than the participants and focus group facilitator) who sit in the room and observe only.

Advantages of observation include allowing Mission staff or other rapid appraisal team members to get a sense of the findings of the rapid appraisal prior to the final report. In addition, an observer may also take notes for the facilitator – crucial if there is no ability to record the session or if the team is working very fast and does not want to listen to the tapes in order to make notes (a good facilitator is very busy during the group and cannot take detailed notes).

On the other hand, observation may distract participants or make them self-conscious. It can also hamper the rapport a facilitator tries to create in the room.

If observers will be present, consider:

- **Seating.** Will the observer be seated in view of the participants? If so, the observer should be seated outside of the circle of the participants (or away from the table) though this may not be possible for a note taker (if only one table or writing surface is available).
- **Introduction of the observer.** Generally speaking, introducing the observer is a good idea. Not introducing the observer can be distracting of itself (as participants wonder who the mystery person is). Note takers should be introduced and the note taking explained; otherwise, participants assured of their confidentiality will wonder why a person is writing down everything they say.

Recruiting Participants

After the Mission staff and assessment team have determined the composition of the focus groups and agreed that the targeted groups will likely yield in needed information, the next step is the recruitment of the focus group participants.

Establishing Screening Criteria and Screening Questionnaires

Once the composition of each group is decided, potential participants must be screened. A screening questionnaire will help recruiters determine whether a participant meets the profile

desired. For example, for a focus group with youth on attitudes towards voting and political participation, the team may want groups of youth with different educational levels and voting experience. The screening questionnaire, then, in addition to questions such as age, gender, or place of residence, would ask questions such as:

- What is your highest level of education?
- Are you registered to vote?
- Did you vote in the last election?

If the team is interested only in youth who completed high school but not university and have never voted, the questionnaire will be used to screen out college graduates who vote.

The following points should be kept in mind:

- Include the minimal number of questions necessary.
- Don't be too restrictive in screening (otherwise it will be difficult to recruit enough participants).
- Use two-tiered screening – broader criteria first, followed by narrower criteria (are you registered to vote? Have you ever voted? Have you ever worked on a political campaign?). Two-tiered screening allows for a fall-back position in case the more restrictive criteria yield too few participants.

Appendix F.2: Focus Group Participant Screening Questionnaire (page 15) contains a sample screening questionnaire that the assessment team could modify for its use in determining appropriate participants for the focus group.

Moderator's Guide/Focus Group Protocols

The moderator's guide (or protocol) contains the questions that will be asked of the participants during the focus group meeting. An example can be found in the Appendices.

In drafting the Moderator's Guide, the team should consider the sequencing of the questions can be an important factor affecting the flow and effectiveness of the focus group discussion and can affect research bias. Bias can occur, for instance, whenever the placement of a question affects the response to a subsequent question. Pilot testing, if possible, is a great aid here. Problems of this nature can usually be detected during pilot testing by research team staff and by participants, who may also point out possible improvements.

IV. LOGISTICS

Location

Focus groups can be held in *informal* locations, such as community meeting places, churches, schools, hotels, or a home, or at *formal* facilities designed specifically for this activity, complete with one-way mirrors for observation and professional audio and video taping capabilities. The most important consideration is: Will the chosen location be convenient and comfortable for the

participants and feasible for the research team? Considerations include child care availability for participants, disability access, access to public transportation, and cost.

Location

For youth, location of the focus group is very important, and participation is likely to be higher if the location is informal and familiar. Try schools, offices of youth-oriented NGOs, community buildings, even cafes or restaurants – if you can get a private room.

Scheduling

Scheduling of the focus group meeting times will depend on the convenience and availability of the targeted participants. For employed participants or students, weekday evenings may be most convenient. Scheduling during or very near to a meal time can be very convenient for persons with tight schedules will require that a meal be served.

Pilot testing the focus group protocols

Pilot testing, while not required, helps ensure that the focus group protocols (including set-up, seating, introduction, asking the questions, and probing) are appropriate and effective for gathering the needed information. To the extent possible, the pilot test should be conducted under conditions closely approximating the research protocol, allowing both the moderator's guide and the other aspects of the protocols to be evaluated.

Pilot testing may not be feasible in a rapid assessment due to the time constraints inherent in the research.

V. PLANNING AND PREPARATION: SECONDARY STAGE

Develop a Contingency Plan

It is always wise to have contingency plans for some of the difficulties that can be encountered, (usually at the last minute) such as:

1. Inadequate attendance due to:
 - Recruiting targets not being met,
 - Inclement weather,
 - Excessive no-shows.
2. A wrong mix of participants, due to lack of sufficient homogeneity or personality or style clashes.
3. Behavioral problems by participants (e.g., substance abuse, confrontations between rival groups or gangs).
4. Last minute unavailability of the chosen facility.

Possible solutions include rescheduling, reorganizing the composition of the groups to separate some persons into different focus groups, moving the location or even canceling the meeting. The note taker should be prepared to take over as the moderator in an emergency. Anticipating some of these potential problems can prepare you to deal with them in the most effective manner.

Materials for Focus Group

Materials generally needed for a focus group include:

- Name tags or name tents
- Tape recorder (especially if not using a note taker), along with any batteries or extension cords and blank tapes.
- Extra audio tapes
- Extra batteries
- Forms or other items, if any, to be examined by and discussed by the focus group (e.g., draft posters for an anti-drug campaign for youth)
- Refreshments

Materials that might be needed include:

- Duct tape, to cover electrical cords of the taping equipment
- Easel and flip chart paper
- Markers, permanent and white board
- Masking tape for posting flip chart papers or other items

Materials for Recruitment

The recruiter will need the following materials:

1. Contact log – to keep track of contacts and follow-ups to each potential participant.
2. Confirmation letters (refer to example in Appendices) – to be sent to persons who agree to participate. May not be appropriate for some focus groups (youth in general).
3. Map and directions to the focus group site (if needed) – printed directions can be included in the confirmation letter or given to in-person contacts.
4. Recruiting screening script – a questionnaire the recruiter can follow to ensure the right type of participant is invited (e.g., boys who have been in jail or juvenile detention in the past 12 months).

VI. RECRUITMENT

Contact Strategy

Your recruitment strategy to find adult participants for focus groups will probably be different than your youth strategy.

Adults

For adults, the following strategy might work best (this time line may vary according to the needs of the RA):

1. Two weeks before focus group, contact potential participants by telephone or in person (depending on the group).
2. One week before event, participants receive confirmation letters (or follow-up telephone calls, if the mail is unreliable).
3. One day before event, follow-up calls made to every participant.

Youth and/or Other Hard-to-Reach Populations

For hard-to-reach populations such as youth, the recruiting is usually done face-to-face and not by telephone. Consider the following recommendations:

- Use youth recruiters who have similar backgrounds or experiences as those youth you are trying to recruit.
- Use a snowballing technique: once a young person with the right profile agrees to participate, ask him to suggest friends who have similar attributes (ideas, opinions, experiences).
- Describe the research project and the focus group that is being organized, using wording that conveys why it is an *interesting* study (key to encouraging participation).
- Convey a message of respect and honor.
- Focus on the value of their contribution, not the randomness of their inclusion. Invited participants will have an opportunity to share their insight and wisdom for the benefit of others, the community, or the study.
- Choose a communication style that will be effective with the targeted population.
- Accept only solid commitments; if unsure, follow-up with a telephone call 2 days later (if possible). Take into account cultural considerations about commitments and communication. Don't make it too difficult or uncomfortable for a person to say "no" or you may get verbal confirmations from persons who have no intention of attending.

Exchange of Information

Be sure to provide the participants with all of the information they need and to get all of the information you need from the participants. However, it is equally important avoid providing information that could affect the results of the focus group discussion. Sharing too much information could make the results of the focus group inaccurate or even useless since the participants' motivations could be affected and questioned.

Here are suggestions for information that should be exchanged:

1. Information to provide to potential participants:
 - the subject of the research (limit information to avoid influencing participants)

- who will participate
- what you need from them (commitment, attendance, participation)
- incentives offered: honoraria, meals, refreshments, etc.
- date, day, time, duration and location of focus group discussion
- why they were selected and invited
- who the client is, in some cases only
- future contacts prior to meeting

2. Information to gather from persons contacted:

- information on the screening questionnaire
- contact information, day and/or evening, best time to call, mailing address
- any special needs, such as child care or disabled access

Follow-up

Follow-up is crucial to ensuring good participation in the focus group. Follow-up can include telephone calls, confirmation letters, or even personal visits, depending on the participant. Confirmation letters will work best with adults with stable home lives; telephone calls and visits will work best with youth, hard-to-reach populations, and persons whose literacy skills are low or unknown. The team should discuss who will sign the letters and whose letterhead will be used. Letters on USAID letterhead are more likely to encourage participation in the focus groups than those on letterhead from an unknown (to the participant) American company.

Tips for Successful Recruiting

1. Convey a sense that the research will be interesting and worthwhile.
2. Make the contacts personal.
3. Build on existing relationships whenever possible.
4. Use appropriate screening criteria.
 - Try to avoid mismatched participants.
 - Avoid being too restrictive.
5. Offer incentives.
6. Make participation as convenient as possible.
7. Follow up.
8. At every stage, let them know that their participation is important.

Over-recruiting

For hard-to-reach populations, such as youth, over-recruiting by about 50 percent helps guarantee adequate participation. For less hard-to-reach populations, over-recruiting by 10-20 percent may be enough. Although 50 percent over-recruitment could result in too many participants, it is always easier to turn persons away than to do last minute recruiting. Anyone turned away from the focus group should also receive any incentives promised.³⁰

²Focus Group Kit, Vol. 2: Planning Focus Groups, by David L. Morgan, Sage Publications (1998), p. 110.

See Appendix F.3 (page 17) for a series of steps that might be followed in developing strategies for recruiting focus group participants.

VII. MODERATING FOCUS GROUPS

Moderating a focus group discussion requires an excellent facilitator who is capable of quickly establishing rapport with the participants. The moderator should be skilled at drawing out the insights and perspectives of the participants in a nonjudgmental way and withholding his own personal opinions. Group dynamics need to be managed to foster discussion instead of hindering it. Dealing successfully with disruptive or dominating participants requires being firm and focused – and diplomatic.

Presented here is an overview of this important role. Further study and training are recommended for an inexperienced moderator.

Language

Focus groups should be conducted in the participants' native language, if possible. Translation – either consecutive or simultaneous – will slow the discussion and make free exchange of ideas impossible (as participants wait for everything to be translated).

Greeting Participants

The moderator or someone else who is friendly and congenial should greet the participants as they arrive and have them complete name tags. Participants can be invited to have refreshments, if these are being provided. Creating a comfortable atmosphere is important to the focus group discussion, so, if possible, the greeter should make small talk and make participants feel relaxed.

Introduction

When all (or enough) participants have arrived, begin the focus group.

1. Begin tape recording (if using).
2. Welcome and introduce moderator and any observer or note taker.
3. Explain that the discussion is being taped and why.
4. Explain confidentiality of the discussion.
5. Give a brief description of research project and focus group topic.
6. Tell them why they were selected.
7. Explain the guidelines for the discussion.
 - Participation by all; allow others to talk; all opinions welcome.
 - Mutual respect.
 - Moderator will facilitate the discussion, but not express his/her own opinions.
 - In order to end on time, the time for discussing some questions may be limited.
8. Request brief self-introductions by the participants.

Facilitating the discussion

Following the sequence of the moderator's guide, the research questions are asked of the participants, with the moderator facilitating the discussion. Some tips:

- Use a posture that expresses interest, such as leaning forward and not crossing your arms or legs.
- Eye contact and body language: focus on the person speaking.
- Use good listening skills.
- Use affirmations of active nonjudgmental listening, see, okay, uh-huh, repeating a word of phrase that a participant says, slight nodding of your head but being careful not to indicate approval or agreement).
- Request clarification when needed.
- Paraphrase to confirm understanding.
- Listen for thoughts (beliefs, opinions, attitudes, ideas), not just the words that are verbalized.
- Listen for feelings (desires, hopes, wishes, fears, anger, etc.), not just content.
- Avoid sharing personal opinions.
- Encourage candid dialogue by avoiding affirmative/negative verbal and nonverbal responses (e.g., some facial expressions, excessive nodding of the head).
- Probe for more information, such as:
 - Tell me more about that.
 - What do you mean?
 - Can you explain?
- Monitor the recording equipment, changing tapes or batteries when necessary.
- Manage the group dynamics.
- Minimize dominance from excessive talkers by focusing eye contact on other participants.
- Call on quieter persons.
- Poll group on specific items or questions if there isn't a balanced participation.
- Don't allow participants to ramble.
- When the discussion gets off on a tangent, bring the group back to the topic of the question, making a smooth transition.
- Manage the time and the flow of the discussion.
- Ease the transition between questions.
- Assure that all questions are included.
- End on time.

Conclusion

At the end of the discussion:

- Ask for and respond to any questions or needs for clarifications about any aspects of the discussion or the research project.
- Ask for feedback - this could be helpful for future focus groups.

- Express sincere appreciation for their attendance and participation.
- Explain once again how the information gathered will be used.
- Be careful not to make any commitments that can't be followed through, such as providing results of the study, unless this can and will be done.
- Thank each participant individually as they leave.

VIII. REPORTS

Initial Reflections

The moderator should – as soon as possible after each focus group – write down her initial impressions of the discussion, including:

- The most widely held views, opinions, ideas and themes.
- Any surprises or differences from expectations or from previous focus groups.
- Particular quotes that are revealing or should be used in the RA report.
- Interpretations of the group's responses.
- Any ideas for changes or improvements for subsequent focus groups.

Top Line Reports

Typically, the moderator or note taker will prepare a report (called a top line report) for each focus group. This top line report summarizes the focus group discussion and analyzes responses in terms of the major questions being investigated in the RA. However, individual top line reports will likely be too time-consuming for the team. Instead, the moderator should write her initial impressions, and, as with all data collection methods used in the RA, the team should meet regularly to discuss the information being gathered.

When top line reports are prepared, they typically include these components:

1. Background, goals and purpose of using focus group(s) for the RA
2. Methodology
 - Profile/composition of the group(s), recruitment specifications
 - How participants were recruited
3. Findings
 - The key points raised and opinions expressed, and what portion of the group felt this way
 - Use of quotes, as appropriate
 - Summary of the results
4. Observations
 - Group dynamics and how it may have affected the outcome
 - Personal observations
5. Recommendations, if appropriate

APPENDIX F.1: PLANNING A FOCUS GROUP

Development of an Overall Plan

- Review the goals and purposes of the assessment
- Decide on # and size of groups
- Choose geographic area(s) where groups will be held
- Establish time line
- Analyze and list required resources
 - Human
 - Physical
 - Financial
- Choose or develop report formats

Personnel Decisions

- Make staffing decisions and assign responsibility
 - briefing or training of the RA team lead fieldworker/fieldwork coordinator
 - logistics/planning/preparation
 - recruiter(s)
 - support staff/hosting for the focus group meeting
 - moderator
 - observer/note taker
 - video or audio recording
 - transcription of notes
 - analysis and reporting of focus group results
 - top line reports (if any)
 - consolidation of top line reports from different focus groups
- Establish systems or procedures for monitoring and supervision of RA team staff
 - establish and use job descriptions or scopes of work (necessary if hiring local researchers to conduct the focus groups)
 - review with each person his assigned tasks, responsibilities, expectations, deliverables
 - establish lines of and frequency of communication
 - review checklists, make any necessary adjustments, distribute and discuss with each member of the research team
 - review timelines with each person

Briefing and Training of Personnel

(This may not be necessary if the rapid appraisal team conducts the focus groups itself without hiring additional local staff.)

- Analyze the needs for meetings, briefings and/or training
- Develop a meeting or training plans
 - identify the participants
 - identify facilitator(s) for the training
 - decide on location, dates, times, and duration
 - decide on content and materials needed
 - prepare a detailed agenda, specifying the activities and how they will be carried out
- Prepare for meetings or training
 - contact all persons to be involved

- confirm location
 - prepare, develop and assemble needed materials
- Conduct the meeting or training

Composition of the Group(s)/Profiles

- Develop profiles, recruitment specifications and screening criteria
 - for full set of focus groups
 - for each group
- Instrumentation
 - Profiles (refer to examples provided)
 - Screening questionnaires (refer to examples provided)
 - Moderator's guide (refer to examples provided)

Logistics

- Select the facility to be used
- Make arrangements for food and drinks
- Establish incentives
- Establish focus group meeting dates and times
- Assess child care needs and availability
- Make lists and check availability of the materials and equipment needed for recruitment and conducting the focus groups (refer to Appendices #4 and #6 for more detailed lists of required materials and equipment).

Pilot Testing Questions

- Use separate checklists for planning and conducting a pilot test
- (Manual Appendices __ and __ 6 may be adapted)
 - Develop plan (location, timing, recruitment specifications, etc.)
 - Recruit participants
 - Conduct pilot focus group
- Analyze the appropriateness, effectiveness, sequencing and timing of the questions
- Make any adjustments necessary to moderator's guide

Contingency Planning

- Develop a plan “B” to address potential challenges, such as:
 - The need to replace staff
 - Recruitment difficulties and delays
 - Low turnout for the focus groups
 - The “wrong” mix of participants
 - Behavioral problems by participants
 - Last minute unavailability of the chosen facility
 - Weather-related delays

Confirmation of Logistics/Final Preparations

- Confirmation of participant attendance
- Confirmation of logistical arrangements confirmed
- Necessary materials and equipment acquired

**APPENDIX F.2:
FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE**

Interviewer Name: _____
Date: _____
Location: _____
Group Location: _____
Group Number: _____

SAMPLE SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Good morning (afternoon, evening). My name is _____. I am a consultant for USAID, the U.S. government agency that provides funds for programs that assist children, youth, and families around the world. We are conducting a series of discussions with young people in the community. In these discussions, we informally talk about employment opportunities for youth in this community. All the information shared in the discussions is strictly confidential. If we determine that you are eligible to participate, we will pay you \$____ for your participation. The group discussions last approximately 90 minutes. May I ask you a few questions to determine your eligibility?

INSTRUCTIONS: *If the person accepts, ask question #1.*

1. How old are you? ____ (enter age and complete check box)
 - under 15 (TERMINATE)
 - 15-24
 - 25+ (TERMINATE)

2. GENDER:
 - Female
 - Male

3. Are you employed?
 - Yes – full time (TERMINATE)
 - Yes – part time (TERMINATE)
 - No – in school, not looking for work (TERMINATE)
 - No – in school and looking for work
 - No – looking for work
 - No – not looking
 - No – cannot work (disability) (TERMINATE)

4. Did you complete secondary school?
 - Did not complete secondary school
 - Completed secondary school (TERMINATE)

5. Have you ever attended one of the Ministry of Education’s vocational training institutes?

- Yes (OK for Group 1)
- No (OK for Group 2)

May I have your phone number so that I can contact you to confirm your participation?

Home phone:

Work phone:

Best time to reach you by phone:

Local street address:

Any other phone /address (reference) where we can reach you?

SCREENER NOTES (*i.e., Assessment of qualifications for participation*)

DISPOSITION

Qualified for FG

Qualified For In-Depth Interview

Disqualified

MADE CONTACT TO CONFIRM ON (DATE) _____/_____/_____

APPENDIX F.3: RECRUITMENT OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Developing a Recruitment Strategy

- Review the goals and purpose of the RA
- Review recruitment specifications
 - Profiles
 - Screening questionnaires
- Select source(s) for locating focus group participants
 - Contact key persons in the community to:
 - inform them of the research study and enlist their support
 - discuss social and cultural issues of recruiting target group
 - discuss the political arena as it may affect recruiting or conducting the focus groups
 - request referrals, leads or suggestions for recruiting
 - request permission to contact member of their organizations
 - Be sure that all persons nominating or recruiting candidates are clear about the recruitment specifications and exactly what information can be shared with the participants, to avoid any bias
 - Attend community events, such as fairs and open meetings
 - Become familiar with the community, walk the streets, talk to people you meet
 - Network (follow-up leads, get more, inform key persons in the community of your progress)
- Decide on the contact plan (face-to-face, phone and/or mail communication)
- Review decisions on logistics of the focus group plan to be able to communicate this to potential participants
 - Dates, times and locations for the focus group(s)
 - Incentives offered (honoraria, food, etc.)
 - Child care availability and disability access
- Schedule recruiting activities and decide on locations

Preparation for Recruitment Activities

- Prepare recruiting scripts (what you will say to potential participants)
 - be clear about what information needs to be included
 - be sure that no extra information is given that could bias the study
- Discuss resources needed for recruiting activities or any other concerns with the lead fieldworker or office liaison
- Prepare or acquire needed materials
 - contact log
 - confirmation letters
 - map and directions to focus group site

Securing Participation

- Make initial contacts and invitations
 - use agreed upon recruiting script as a guide
 - convey relevance of the study
 - focus on the value of their contribution
 - choose a communication style that will be effective with the targeted population
 - use screening questionnaires

- use contact log
- be sure that all persons are clear that all participants must be confirmed (screened) by the lead fieldworker or lead recruiter to avoid having uninvited guests who haven't been adequately screened and to avoid excessive attendance
- if recruiting is done face-to-face, immediately deliver a confirmation letter to those screened persons that accept the invitation
- Follow-up on undecided persons
- Contact additional persons to complete recruitment targets
- Follow-up to confirm participation
 - send confirmation letter (if using) one week in advance of focus group to those who haven't already received one
 - make reminder calls to confirmed participants (day/night before)

APPENDIX F.4: PILOT TESTING OF FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS

Since pilot testing parallels most of the steps for planning and conducting the focus groups, this Appendix is simply a composite of the other Appendices. An effective and recommended alternative to using this list would be to make copies of the other Appendices and use them exclusively for this phase of the study. Then, validate or revise the moderator's guide, as included in this Appendix.

Planning and Preparation

- Choose geographic area for pilot testing
- Make personnel decisions
 - fieldwork coordinator
 - planning/preparation/logistics
 - recruitment of participants
 - moderator
 - observer/note taker
- Decide on incentives to be offered
- Decide on recruitment specifications
- Select date, time and location
- Determine need for and availability of child care and disability access

Recruiting of Participants

- Develop a plan
 - Review the goals and purpose of the research project
 - Review recruitment specifications
 - Select source(s) for locating focus group participants
 - decide on appropriate and effective access to target population(s)
 - contact key persons in the community
 - if lists are used, decide on how names will be selected from the list in an unbiased manner
 - Decide on the contact plan (phone, mail and/or face-to-face communication)
 - Schedule recruiting activities and decide on locations for this
- Prepare for Recruitment Activities
 - Prepare invitation scripts as guides for recruiters
 - Discuss resources needed for recruiting activities with lead fieldworker or office liaison
 - Prepare or acquire needed materials, including confirmation letters
- Securing participation
 - Make initial contacts and invitations
 - Follow-up on undecided persons
 - Contact additional persons to complete recruitment targets
 - Follow-up to confirm participation
 - Send confirmation letters or make telephone calls

Conduct Pilot Focus Group

- Set up and preparation
- Moderating

- Observing/note taking
- Debriefing

Analyze Appropriateness of Moderator's Guide

- Validate the questions that functioned well
- Correct language, as needed
- Validate or correct the sequencing of the questions
- Revise the approximate time needed for each question
- Develop further probing cues, as necessary
- Make any other necessary adjustments of the moderator's guide or any other facet of the protocols (seating, receiving the participants, etc.)
- Make notes for briefing other members of the research team on the results of the pilot testing and the lessons learned

**APPENDIX F.5:
SAMPLE CONFIRMATION LETTER TO RECRUITED PARTICIPANTS**

Date _____

Dear _____

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our focus group discussion on dd/mm/yy at am/pm. The group discussion will take place at the offices of the Institute for Social Research, B. Dmitrovka 18/6.

As we mentioned earlier, you will receive \$20.00 for participating. We also invite you to join us for some refreshments, as it is our own way of thanking you for participating.

We would like to clarify again that the purpose of this focus group discussion is only to obtain your opinions. You will not be sold anything, nor will you be contacted in any way as a result of this meeting. You will be one of about twelve people participating in this discussion.

While these small group discussions are informal, enjoyable and interesting to people like you, they make up a very important part of our research. We depend upon your attendance for the success of our study. We invite only a limited number of people to this group, so we urge you to attend, and we request that you please arrive at our office 15 minutes before the discussion is scheduled to begin. We look forward to meeting with you. If not able to attend, please call the Institute for Social Research at (095) 555-55-60 (ask for Oleg).

Sincerely,

USAID Project Manager

Enclosure: map (if necessary)

(Note: If confirmation letters are sent to the recruited participants, they should be translated into the native language.)

APPENDIX F.6: MODERATING THE FOCUS GROUP

Prior Preparation

- Review the goals and purpose of the research study
- Review the recruitment specifications and the profile of the group
- Review the moderator's guide thoroughly
 - understand the purpose and objective of each question
 - think of issues that might come up or might need probing
 - estimate/allocate amount of time for each question
- Become familiar with any written materials to be used during the focus group, such as examples of forms that will be examined and discussed by the focus group
- Identify and acquire any additional technical knowledge needed to successfully guide the discussion
- Discuss resources needed or any other concerns with the RA team leader
- Discuss procedures and assignment of tasks and responsibilities with the observer, to include items on the checklists and also
 - maximum and minimum # of participants
 - at what point latecomers will not be allowed to join the group
 - how to handle persons that cannot be included (latecomers, alternates, uninvited or disruptive persons, others)
 - Prepare or acquire needed materials, coordinating these efforts with the observer or other team members (refer to Appendix #6 for note takers for a detailed list)

Set-up and Preparation of the Focus Group Facility

- Verify or assist with:
 - set up of audio or video taping equipment
 - arrange seating
 - verify food and drink arrangements and set-up
 - set up materials
 - become familiar with the facility and address any pending issues: heating, cooling or ventilation, noise interference, access to phones or emergency services, bathrooms, availability of a trash container
- Confirm that the note taker is using the detailed checklist for set-up tasks and address any areas of concern
- Greet and welcome participants as they arrive
- If necessary, rearrange the seating pattern of the participants to permit optimal group dynamics

Moderating

- Operate and monitor recording equipment (this task may be done by the note taker)
- Introduction- welcome and overview of the event, to include:
 - introduce moderator and note taker
 - explain that the discussion is being taped and why
 - discuss confidentiality
 - give a brief description of research project and focus group topic
 - tell them why they were selected
 - provide guidelines for the discussion
 - participation by all, all opinions welcome
 - mutual respect

- moderator will facilitate the discussion, but not share his/her opinions
- Brief self-introductions by the participants
- Focus group discussion
 - using the moderator’s guide, ask the questions
 - use good listening skills (affirmations, paraphrase, request clarification, probe, etc.)
 - manage group dynamics, encouraging participation by all
 - manage the time and flow
 - assure that all questions are included
 - end on time
- Conclude the meeting, thanking the participants
 - Respond to any questions
 - Don’t make any commitments that can’t be followed through
 - Individually thank each participant
 - Distribute incentives

Analysis and Reporting

- Debrief with the note taker
- Write up initial impressions, with the assistance of the note taker

APPENDIX F.7: SAMPLE AGENDA FOR TRAINING LOCAL RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS GROUP RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES

This sample agenda is for a training session to train local researchers in focus group recruitment techniques. The training can be condensed to about two hours for more experienced staff who may only need a review or a briefing on the procedures and instrumentation for the rapid appraisal. For staff with less experience, it can be lengthened to allow for a more experiential and thorough treatment of each of the elements of recruiting.

Location: _____
Facilitator: _____
Date/time: 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Objectives

At the end of this session the participants will:

- 1) Be able to briefly describe the rapid appraisal.
- 2) Be able to describe and outline the purpose and procedures for focus groups.
- 3) Be able to define recruitment specifications, quota data charts, screening criteria, and screening questionnaires.
- 4) Be able to name at least 3 kinds of sources to locate potential participants.
- 5) Have developed preliminary screening questionnaires.
- 6) Be able to name and describe at least three different contact strategies.
- 7) Have practiced recruitment screening interviews.
- 8) Have established group norms for training and recruiting as a team.

Handouts

- 1) Preliminary screening questionnaires
- 2) Screening scripts
- 3) List of research team norms

Flow of Activities

8:35 - 8:40 AM	Greetings and presentation of objectives
8:40 - 9:05 AM	Introductions and team building
9:05 - 9:10 AM	Research team norms (how team works together, responsibility of recruiters, which team member to contact with questions and completed screening questionnaires)
9:10 - 9:15 AM	Overview of the RA
9:15 - 9:30 AM	Description of focus groups (purpose, procedures, and staffing)

9:30 - 9:40 AM	Composition of the groups (target participants for each group, why these participants, link to RA purpose)
9:40 - 10:25 AM	Locating potential participants. Participatory exercise: Give examples of target groups and have the group suggest possible strategies for locating these participants.
10:25 - 10:45 AM	Break
10:45 - 11:10 AM	Discussion of screening questionnaires and how to use them. Participatory exercise: Practice in teams.
11:10 - 11:55 AM	Contact strategy and screening scripts (where to locate potential participants and how to explain the screening questionnaire to participants)
11:55 - 12:15 PM	Checklists and Review (provide checklists and discuss them)
12:15 - 12:25 PM	Other issues (scheduling and other questions)
12:25 - 12:30 PM	Wrap-up

APPENDIX F.8: FOCUS GROUP NOTE-TAKING TIPS

Prior Preparation

- Review the goals and purpose of the research study
- Review the recruitment specifications and the profile of the group
- Review moderator's guide thoroughly
 - understand the purpose and objective of each question
 - discuss with the moderator approximate time allocated for each question
- Identify and acquire any additional technical knowledge needed to follow the discussion
- Discuss procedures and assignment of tasks and responsibilities with the moderator, to include items on the checklists and also
 - maximum and minimum # of participants
 - at what point latecomers will not be allowed to join the group
 - how to handle persons that cannot be included (latecomers, alternates, uninvited persons, others)
- Assure recording equipment will be available (often done by moderator)
 - confirm source and availability for dates and times needed
 - decide whether back-up taping equipment will be included
 - investigate need for extension cords at the facility
 - pick up and/or pack
 - get familiar with its operation and test it
- Acquire or prepare needed materials - guarantee availability on time
 - honoraria envelopes ready for disbursements (if providing cash incentives)
 - honoraria receipts prepared (if necessary)
 - name tags or name tents
 - audio tapes, and extras
 - batteries, and extras
 - forms or other items or materials to be examined by and discussed by the focus group
 - refreshments or food
 - depending on need:
 - duct tape, to cover electrical cords, if necessary
 - easel and flip chart paper
 - markers, permanent and white board
 - masking tape for display of any item that is part of the discussion or for posting flip chart papers

Set-up and Preparation of the Facility

- Coordinate preparation work with the moderator and address any areas of concern
- Get familiar with the facility and address any pending issues
 - check location of bathrooms and be sure that they are unlocked
 - check access to phones or emergency services
 - address physical space considerations, such as heating or ventilation, noise interference, availability of a trash container
- Arrange seating in a circle or around a table
 - assure the best eye contact between participants and between participants and the moderator
 - place chair for note taker outside of circle, if possible

- Set up audio taping equipment (often done by the moderator)
 - be sure the location is easily accessible and to the observer
 - cover extension cords with duct tape, if necessary
 - test the equipment, be sure tape is rewound completely
 - place extra tapes and spare batteries in convenient location
- Confirm arrangements and set-up for food, drinks and serving needs
- Materials ready
 - place name tags or name tents nearby for easy access
 - check that honoraria envelopes are ready for distribution
 - place note-taking materials at observer's chair/desk
 - set up other materials, (markers, flip charts, handouts, etc.)
 - Greet and welcome participants as they arrive

Note-taking

- Greet and brief latecomers
- Follow agreed-upon strategy regarding latecomers, alternates, others
- Operate and monitor recording equipment (this task is often done by the moderator)
- Distribute to the participants any materials needed for the discussion (e.g., examples of publicity)
- Take notes (sample note taking form provided)
 - key points
 - complementary and contrasting views
 - summary of discussion
 - indicate for each of the above what portion of the group expressed similar opinions
 - clearly expressed or notable quotes
 - nonverbal activity
- Take note of any question or subject that is in the moderator's guide but may have not been addressed and inform the moderator at an appropriate time
- Distribute incentives, if any, at the end
- Debrief with the moderator

SAMPLE NOTE-TAKING/REPORTING FORM FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Location (city/community) _____ Date _____

Moderator _____ Observer _____

Composition of the group _____ Number of participants ___ F ___ M

Additional notes:

Question #1: Content of the question should be filled in here.	
<u>Key Points/Summary of the Discussion</u>	<u>Key Quotes</u>
<u>Comments/Observations/Non-verbal Communication</u>	
Question #2: Content of the question should be filled in here.	
<u>Key Points/Summary of the Discussion</u>	<u>Key Quotes</u>
<u>Comments/Observations/Non-verbal Communication</u>	
Question #3: Content of the question should be filled in here.	
<u>Key Points/Summary of the Discussion</u>	<u>Key Quotes</u>
<u>Comments/Observations/Non-verbal Communication</u>	

APPENDIX G

Illustrative Interview Protocol for Stakeholders and Informants

(Please note that these are sample questions centered on HIV/AIDS issues and are not intended to be exhaustive).

I. FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

A. What kinds of programs/initiatives does the Ministry currently have that address HIV/STD prevention for youth? Describe each program.

Ask for data on:

- Numbers served
- Areas of country served/targeted
- Types of interventions
- Cost of programs
- Any cost-sharing between Ministries
- Any donor funds?
- Which donors?

B. Why were these programs undertaken? What was the impetus?

C. How effective do you think these programs have been in reducing HIV/STDs in youth? Have any evaluations been conducted or statistics gathered on the problem?

D. What are the Ministry's plans for the future regarding HIV/STD prevention programs for youth?

E. If USAID were to design an HIV/STD prevention program for youth, what do you think the priorities for the program should be? What kind of program is most needed?

F. Which category youth should the program target? (Probe: age, gender, minority youth, rural or urban.)

II. FOR YOUTH

A. I've heard that there are high rates of HIV/AIDS infection among young people in this area. Do you think that is true?

B. Why do you think the rate of HIV infection here is high? Or low?

C. What do you think should be done about the infection rate?

- D. How do you think young people would best receive prevention messages? (Probe: TV or other media advertising, posters in government or community buildings, articles in newspapers about the problem, in-school programs.)
- E. Where do most young people in this area get their health care? (Probe: government-run hospitals or clinics, private hospitals or clinics, local healers or herbal medicine practitioners.)
- F. What do the youth you know who are HIV positive receive health care?
- G. What do you think is the biggest problem facing HIV positive youth?

III. FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

- A. What is the situation facing youth ages 15-24 regarding HIV infection in this area?
- B. How many HIV positive youth are treated by your clinic, hospital?
- C. What kinds of services does your clinic/hospital provide? Are these services adequate to meet the needs? What kinds of services would you offer if money, time, etc. were not issues?
- D. Do you have data/statistics on infections (country-wide or area-specific)?
(Get any information available, especially regarding age, gender, geographic locations.)
- E. What kinds of programs or assistance are available to HIV positive youth (sponsored by the government, donors, or NGOs)?
- F. Do youth take advantage of these programs? Why or why not?
- G. How could the programs be improved? Do they serve everyone who needs them?
- H. Are there needs that are not currently being filled by these programs? What are the priority needs for HIV positive youth?

APPENDIX H

Sample Report Outline

The rapid appraisal team's final report to the Mission should, at the minimum, follow an outline similar to the illustrative outline presented here.

Title Page

The title page should include:

- title, date
- author(s), author(s) affiliation
- contract name, contract number
- to whom the report is submitted, from whom the report is submitted

Table of Contents

- including page numbers, list of appendices, and list of tables or figures

List of Acronyms

- spell out for the reader the full wording represented by the acronym.

Acknowledgments (optional)

- It is customary to thank those who have been helpful during the assessment.

Executive Summary

- brief (2-3 page) summary of the main findings and recommendations

Introduction

- background and purpose of the assessment

Assessment Objectives and Methodology

- objectives of the assessment (key questions answered)
- methodology(ies), locations visited
- activities undertaken

Findings

- list significant findings
- list problems and/or principal constraints

Recommendations

- follow up action recommended

Annexes or Appendices

- protocols, instruments used
- persons, groups interviewed
- bibliography

APPENDIX I

Recommended Reading / Bibliography

Aguirre International. (2001) Freedom Support Act University (FSAU) Evaluation Primer. Washington, DC: Aguirre International.

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