

Terms of Reference

Final Review of Youth in Action program

1. Program to be Reviewed

Program Name	Youth in Action
Program Location	Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda
Program Budget	\$39.8 million
Program Start	1 October 2012
Program Goal	To sustainably improve the socio-economic status of vulnerable young people, both boys and girls, in five countries in Africa
Implementing Agency and Partners	Save the Children International; Save the Children Canada; Save the Children US; Save the Children Denmark; Save the Children Country Offices in Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Uganda; Search Institute; Souktel; and in-country partners
Work Requested	Final Review
Timeframe	1 November 2017 – 31 July 2018
Report Deadline	31 May 2018 (Draft); 31 July 2018 (Final)
Budget	USD 150 000 (Maximum – cost effectiveness will be a selection factor)

2. Background

Save the Children (SC) is the world’s leading development and humanitarian agency for children and youth. SC comprises 28 members and Save the Children International (SCI), who operate in partnership on child-focused issues in more than 120 countries worldwide. Together, the network is internationally recognized for its capacity to mobilize communities, reach disadvantaged children and families, develop technical expertise, and foster effective communication between stakeholders in the areas of health and nutrition, education, child protection, food security, and livelihoods, as well as in emergency humanitarian response. **Save the Children Canada** (SC Canada) is a member of the SC network. SC Canada has over 30 years of experience successfully managing institutional grants.

Youth in Action (YiA) is a six-year program implemented by SC in partnership with The MasterCard Foundation (MCF). YiA aims to improve the socio-economic status of 39,850 out-of-school, rural youth, girls and boys, ages 12 to 18, in Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Uganda.

a) *Programming Vision and Approach*

YiA’s central vision is to ensure that quality, gender sensitive, age-appropriate learning and livelihoods approaches for vulnerable youth are implemented and tested in multiple countries.

YiA’s interventions are grounded in a **Theory of Change** (TOC), which organizes the program’s interventions, assumptions, and outcomes, and frames its approach to activities and learning. The TOC includes three programmatic pillars: **Youth Learn**, **Youth Act**, and **Youth Connect**, and two cross-cutting themes: **Participation** and **Partnerships**. The model allows YiA to support male and female youth to identify and explore livelihood opportunities through a combination of non-formal educational and practical learning experiences. For the majority of program participants, these opportunities are grounded in agricultural value chains or agri-business.

To support **Youth Learn**, YiA uses participatory and experiential methods to build on youth's knowledge, perspectives, and experiences in order to help youth:

- Build foundational academic skills, including literacy and numeracy;
- Acquire technical skills, such as financial literacy and market analysis; and
- Improve transferable skills for work readiness, such as time management.

Under the **Youth Act** pillar, youth begin to apply their newly gained skills. YiA supports youth to:

- Engage in a livelihood initiative, such as apprenticeship or enterprise, or return to school;
- Engage in structured opportunities to further their agency; and
- Navigate formal and informal market networks where youth can be the most viable.

The **Youth Connect** pillar recognizes that successful youth are exposed to an array of services and networks that help them leverage opportunities. YiA helps youth connect by:

- Enabling access to financial and community resources to support livelihood initiatives;
- Promoting savings and access to credit by working with financial service providers; and
- Connecting youth with experts and local artisans through mentorship and advisory groups.

In addition to strengthening youth's capacities, YiA believes that it is essential to foster an enabling environment, in which youth are supported in livelihoods initiatives and where gender barriers are eliminated or reduced. To do so, we work through **partnerships**, including families, communities, financial institutions, actors in local markets, and government institutions to create and maintain sustainable systems. Further, in our programming, we seek to ensure the full and equal **participation** of boys and girls so that all youth, regardless of their gender, are able to actively engage with YiA.

More information about the YiA program can be reviewed at: <http://youthinaction.savethechildren.ca/>.

b) *Historical Program Developments*

YiA started on 1 October 2012, which closely coincided with the launch of SCI as the new Save the Children governing framework. This timing had a significant impact on the rollout of YiA. The effect of organizational change on YiA has since been extensively examined and will not be a focus of this review.

YiA was originally planned to be implemented for five years, targeting 44,700 youth. In the latter part of Year 2, MCF and SC agreed to extend the program to a sixth year to allow for more effective programming and to ensure adequate time for all youth cohorts to work through the 10-month program cycle. This decision was made due to initial delays in the program's design and implementation, and the ability to roll-out the full program, including cash grants. At this time, MCF and SC also agreed to reduce total program participants to 39,850 youth (50 percent female / 50 percent male). These delays have since been addressed.

In addition to the timeframe and number of targeted youth, YiA has undergone a number of other programmatic changes. In particular, over the course of its existence, YiA has contextualized many of its components in order to adapt to on-the-ground realities in each of the five program countries.

In January 2016, YiA underwent a Mid-term Evaluation (MTE). The final review is meant to build on recommendations from the MTE, for example, developing and utilizing a TOC; improving the guidelines and strategies used in the selection phase; integrating gender equality considerations; strengthening the livelihoods approach; and intensifying communication efforts.

c) *Program Partners*

While SC Canada is accountable for the overall management of the program, YiA is implemented through a range of partnerships, including technical expertise from SC Denmark and SC US, as well as SCI management based out of Nairobi and Egypt, and on-the-ground knowledge from SC Country Offices (COs) in Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Uganda. YiA also involves two external partners: Search Institute (based in the US), and Souktel (based in the US and Palestine). Further, the majority of YiA programming in each program country is implemented by local partners working with youth participants.

3. Purpose and Scope of the Final Review

The final review will provide an independent assessment of YiA's achievements, strengths, and weaknesses, from its inception to conclusion, with a particular emphasis on **Program Design, Program Assumptions, and Program Sustainability**. The primary audience is internal, namely: SC, MCF, and program partners. The review will build on findings from YiA's MTE and assess subsequent program alterations. The final review will inform MCF's work in education and learning, and youth livelihoods, as well as SC's global youth programming and youth engagement strategies.

SC and MCF envision this review as a platform to understand what YiA can tell us about how successful youth livelihoods initiatives need to be structured. The review will provide insight into the opportunities and challenges that stem from working in rural, often remote, African environments. It will track how transitions and decisions made in each YiA country have impacted youth and the program. Similarly, the review will show how program assumptions led to intended and unintended outcomes. Finally, the review will address key findings and recommendations from the MTE and any changes that occurred to the program as a result.

In particular, the review team will be expected to use a gender lens throughout the entire review, where applicable considering the differences between how girls and boys experienced the program. SC and MCF are interested in understanding what lessons YiA can provide for how to best incorporate gender mainstreaming approaches in youth livelihoods programming.

YiA has conducted extensive formative and summative research in all five program countries. The review team is not expected to replicate or formally validate existing research. Instead, the team should review the available research and ensure that the final review provides a clear picture of how well this research has helped SC and MCF understand how YiA has impacted the lives of youth. All completed YiA research will be provided to the review team at the start of the contract.

This final review is **not** meant to retrace the steps of the MTE. The final review should build on the MTE without replicating it. Through the MTE and other mechanisms, SC and MCF have already developed a sound understanding as to the challenges and opportunities faced in operationalizing this type of large and complex program across diverse focus areas. Therefore, except as it relates to specific MTE recommendations, SC's operations and governance structure should not be reviewed in-depth.

4. Objectives of the Final Review

The overall objective of the final review is to capture lessons learnt and build on YiA's experiences, in order to fully understand how decisions and transitions made during the program can be utilized to implement successful future youth livelihoods programs.

Specifically, the final review will:

- Provide an independent assessment of the program, including strengths and weaknesses, as experienced by staff, partners, and participants, to uncover obstacles or barriers.
- Assess how findings and recommendations from the MTE impacted the program
- Identify discrepancies, if any, between YiA’s expected direction and outputs and actual occurrences.
- Establish plausible links between YiA inputs and results (outputs, outcomes and impacts).
- Indicate future adjustments and changes that could ensure greater success for young people participating in similar programs.
- Give a perspective on how well YiA’s qualitative and quantitative research has helped SC and MCF to understand how the program has impacted the lives of youth.

The final review will focus on YiA’s **Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability**,¹ while incorporating a strong **gender lens** through the entire review.

The review team should respond to the questions below, which may be refined and further developed during the inception phase of the final review, following consultation with SC and MCF.

Review of Program Design	
<p>Relevance</p> <p>(The extent to which the program is suited to the priorities of the target group and the recipients.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How relevant were the program model adaptations that were made in each of the five countries over the course of YiA’s existence? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How closely aligned were country-specific program interventions, especially the focus on the agricultural value chain, with the scope and scale of girls and boys’ needs in the relevant country? ○ How closely linked were local interventions to the social (including gender), educational, and economic context of each country’s public, private, and non-profit sector? • How relevant is the program, in its current iteration, for the younger target group (age 12–14) in Egypt and Uganda?
<p>Efficiency</p> <p>(The program’s outputs in relation to the inputs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What strategies did the program use to become more efficient over the course of its existence? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What further opportunities exist to improve program efficiency? • What lessons were learned in how to provide efficient youth programming in very rural areas in the five countries?
Review of Program Assumptions	
<p>Effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the available YiA research, how effective was the program in achieving its intended outcomes?

¹ The definitions of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability provided in the chart below are adapted from the OECD’s Development Cooperation Directorate (DAC)’s Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance. See: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

(The extent to which an activity attains its objectives.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively was the program able to tailor its livelihoods pathways to each country’s context, including considering the needs of both girls and boys in each country? • How accurately does the Theory of Change reflect the program’s design and implementation? • How effectively was the youth-led cash transfer process implemented within YiA? • Under what contexts was mentorship most successful within YiA?
<p>Impact</p> <p>(The totality of effects produced by an intervention.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What unintended outcomes (positive and negative) did the program have on the enabling environment around the youth, i.e., youth’s family and community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ How did these outcomes affect girls and boys differently? • What impact has the program had on how youth make decisions about their livelihood development? • What is the potential impact of YiA research and data collection to inform future programming and models?
Review of Program Sustainability	
<p>Sustainability</p> <p>(Whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after program completion.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has there been policy or programmatic take-up of the YiA approach (or elements of) at national or district levels in country or within SC as a whole? • What steps could have been taken to ensure YiA components were more extensively adopted or adapted by program partners, within SC, and by governments in YiA countries? • How has YiA been able to leverage the strengths and challenges with its in-country and international partnerships?

5. Methodology

SC and MCF seek the most robust review approach appropriate for the scope of the program and audience, without duplicating the work that has been done in the MTE or through YiA’s own research. Evidence will be from primary sources (i.e., interviews, focus groups, beneficiary stories, etc.) and secondary sources (i.e., program documents, reports, and other YiA research and evaluation material), therefore utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodology.

The review team is expected to use a gender lens throughout the entire review. The final review team is also expected to engage with YiA’s existing operations and programmatic research. Strong proposals will show how the review team will address these two key points of the final review.

As the review will focus on the YiA program as a whole, field visits will be required in all five countries. In consultation with SC and MCF, the review team will determine which programming locations within each of those countries will be visited. The review team will be required to submit a proposal with at least two researchers who can visit multiple countries at the same time.

a) *Primary Data Collection and Consultation*

The review will provide adequate room for consultation and involvement of a broad range of stakeholders from **SC, YiA partners**, and other in-country **stakeholders**. It will be necessary to talk with YiA beneficiary youth in order to truly answer the research questions.

SC stakeholders include individuals from YiA country teams, as well as SC country offices, including:

- Relevant CO staff in the five countries
- The Program Technical Team, and
- Additional relevant SC staff and leadership across the SC network.

YiA partners include a wide variety of other individuals, such as:

- MCF staff
- In-country YiA partners, including facilitators and Master Trainers, and
- Staff from Souktel and the Search Institute.

Finally, the review team will explore the reflections of other in-country **stakeholders**, potentially including:

- Parents and guardians of beneficiary youth,
- Community members and community leaders,
- Key youth leaders and youth representatives,
- Private sector partners including potential employers,
- Financial service providers,
- In-country organizations operating within the same thematic areas, and
- Government ministries and departments at the national and local levels.

b) *Available Documentation*

A wide range of documents will be available for and shall be utilized by the consultancy during its desk review. These will include key background documents, such as: the YiA program proposal, the MTE, YiA quarterly reports to MCF, and YiA's *Theory of Change and Comprehensive Learning Framework*.

Additionally, SC will provide the review team with an extensive package of YiA research, including: formative studies on YiA curriculum; gender assessments; studies on cash transfer and family support; documentation of mentorship and support services available to youth; a Program Outcome Study (pre and post); and a tracer study meant to illustrate the effect of YiA on youth after they graduate. The review team is expected to engage in a thorough desk review at the start of the project in order to fully understand YiA, including its history and the scope of its research and learning, which has been a key part of the program's activities.

6. Guiding Principles and Values

As SC Canada will be the contracting organization, all consultants will be required to provide contacts for professional reference checks, a clear vulnerable sector police background check, and agreement with SC Canada's Child Safeguarding Policy and its Code of Conduct. Further, all research and evaluation must comply with the MCF's [Research and Evaluation Policy](#) as well as MCF's Child Protection Guidelines.

The review team should include and address all potential ethical issues related to working with children and other relevant vulnerable populations in its proposal and subsequent inception report. Additionally, the review

team is expected to undertake the final review with high respect given to transparency, cost-effectiveness, gender sensitivity, collaboration with beneficiaries, and involvement of local stakeholders.

7. Key Activities and Deliverables

The final review will start upon signing of the contract between SC Canada, as the contracting partner, and the consulting team, or an otherwise agreed upon date. The exact due dates for all deliverables will be finalized by the review team in collaboration with SC Canada and MCF prior to submitting the inception report, so long as the dates continue to fall within the broad start and finish dates of the consultancy. Draft and final reports must be submitted to both MCF and SC Canada.

The final review is envisioned as a collaborative undertaking between SC, MCF, and the selected review team. We expect that the review team will engage with and provide feedback to SC and MCF on a continual basis. On our part, we are committed to collaborating with the selected review team and to providing sufficient time for a truly back-and-forth approach.

Key Activities / Deliverables	Timeline
<i>Start date of contract</i>	1 November 2017
<i>Inception phase</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a thorough desk review Submit an inception report and work plan Discuss and finalize details with SC Canada and MCF 	Inception report by 1 December 2017 SC and MCF will provide feedback in early December and the inception report will be finalized by the holiday season
<i>Field work initiated</i>	1 January 2018
<i>Field work</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake field visits in all five program countries (by two researchers simultaneously) Engage in consultation with relevant SC staff 	Field visits will be completed by 31 March 2018 The review team will provide initial feedback from the field visits to the Program Steering Committee in April 2018
<i>Draft report</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present initial findings to SC Canada and MCF Engage in discussions with SC Canada and MCF about revisions to the report Submit a draft report to SC Canada and MCF 	The review team will present draft findings to SC and MCF staff by May 2018 SC and MCF will provide initial feedback Draft Report by 31 May 2018
<i>Final report</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a final report to SCC and MCF 	SC and MCF will provide feedback on the draft report throughout June 2018 Final Report by 31 July 2018

a) *Inception Report*

The inception phase will begin with a thorough desk review of existing YiA research and learning. Based on this analysis, the **inception report** will include the proposed:

- Final review framework and timeframe.
- Roles and responsibilities of team members executing the final review.
- Review methodology and approach, including methods for information collection and analysis, and key learning questions to be addressed.
- Updated budget.
- Schedule of meetings (i.e., a briefing plan), including regular teleconferences with key SC and MCF points of contact to check progress and provide updates throughout all phases of the review.

The review team can only embark on field work after SC Canada and MCF approve the inception report.

b) *Final Report*

The **final report** shall provide clear documentation and findings related to each of the five YiA program countries, focusing on reviewing the program's design, assumptions, and sustainability in each country. The final report will provide insight into the review's findings, including reasons for successes and failures, program innovations, lessons learnt, and barriers to success.

c) *Annexes to the Final Report*

The final report shall also include a number of annexes, which will provide context to the report's findings and recommendations. Suggested annexes include:

- Terms of Reference for the final review.
- Final review inception report.
- Data collection tools, including potential questionnaires and interview guides.
- List of individuals and stakeholder groups consulted.
- List of supporting documentation reviewed.

8. **Profile of the Review Team**

As YiA spans five countries, with required field visits for all five, **it is necessary to have a team of at least two consultants**, who can work together to ensure that the review is carried out effectively, and that field visits can occur simultaneously. A larger team will be considered if the proposed budget does not exceed USD 150 000. Key competencies of the review team include:

- Strong experience designing and leading multi-sectoral program reviews, particularly of education and livelihoods programs for adolescents, including those that involve foundational inputs, such as literacy and numeracy.
- Experience evaluating gender mainstreaming initiatives in large-scale programs.
- Experience evaluating agricultural livelihood programs.
- Ability to facilitate and relate to stakeholders at multiple levels and in diverse contexts.
- Proven ability to use quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods, with examples and references that can speak to this experience.
- Strong data analysis and written English communication skills.
- Strong verbal communication and presentation skills.
- Sensitivity to cultural and historical contexts in the data collection and analysis process.

- Strong preference for French fluency of at least one member of the review team, with Arabic language skills being an added advantage.
- Experience working in varied African contexts.

9. **Submission and Evaluation of Proposals**

Consultants meeting the above criteria are invited to submit a proposal by email to: youthinaction@savethechildren.ca with the subject line: “Proposal for Youth in Action Final Review”. Proposals should be received no later than **Friday, 30 June 2017, 5:00pm EST**. The body of the proposal should be no longer than 10 pages and should include the following:

- A cover letter outlining relevant experience in reviewing similar programs and models, including experience working with youth education and livelihoods programs and employability training, as well as experience in the relevant geographies.
- An outline of the final review design and general approach, highlighting: any additional proposed research questions, methodological approach, analytical plan, potential technical and operational challenges, and strategies to ensure timely, high-quality deliverables.
- A list of key activities, linked to the proposed activities, within a scheduled timeframe.
- A staffing and management plan, including details of team composition and specific qualifications of key research staff.

The proposal should also include **Annexes**, which are not included in the 10 page limit, such as:

- An estimated budget, including personnel, international and regional travel, accommodation and expenses, not exceeding a maximum of USD 150 000. Please note the budget must cover all expenses related to the review team. In-country expenses (e.g., translators, transport, stationery and printing, data entry, venue hire and materials, supplies and equipment) will be covered by SC COs.
- *Value-for-money will be an assessment criteria**
- List of three (3) references who can attest to the review team’s experience and expertise as it relates to this program (including daytime phone numbers and email contacts).
 - CVs of the review team, outlining previous evaluation experience and accomplishments as it relates to demonstrating the skills and knowledge needed to fulfill the Terms of Reference.
 - Preferred: Two (2) examples of large-scale reviews recently completed by the lead consultant(s). If possible, at least one should be relevant, or similar to, the subject of this review.

SC and MCF will review all proposals closely against this outline. They will determine a shortlist of potential candidates by 31 July 2017 and finalize a contract by September 2017. The consultancy is expected to start on 1 November 2017.