



# obra

*Partnerships for Youth*

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**The Obra secretariat in the Caribbean is led by the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ).** The partnership's members are:

*Agency for Inner City Renewal*

*Area Youth Foundation*

*Children First Agency*

*Heart Trust/NTA*

*Jamaica Council of Churches*

*Jamaica Foundation For Lifelong Learning*

*Jamaica Money Market Brokers Ltd.*

*Jamaica National Foundation*

*Jamaica Youth Advocacy Network*

*Junior Achievement Jamaica*

*Kingston Restoration Company*

*National Centre For Youth Development*

*National Commercial Bank Foundation*

*National Skills Development Centre (St. Lucia)*

*National Youth Service*

*Operation Friendship*

*People's Action For Community Transformation*

*Rise (St. Lucia) Inc.*

*Rise Life Management Services*

*Sandals Foundation*

*St. Patrick's Foundation*

*Sur Futuro (The Dominican Republic)*

*Violence Prevention Alliance*

*Youth Opportunities Unlimited*

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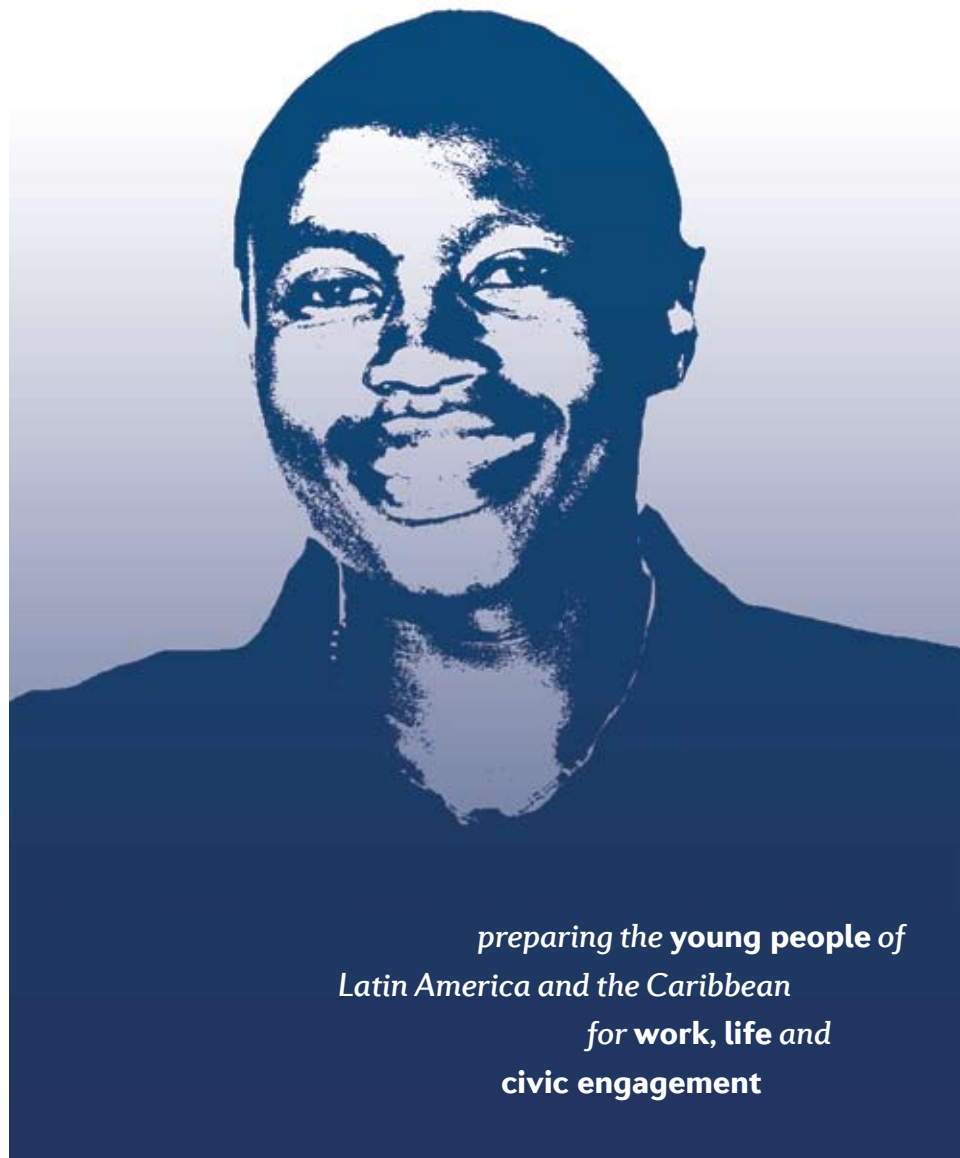
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*preparing the young people of  
Latin America and the Caribbean  
for work, life and  
civic engagement*

## THE CHALLENGE

In the Latin America and Caribbean region 15-25% of the population is between the ages of 15-24. The unemployment rate among these youth is two to three times the rate of unemployment for older age groups. Unemployment among youth perpetrating violence is much higher, and both the numbers of youth out of work and the impact of the violence affect national and regional economic development. Efforts must therefore be made to engage youth and prepare them to become positive change agents, ensuring that in the long-term these youth will contribute to a productive society.

In response to this development need, the *Obra* Caribbean Partners have chosen to collaborate in order to implement youth empowerment initiatives geared towards addressing employment, employability and entrepreneurship.

## THE INITIATIVE

*Obra* is a two-year initiative in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region launched in 2009 by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It aims to form public-private partnerships that raise awareness of youth at risk issues and strengthen youth services to improve education, employment prospects and life skills for young people throughout the region.

In addition to creating multi-sector alliances to support those goals, *Obra* is developing mechanisms for identifying and sharing best and promising practices so that successful experiences may influence the design of public programs and policies.

*Obra* (“work” in Spanish) was designed in response to U.S. President Obama’s call at the 2009 Summit of the Americas for renewed and strengthened partnerships in the region to promote greater opportunities among the region’s youth.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Multi-sectoral partnerships mobilized to support youth at risk
- Youth at risk more prepared and productively engaged
- Youth at risk programs and policies better informed

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR YOUTH IN THE AMERICAS

Jamaica, Guatemala and Peru serve as the “target” countries, or bases for the three sub-regional partnerships. Public, private and civil society organizations and experts from across the hemisphere were invited to participate in the program, share proven experiences and methodologies, as well as benefit from *Obra*’s learning events and platforms. The Secretariats of the Partnerships are: Instituto DEMOS (Guatemala), Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (Jamaica) and CEDRO (Peru), with a membership to date of over 40 organizations—NGOs, government and private sector—in seven countries in the LAC region.

## DONOR

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

## CARRIBBEAN PARTNERSHIP

With its base in Jamaica, the Caribbean partnership hopes to create a sustainable partnership among private, public and civil society organizations that will increase employment and educational opportunities for at risk youth in the Caribbean.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To increase the employability of youth (training, internships etc.);
- To promote entrepreneurship among youth and to provide the necessary support for the establishment of small businesses;
- To influence the development and implementation of effective national and regional youth policy;
- To raise public awareness about the effects of social exclusion on youth at risk and to positively influence the perception of our youth in general; and
- To create a dynamic yet sustainable multi-sectoral partnership that will support the continued development of youth by fostering a culture of collaboration to increase efficiency and deepen impact.