

UP CLOSE



Providing Life and Employability Skills Training

Snapshot

Youth:Work helps disadvantaged youth acquire the comprehensive set of technical and interpersonal skills they need to earn a decent living in a market economy. IYF's holistic approach supports youth with a continuum of programs and services that prepare them for the job market and successful careers. Youth:Work programs include technical training and opportunities for hands-on experience, life skills and employability training, and job placement support, providing a comprehensive approach.

Technical Training

Youth:Work technical training modules are tailored to meet the needs of local markets, ensuring that students develop the specific skills that employers value in new hires. To understand what employers want and need, a rigorous analysis of market trends is conducted and its findings are validated with employers. Regular program monitoring and evaluation, employer input into curriculum development, and ongoing communication with businesses keep Youth:Work training responsive to local market needs.

Because local economies fluctuate, Youth:Work technical training courses are flexible and diverse. The International Youth Foundation (IYF), with significant expertise in this area, has trained young people around the world for jobs in dozens of fields, including auto bodywork, the tourism industry, craft production, graphic design, home building, medical billing, welding, and more. Where possible, graduates are certified in their field by a recognized credentialing entity.

Youth:Work technical training courses range from six weeks to nine months. They can be adapted to address the shared needs of target populations, such as youth in post-conflict situations. Modules that develop self-employment and entrepreneurship skills are increasingly relevant in economies around the globe. Entrepreneurial skills training can be offered as a component of any Youth:Work program, or it can constitute a Youth:Work program in itself.

Life & Employability Skills Training

Disadvantaged youth often do not have professional or personal role models to nurture the “soft skills” that are essential for success in the workplace. Many youth do not receive life and employability skills training in school, and the private sector typically does not have the resources to provide it. Youth:Work training may be the first opportunity some young people have to acquire these skills, which will serve them at work and beyond.

Youth:Work's life and employability skills training includes modules on:

- **Personal competencies** (fostering cooperation, accepting responsibility, developing confidence, managing emotions, and showing respect for self and others)
- **General competencies** (such as basic technology skills, numeracy, and literacy)
- **Problem solving** (critical thinking and conflict management)



On-The-Job-Training

Technical training is not complete without on-the-job opportunities to hone skills acquired in the classroom. Therefore, internships are a key component of Youth:Work programs. Supervised internships give youth an opportunity to gain relevant work experience and make personal and professional contacts, which can lead to formal employment and advancement. Youth:Work cultivates networks of employers who create opportunities for youth to obtain valuable hands-on experience. In turn, employers receive expedited access to trained and credentialed job candidates.

- **Effective work habits** (teamwork, interpersonal communication, and time management)
- **Healthy lifestyles** (substance abuse awareness, STD/HIV/AIDS prevention, healthy relationships, and informed decision making)
- **Diversity** (respect for differences, cultural and ethnic understanding and acceptance)
- **Service learning** (civic responsibility, community service, and volunteering)

Job Placement Support

In addition to equipping youth with technical and interpersonal qualifications, Youth:Work provides a range of services to help participants become competent job seekers and advance from student to employee. Support services for participants may include:

- Training on résumé and cover letter preparation, job-seeking strategies, and interviewing techniques
- Providing individual career counseling and mentoring during training
- Arranging interviews with local employers
- Providing access to job banks, employment databases, and career fairs, and developing these resources where they do not exist
- Facilitating peer support groups for job seekers
- Offering ongoing follow-up, mentoring, and monitoring of graduates

Youth:Work programs and services are delivered by a network of professional local partners, ensuring that training is relevant to and appropriate for local communities. In turn, Youth:Work strengthens the implementing partners' capacity to sustain employability activities after donor funding ends.



Building Capacity, Sustaining Services in Peru

One local partner in an IYF-supported employability program in Peru determined that businesses and low-income youth were not regularly using state-sponsored job placement agencies. In response, the program created a full-service job placement center. The center businesses identify labor needs and facilitates a search for appropriate employees, proposing several candidates from its youth employability program, complete with résumés and technical and psychological evaluations. Provision of these services required a significant effort, including creating a database of employers, defining procedures, marketing to and following up with clients, and staying informed about local labor market trends. While project funding has ended, the center continues to operate, offering services through the training institutes affiliated with the project.

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