

UP CLOSE



Supporting Entrepreneurship

Snapshot

In many economies, the most viable work opportunities for youth are the jobs they create for themselves. According to the ILO, over the next ten years, only one job will be created for every four young people entering the labor market. Youth:Work programming meets the increasing need for entrepreneurship training and job creation by helping young men and women develop the constellation of skills they need to launch and sustain new enterprises. Youth:Work also fosters networks of support for young entrepreneurs in local communities and positions entrepreneurship training as a vital complement to youth employment programs.

Training Disadvantaged Youth as Entrepreneurs

Youth:Work entrepreneurship programs identify underserved youth with entrepreneurial talent and aspirations and develop their potential through a well-rounded curriculum that covers:

- Basic work skills
- Life skills
- Business plan development and other business development services
- Business financing
- Hands-on experience in developing and managing a new enterprise
- Mentoring and coaching

Entrepreneurship training is appropriate for young people who show an aptitude for and interest in starting their own businesses, as well as for youth who live in areas with an unstable formal economy or an established informal economy.

Young people graduate from Youth:Work entrepreneurship training programs equipped with:

- Business management skills
- Leadership and management skills
- Networking experience
- Knowledge about money and financing
- Confidence

Youth:Work can help USAID Missions implement entrepreneurship training as a component of a broader employability program or as a stand-alone initiative that focuses solely on entrepreneurship and enterprise development. To develop local organizational capacity and promote sustainability, Youth:Work training is delivered through local partners, which also conduct program monitoring and evaluation.

Basic Work and Life Skills

Basic entrepreneurship training ensures that young people have a foundation in math, language, problem solving, and other skills that support professional growth. Student entrepreneurs also receive practical advanced training, which includes modules on how to formalize and register their businesses, comply with health and safety regulations, and grow their enterprises.

Business Plan Development

Student entrepreneurs work in groups to learn the fundamentals of business development. Based on an assessment of local market conditions, groups design viable business ideas and develop sound business plans. Youth:Work local partners provide mentoring, targeted training, technical support in operational and legal matters, and business contacts to help the young entrepreneurs refine their plans.

Facilitating Access to Capital

Promising ideas need encouragement and resources in order to flourish and become a reality. Youth:Work training ensures that student entrepreneurs understand how capital can be raised, used, and leveraged. Because young people are frequently perceived as high-risk borrowers, Youth:Work implementing partners seek to mitigate risk through loan guarantee arrangements with local financial institutions and a strong package of technical support for business start-ups. Youth:Work programs can manage a revolving loan fund directly or can ensure that trained youth have access to capital funds available in their regions.

Keys to Success

Screening. Applicants are screened for skill level, readiness, and commitment to entrepreneurship.

Process. Learning is participatory and conducted in small groups so that participants with various talents and skills can learn from one another as well as how to work as a team.

Flexibility. Approaches to working with young entrepreneurs vary according to program objectives and target populations.

Sustainability. Youth:Work forms networks of government, corporate, and civil society stakeholders that support young entrepreneurs while fostering a culture that values entrepreneurship.



Creating Jobs and Sustaining Natural Resources in Indonesia

In coastal communities in West Java, an entrepreneurship program supported by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) has helped youth become skilled and productive entrepreneurs and stewards of sustainable resources. The youth (half of them young women) developed two businesses that specialized in sorting, harvesting, and marketing catfish. Provincial and local governments and organizations established the necessary infrastructure for the sustainable catfish farming enterprise and provided over 60 percent of financial and business support to program participants. As these businesses have matured, they have created 140 additional jobs, 46 percent of which have been filled by young people.

Contact Us

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