

Public-Private Partnerships for Youth Development

USAID works with corporate partners to provide professional experience to young people.

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TODAY'S GLOBAL POPULATION is more than six billion people. Nearly half of that population is under 25 years of age, constituting the largest youth population relative to adult population in the history of the world. With an astonishing 200 million of these youth living in poverty and as many as 88 million unemployed, the case for immediate action is compelling. Our future depends on the success of today's youth, but sadly we find that they are often ill prepared to participate in the newly globalized society.

Youth unemployment not only deprives young people of opportunity, its cost to society is high. Studies have shown that this "youth bulge" of 15-29 year-olds is associated with a high risk of unrest in countries where there is little opportunity for employment or skills-building. What is more, the difficulty of finding employment is compounded by the worsening global economic slowdown and changing trends in technology. For youth trapped in the cycle of poverty, debt and unemployment, escape seems impossible.

As development practitioners, we must find innovative new ways to break this cycle of poverty and to invest in youth so they may take up their role as future leaders. At the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), investing in youth is one of our major pri-

orities. But we recognize that we cannot begin to tackle the job of educating, training and empowering the youth of the world without the contribution of other development partners from the inception of our programs. In order to achieve any degree of success, we must embrace the resources, networks, expertise and creativity of private sector partners including nongovernmental organizations, foundations and corporations as full and equal development partners on development projects.

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This new model of partnership deviates from the traditional philanthropy/beneficiary model. Instead, the emphasis is on engaging with local and international partners to leverage the unique assets of others for increased development impact.

For example, in collaboration with the International Youth Foundation (IYF), USAID has reached out to youth across the globe to provide them with job readiness skills. In Latin America, USAID, IYF and partners such as Alcatel-Lucent, Gap, Merrill Lynch, Nike and Shell have contributed to *entra 21* program. Over five years, this \$29 million program has provided information technology training and job readiness skills to more than 19,000 disadvantaged youth.

In the Middle East where youth unemployment rates are soaring, USAID and Save the Children's Alliance for Junior Achievement seek to provide youth with professional experience and know-how. The INJAZ Arabia program matches senior-level corporate volunteers with Arab youth to share knowledge that enhances students' leadership, business entrepreneurial, problem-solving and communication skills. Through this partnership, more than 10,000 corporate volunteers have helped mentor over 300,000 Arab students.

In Indonesia, where more than half of all primary and secondary students drop out of school to join the labor force, USAID has partnered with Intel to train teachers to use information and communication technology (ICT) in the classroom. By using ICT tools in school, teachers are able to familiarize students with new technology while also providing a stimulating classroom experience. By 2010, more than 15,000 teachers will have learned how to use technology to develop high-quality, exciting curricula to keep students engaged, parents convinced of the value of school, and to provide students with marketable skills.

USAID has more than 680 alliances with 1,700 individual partners in the private sector. To date, we have leveraged more than \$9 billion in combined private and public resources for development through USAID's Global Development Alliance model of partnership.

At USAID, we are committed to helping youth around the world achieve success. Through partnerships, we can create sustainable development programs that provide the kind of change we need for a better, more secure future. The future of the global economy is dependent upon our success. Together, we can meet this challenge. **MD**