

*Learning Series*

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# COLLABORATING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR:

A Case Study of an *entra 21*  
Project in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

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Preparando a los Jovenes para Entrar  
al Nuevo Mundo del Trabajo



International Youth Foundation®

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### **Entra 21**

An initiative of the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank and IYF, *entra 21* was created in 2001 to improve the employability of disadvantaged youth in Latin America and the Caribbean and place them in decent jobs. *Entra 21* is a \$29 million matching grant program supporting 35 projects in 18 countries throughout the region. The program provides young people, ages 16 to 29, with comprehensive training in information technology and life and job-seeking skills, and job placement services.

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# Collaborating with the Private Sector:

A Case Study of an *entra 21* project in Brazil

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International Youth Foundation™

## Forward

It is my pleasure to share with you *Collaborating with the Private Sector: A Case Study of an entra 21 project in Brazil*, which presents the factors that enabled an NGO in Salvador, Brazil, the Instituto de Hospitalidade, to successfully engage the private sector in its youth employment initiative. Engaging the business community in promoting youth employment is one of *entra 21's* core purposes and learning themes. We've learned is that in order to train and place youth in decent jobs, we must understand the local labor market so that training focuses on the competencies required by the private sector, and ensure employers are satisfied with the skills youth bring to-- what for many is--their first job in the formal economy.

Since its founding in 1990, the International Youth Foundation has promoted an approach to youth development that values building the capacity of young people to become engaged and productive citizens. Operating in nearly 70 countries and territories, IYF has worked with hundreds of companies, foundations, and government agencies to equip youth with the skills and opportunities to be successful. *Entra 21* is an integral part of IYF's work, providing life skills and technical training and job placement support to disadvantaged youth ages 16-29 across Latin America and the Caribbean. The initiative expects to train 19,000 youth, and place at least 40% of them in jobs.

Thanks to the generous support of the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development and other donors, IYF is able to learn with and from the 35 *entra 21* projects funded in Latin America. Our goal is to share what we are learning with practitioners, donors, and policy makers, so that the quality and scale of youth employment programs can continue to grow throughout the region and beyond. We believe that employers, especially, businesses, have a stake in ensuring that youth employment programs are effective and are reaching growing numbers of unemployed or under-employed youth. This publication gives us a valuable look at how businesses in the city of Salvador become involved -- not out of altruism, but because it is good for business. You will learn how the Instituto de Hospitalidade used its assets and developed a good product—an *entra 21* youth employment project-- to enlist employers' support. This report also provides lessons for NGOs and business leaders interested in NGO-private sector collaboration -- whether it is around youth employment or another social issue.

On behalf of IYF, I would like to express our gratitude to the Instituto de Hospitalidade, the many business leaders from Salvador who agreed to be interviewed for this publication, the youth who worked so hard to get their first job, and to Rodrigo Villar for this thoughtful study.

William S. Reese  
President and CEO  
March 2006

## Introduction

Participation by the private sector in job training and placement is considered by *entra 21* to be a critical element for success. Without the support of private businesses, the largest source of jobs, it would be difficult to reach the rates of job placement that have been established by this regional program. Building relationships with the private sector enables *entra 21* projects to better understand labor market needs, negotiate and create internships, and place at least 40% of the trained youth in decent jobs.

In 2005, the International Youth Foundation contracted Rodrigo Villar, an expert in corporate social responsibility in Latin America, to study the relationships forged between the Instituto de Hospitalidade (IH), *entra 21*'s implementing partner in Salvador, Brazil, and the city's private sector. This publication is a product of his visits and interviews, which took place between August and October of 2005.

A major challenge for the private sector in Latin America is addressing social problems through business strategies. Some institutions, like the Instituto de Hospitalidade of Salvador of Bahía, Brazil, have addressed this challenge through a sector-specific approach, in this case with the tourism sector. This case demonstrates how the *entra 21* project in Salvador, Brazil created alliances with local businesses that generate economic and social value and align a social cause with a business strategy.

### ***Entra 21* in Salvador of Bahía, Brazil<sup>1</sup>**

The purpose of the Tourism and Social Responsibility (TSR) project, led by the Instituto de Hospitalidade (Hospitality Institute or IH in Portuguese) is to train low-income youth from public schools and to place them in jobs in the tourism sector. The project provides integrated training that includes the development of competencies in life skills and information technology (IT) for the tourism sector.

This project, succeeded in creating a bridge between businesses in the tourism sector and youth who previously had no access to these businesses. IH successfully integrated a social effort into the core operations of the companies and enlisted their support throughout the project.

The project, which began in the first half of 2004, trained over 500 youth and had a drop-out rate of 10%. According to a 2005 evaluation by a Brazilian research organization, 55% of the youth who were trained in the first cohort were employed, which exceeded IH's target of 40% job placement. Youth also were hired under formal contracts.

As the project continued to demonstrate positive results, the number of youth interested in entering the program increased. Whereas the first cohort was selected from 300 candidates, subsequent groups were selected from up to 2,200 applicants.<sup>2</sup> In addition, businesses have shown increased interest in receiving the youth as interns. In 2005, 74 businesses from various areas of the tourism sector (travel agencies, hotels, and restaurants) offered youth internships, or contracts, and 18 new businesses expressed interest in receiving the youth trained in the program.<sup>3</sup>

Employer assessments regarding the youth have been positive. According to an external evaluation conducted by a Brazilian research firm, Specto, all of the employers thought that the young people trained in the TSR project carried out their work satisfactorily and 80% considered their performance

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<sup>1</sup> The author would like to acknowledge the support he received from the Director of the Instituto de Hospitalidade, Rafael Sanches Neto, the *entra 21* team and especially the coordinator, Gleice Guerra, who organized the interviews in Salvador and helped the author understand the details of the TSR/*entra 21* project.

<sup>2</sup> Information contributed by the TSR Project team

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

equivalent to or better than that of other workers in the same jobs. In addition, 93% of the employers expressed their interest in hiring additional program graduates (Specto, 2005:6).

The experience and results achieved in the first phase of the project served as a base for the expansion of the model throughout Brazil. In the next 18 months, the project will expand to 10 more tourist destinations in Brazil and train an additional 4,080 youth. Another expansion phase is planned to begin in 2007 and will train 6,000 more youth.

Given the effectiveness of the project in training and placing low-income youth in the job market and given the positive opinions from the businessmen about the TSRP, it is important to investigate the key characteristics of this potentially replicable model. How was it possible to place a group of disadvantaged youth in these jobs? What factors contributed to resolving complex problems such as youth unemployment, while also contributing to the development of the tourism industry? How has the project aligned the needs of the companies with strategic social actions?

This study reflects on the nature of the alliances and the cooperative links between the Instituto de Hospitalidade and local businesses, and a series of factors that contributed to the success of the project.

**A Core Element: The Integration of a Social Initiative into the Heart of the Business**

James Austin and the Social Enterprise Knowledge Network<sup>4</sup> created a simple continuum to illustrate different forms of collaborations between businesses and nonprofit organizations (Austin, J. et al. 2004:3-7); it provides a framework for understanding this case. The types of collaborations proposed in this model fall on a continuum from less to more strategic:

- **Philanthropic** relations characterized by donations of money or services by a business to a not-for-profit entity with low and infrequent levels of interaction that are non-strategic to the business.
- **Transactional** relations go beyond the transfer of resources and services, without being integrated into the core strategies of the business; and,
- **Integrated** collaboration occurs where there is strategic alignment between the business and the nonprofit organization and its work (Austin, J. et al. 2004:4-5).

**The Continuum of Private Sector-Non Profit Collaboration**

Nature of the Collaboration	Philanthropic	Transactional	Integrated
Level of Commitment	Low -----> High		
Importance to the Mission	Peripheral ----->Central		
Scope of Activities	Narrow ----->Wide		
Strategic Value	Low -----> High		

Source: Austin, J. et al. 2004: 5 (adapted by the author)

<sup>4</sup> The Social Enterprise Knowledge Network (SEKN) is a collaborative created by a group of leading Latin American business schools and the Harvard Business School in partnership with the AVINA Foundation. It seeks to promote knowledge and practice in social enterprise through collaborative research, shared learning, and other means.

According to this framework, IH forged integrated relationships in which a social innovation was incorporated into businesses' operations. As we will see, one of the virtues of the TSR project is that it offers businesses a strategy for becoming socially engaged which is connected to their business strategies and, therefore, promotes the creation of social and economic value. A socially integrated initiative is very different from one which is divorced from a company's core purpose—its impact is potentially greater due to the synergy between the economic and the social (Gutierrez, R. y Jones, A. 2004).

Several factors help explain why this project was able to effectively integrate a social initiative within the core business of the tourism industry. These factors are embedded in the mission and values of the Instituto de Hospitalidade as much as they are in their strategies and modes of operation. For each of these factors, some form of collaboration between the Instituto de Hospitalidade and businesses in the tourism industry is a fundamental element. Collaborating with the private sector is part of IH's strategic vision, which explains, in large part, the project's success.

#### **Success Factors**

- Collaboration with the private sector businesses is part of the vision and strategic orientation of IH.
- The legitimacy of IH is a result of its work with and for businesses in the tourism sector.
- The market-relevant training curriculum project is based upon constant communication with local businesses.
- Securing internships with businesses is a critical element of the job training and placement strategy.
- The acquisition of competencies by the youth is a prerequisite for the collaboration between the business community and the TRS project. P.
- IH developed the TRS project in part by taking advantage of incentives provided by governmental programs.

#### **An Analysis of the Factors of Success**

##### ***Collaboration with businesses is part of the vision and strategic orientation of IH.***

The Instituto de Hospitalidade (IH) is a Brazilian NGO founded in 1997, when the Odebrecht Company began to develop a tourism complex on the coast of Sauípe in Bahia. At the time, IH faced two significant challenges: avoiding the creation of a tourist enclave that was not integrated with the local community and preventing environmental degradation, which so many other tourist destinations had suffered. The idea of linking tourism with sustainable and local development and finding a harmonious balance between the diverse views and needs of local communities and the growing tourist industry gave rise to the creation of the Hospitality Institute. (Sanches, R. 2005).

The challenge to develop tourism in a locally sustainable way is not unique to Sauípe; it applies to tourism attractions throughout Brazil. The country has rich cultural and environmental diversity. Seventeen areas of Brazil have been declared by UNESCO as cultural patrimony, for example, and the country has many cultural and environmental assets it needs to preserve and nurture as it develops its tourism industry in a sustainable way (See the pamphlet *Movimento Brasil de Turismo e Cultura*, p. 7).

The vision of IH and the challenges that it faces presuppose an institutional arrangement that facilitates the establishment of alliances and diverse types of collaboration with tourism businesses, the government and other sectors of society. Guided by this vision, IH constituted itself from the start as a nonprofit organization with strong participation from the business sector, the government and other nonprofit organizations with experience and legitimacy in tourism and development. At present, IH is associated with 32 institutions including businesses, government and third sector organizations which work in

education, culture, employment, tourism and the environment. These institutions have combined their efforts to promote education, a hospitality culture, and tourism and to contribute to sustainable development in Brazil. Approximately 200 entities and 300 volunteers are directly involved in its projects (see Instituto de Hospitalidade, 2005).

According to IH, a virtuous circle exists among education, culture and sustainable development. Local culture, biodiversity and Brazilians' hospitality are elements of a comparative advantage and create the opportunity for the development of a competitive tourism industry. On the other hand, tourism is an engine for job creation and has the potential to improve the local population's quality of life. For this reason, IH believes that valuing the region's unique cultural characteristics, promoting sustainable local development, and contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of local communities is fundamental to the development of the tourism sector. (Sanches, R. 2005).

IH has developed a series of strategies to promote this vision of tourism as a platform for sustainable development in Brazil and to combine quality tourism with social integration. These strategies include the creation of a network of advocates for sustainable tourism to promote multiplier networks; and to facilitate the expansion of know-how that can expand and enhance relations between tourism and sustainable development. IH's capacity to mobilize and articulate this vision requires multiple alliances and forms of collaboration so that it can promote tourism growth, social development and the preservation of the country's cultural treasures and biodiversity. (See Instituto de Hospitalidade, 2005).

Clear expressions of this strategy may be found in IH's recent initiatives. Among these are the World Forum of Tourism for Peace and Sustainable Development and the Brazilian Movement of Tourism and Culture. With the first initiative, IH has managed to mobilize five world networks around tourism as a transforming force. The second initiative, inspired by the work of the World Forum, seeks to create a national movement and to develop sustainable development initiatives in 24 tourist destinations in the country. In order to promote the cause of sustainable tourism and the creation of a movement around this cause, IH combines the promotion of the networks with demonstration projects and annual meetings. Another key IH initiative has been the identification and certification of competencies required for various occupations within the tourism sector. This initiative has created legitimacy for IH within the sector and has been a key factor in the success of the *entra 21* project.

### ***The legitimacy of IH is a product of its work with and for the tourism industry***

IH's legitimacy within the tourism industry is due, in large part, to its capacity to respond to the needs of a sector as diverse as tourism. This legitimacy has greatly facilitated *entra 21's* ability to serve as a bridge between low-income youth and the business sector.

IH led efforts to create the National Certification System for the Brazilian Tourism Sector Certification, for which it identified the professional profiles of 52 occupations and validated them at the national level. Based on this knowledge, IH proposed the Norms for Occupations and Competencies of the National Certification System of the Professional Quality of the Tourism Sector. To date, IH has evaluated the competencies of 27,000 professionals and has certified 14,000. This process has earned IH wide credibility among employers in the tourism sector and facilitated the collaborative relations with businesses for the *entra 21 / TRS* project.

### ***The TRS project is based upon ongoing communication with the business community***

The curriculum designed for the young people trained by the TRS project is based on the competencies IH identified in the National Certification System for Professional Qualifications for the Tourism Sector. These competencies are the set of knowledge, abilities and attitudes needed to participate in the tourism labor market. The curriculum includes life skills, such as how to work in a group and interpersonal

relations. In this way, the project seeks to offer youth integrated training in order to secure a decent job and improve their employability. The project combines training in life skills with the set of tourism sector occupations, specifically in the areas of hotel management, travel agencies, and food and beverage service. In this way, the youth are prepared in a wide range of possibilities for job placement in the tourism sector, without being restricted to a specific area.

The curriculum includes the promotion of sustainable development in tourism, the promotion of excellence in providing service, and the development of a life plan and career goals. These elements are discussed in workshops where the development of life goals and plans are used as an essential part of the methodology.

The training lasts one semester and consists of an intensive schedule of 400 hours of classroom activity for all youth, 100 hours of elective activities, and an internship of 80 hours.

Through its evaluation of the participant during his/ her internship, IH is able to test whether the training is relevant and responsive to market needs. Using the internship experience, IH is better able to learn from both the business and youth how to improve or adjust the curriculum. One such consultation resulted in an adjustment to the curriculum regarding the competencies needed for working on preparing tours and tourist packets for travel agencies. The competencies required for this type of tourism were introduced in the curriculum after several employers and practitioners mentioned the need for training in this area. The project team verified this finding with a group of businesses and later incorporated it into the training process.

#### *Internship is a critical element of the job training and placement strategy*

The internship is a key component of IH's job training and provides youth an opportunity to secure a permanent position. For this reason, IH created a systematic procedure for collaborating with businesses to ensure that they accept TRS trainees as interns. The results have been noteworthy - 74 businesses hired interns and 18 more are planning to do so in the near future.

The project team follows several steps to obtain internships. Two professionals from the project staff are in charge of identifying practicum activities with businesses in the tourism industry. Once they have obtained lists of potential restaurants, hotels and travel agencies, IH staff organize a site visit, during which they present the advantages and benefits of accepting youth trained by the TRS project as interns and eventually, as employees.

Once the youth has been accepted as an intern, he or she receives continuous support from a member of IH's training team and a mentor. The mentor is a professional from the business who is assigned by the business to orient, guide and support the intern while he or she is working in hotel or restaurant or whatever the business may be. In order to accomplish these tasks, the mentor receives a five-day training course from IH about the project and his or her role in guiding the intern.

During the internship, IH staff request feedback from the mentor and the intern regarding his or her progress and challenges. They also solicit businesses' opinions with regard to the training provided by the project. IH uses this information to determine if adjustments are needed to align the curriculum better to employers' needs. For this reason, the internship is not only critical to preparing the young person for work in the tourism industry, but also is an effective way for IH to maintain constant communication with the labor market.

### *The acquisition of skills by the youth is a prerequisite for the collaboration between businesses and the TRS project*

Through classroom-based training and the internship, the TRS/*entra 21* project ensures participating youth have the motivation and the skills needed to work in the tourism industry. Without this supply of motivated, skilled youth, it would be impossible for IH to create a bridge between these young people and the private sector and place them in jobs.

Businesses receive requests from this project and many other training programs seeking internships for large numbers of youth, including those who are university-trained. The question is: why do employers prefer youth from this project?

The employers mention several reasons they accept project TRS youth as interns, but a fundamental condition is that they have the basic skills needed to work in the tourism sector. They also mention that the TRS project youth have a high level of motivation, accept the internship as a great opportunity to enter the labor market, and have a strong desire to learn and carry out the assigned tasks.

In addition, the TRS project adapts its selection criteria to the specific needs of each business. The IH training team evaluates the personnel requests from the businesses and, based on these, selects the four most appropriate candidates, who are then presented to the business for their decision. In this way, IH facilitates the task of selecting interns for the companies. IH's brand identity, legitimacy and careful selection process provides businesses with the assurance that they will find the human resources they need without having to undertake a complicated and expensive selection process.

“When we employ youth without training, the possibility of making mistakes is 7 out of 10. When we employ a young person from the TRS project, the possibility of guessing correctly is 8 out of 10. It is very gratifying to employ a young person from this project.”  
(Flavio Andrade, Manager of the Holiday Inn, in *IH Notes*. April, 2005:5).

### *IH takes advantage of economic incentives offered by governmental programs*

IH's ability to leverage government incentives and build upon government programs that promote youth employment is another element that has contributed to project success. The Apprentice Law, Number 10.097 of December 2000 in article 249, requires that businesses ensure that between 5% and 15% of their workers are registered in courses offered by the National Training Service or in training offered by non-governmental institutions. The First Job Program is a Ministry of Work and Employment program that provides incentives to businesses that offer employment to youth that are between 16 and 24 years old. The youth must be attending primary or secondary school or must have finished secondary school and have a per capita household income that is less than the minimum average wage. The business receives a subsidy of 1500 Reals per year (approximately \$675) for each youth hired.

The fact that these two government programs are targeted to the same population as IH's *entra 21* project facilitates employers' support. By receiving TRS trainees, the businesses are able to fulfill their obligation under the law and engage in a socially responsible initiative.

### *TRSP: A project with the goal of national expansion*

The TRS/*entra 21* project, like all of IH's projects, was conceived as an initiative to be scaled up and have a multiplier effect. The initial phase created the programmatic foundation which enabled IH to negotiate an expansion of the project with the Ministry of Tourism. The first stage of expansion will occur in 2006, during which time IH expects to reach 4,080 youth in 10 new tourist destinations. IH hopes that in 2007 it can initiate a second stage in which the number of youth trained will rise to 10,080 youth in 25 tourist

destinations. The resources for the first stage of this scaling up have been committed by the Tourism Ministry, the International Youth Foundation, the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank, and USAID.

The challenges facing this expansion are significant, but the lessons learned and the accumulated knowledge of IH with the TRS project are equally important. Soon IH will systematically document these practices, systems and lessons in order to facilitate the scale-up of the project. Several consultants will be hired to make their procedures more systematic, to write and publish teaching manuals, to adapt the information and evaluation systems to a larger program, etc.

The expansion will require the establishment of partnerships with training institutions in the different tourist destinations, the training and mentoring of these institutions, ongoing adaptations of the model to the local conditions, and the creation of teams in each site with the necessary capacity and commitment. It also will require ongoing work to build ties with companies in the tourism sector. This task of building relations with the private sector will not be solely in the hands of IH, but also will involve the partner organizations IH selects in the ten other tourism destinations. The employers who are currently involved in the TRS project and are highly satisfied will be able to play an active role in this expansion by disseminating information about the program's benefits to other companies in their sector or economic niche. Networking and marketing among companies of the same economic group and among employers of the tourism sector can play a catalytic role in the scale-up of the TRS project.

The growing importance of the theme of corporate social responsibility in Brazil, as well as the growing interest in other initiatives promoted by IH in the field of sustainable tourism, will certainly contribute to the creation of a favorable environment for the expansion of TRS/entra 21 project.

### *Lessons from the case of IH*

From this description of the Tourism and Social Responsibility Project developed by the Instituto de Hospitalidade, we can draw several lessons regarding the management of relationships with businesses in job training programs for low-income youth.

**1) Focusing on the needs of a specific business sector** IH focused on a specific niche of the labor market: the tourism industry. This focus on a particular sector facilitated IH's understanding and ability to synchronize its work with the labor needs of this sector. It also helped with the design of a curriculum adapted to the needs of a particular set of companies and the project's ability to adjust to new information about the human resource needs of a sector. A general approach to the labor market would not have given IH the comparative advantage it has in terms of knowledge, legitimacy and ability to adapt to changing employment conditions.

**2) Creating a product that adds value to the company** For employers in the tourism sector, the TRS project trains students in the competencies needed for their business which include having a strong service ethic and desire to continuously learn and improve. The TRS project is, therefore, attractive to employers because it adds value to their businesses and helps meet a need for qualified human resources.

**3) Creating confidence among and legitimacy with businesses.** An entity that offers job training programs needs to be favorably viewed by employers. In the case of the training programs directed at low-income youth, this need for favorable recognition in terms of the quality of the training is even greater.

IH has managed to create this confidence and legitimacy by working with and for a specific niche of the market, by continuously adapting to the changing needs of this niche, by adjusting the curriculum in order to create a product and service that adds value to the businesses, and by demonstrating results with

its trainees. An entity with this type of legitimacy has a greater opportunity to create the necessary confidence for businesses to open their doors to the low-income youth.

**4) Blending social and economic value.** A social initiative, such as the TSR project that is connected to the core of a business, has a high level of acceptance among employers. By aligning a social cause or project with the economic needs of a business, it is easier for the private sector to have a stake in the project since the business benefits by supporting the project.

**5) Giving equal priority to working with business and youth** It is not sufficient to provide high quality training if you want to be successful in developing job skills for low-income youth. The IH case demonstrates that working with the private sector is equally important. Establishing systematic procedures to guarantee internships for the trainees, creating channels of communication for receiving feedback, adjusting the curriculum, and disseminating information about the advantages of the program to the business sector are activities which are just as important to the overall success of the program as the training itself.

**6) Adapting to the needs of the labor market.** The case of IH demonstrates the critical importance of establishing the mechanisms necessary to have up-to-date data on the needs of the labor market, and of having a flexible curriculum that can be adapted to those needs. This continuous synchronizing between the project and the labor market has been an important factor in the success of the IH project.

**7) Taking advantage of existing programs.** IH has been able to develop its training program by taking into account the opportunities and incentives offered by governmental programs (Law of the Apprentice and First Job Program). Taking advantage of these opportunities has enabled IH to gain greater acceptance of the IH program by the business community. Favorable public policies and programs can facilitate alliance-building, reduce barriers that might inhibit entree to the companies and create better conditions for good program development.

These lessons can help in the development of future job training initiatives for young people with limited resources in different situations, and will be important factors in the expansion process of the TRP project in Brazil.

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