



# LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN

Today, young people aged 15-29 make up the largest generation that Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region has ever seen – or will ever see. The future of the region depends on this generation and the degree to which they recognize and reach their potential.

## FIVE CHALLENGES IN THE LAC REGION

From agriculture to manufacturing, digital disruption has transformed industries, yet regional educational and training systems are not equipping young people with the 21st-century skills that employers require. This disruption and the resulting skills gap have only accelerated with the pandemic.

The impacts of climate change –including changing precipitation patterns, rising temperatures, and increasingly intense and frequent storms– are putting rural and maritime communities and livelihoods at risk.

More people than ever before are migrating, both within and beyond national boundaries. These shifting regional migration patterns present challenges for migrants' countries of origin, destination countries, and the communities they pass through.

LAC has the highest homicide rate in the world, and this violence disproportionately affects young people – 77% of deaths among young men in the region are caused by violence. Gender-based violence also skyrocketed during the pandemic.

The window of opportunity for this generation is closing fast. By 2024, 19.7% of young people will not be in school, training or work. Moreover, young people who are in the labor market face an unemployment rate of 13.6%, twice the rate of adults.

Although this generation of young people is the region's most educated generation ever, it also faces critical challenges. At IYF, we are committed to prioritizing investments in young people to help them overcome these challenges. To learn more about IYF's evidence-based approaches, see Page 3.



# HOW IS IYF RESPONDING TO THESE CHALLENGES?

1



## Unlocking Youth Agency

We equip young people with civic and life skills through our flagship Passport to Success (PTS) curriculum, reaching 39,000 young people every year in classrooms, at work, in community centers, and online.

We inspire and support young people to take action, incorporating service learning, volunteerism, research fellowships, youth councils, and social action boot camps into our programming.

We support youth overcome challenges and seize opportunities through our career decision-making guidance and youth-led case management approaches.

2



## Driving Economic Opportunity

We leverage our industry-leading network of private sector partners to develop tailor-made solutions so young people can unlock economic opportunities across a range of economic sectors – from IT to energy.

Our private sector partners provide IYF with the financial support, market intelligence, and influence required to build sustainable solutions at scale.

3



## Making Systems More Inclusive

Leveraging our proven systems-change approach and tools, we transform systems to better serve the needs of young people from the Southern Cone to the Rio Grande by building new and stronger routines, roles, rules, and stakeholder relationships.



Over the past decade, we have changed over 90 policies in Mexico and Peru. Additionally, we spearhead campaigns to change restrictive gender norms throughout the region.





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## LONG-LASTING AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS



IYF's agile, demand-driven approach prepares young people for the changing world of work. We leverage nontraditional data sources, including data scraped from vacancy databases, curricular analyses, and design thinking workshops, to identify quantitative and qualitative skills gaps at a local level. With this information, we work with local technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems to adjust enrollment, incorporate relevant skills into the formal curricula, and upgrade instructor skills to deliver the new curricula. On average, 65% of graduates from IYF programs secure formal employment 4 to 6 months after completion.



IYF unlocks youth agency and economic opportunity in rural and maritime value chains and builds positive youth development approaches into food system programming. Additionally, we provide proven business development interventions, including connecting young entrepreneurs with over USD\$1 million in new capital for their businesses and identifying economic opportunities in the regional value chain. In Mexico, we are partnering with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) to incorporate conservation agriculture training into the polytechnic agriculture curriculum. In Peru, we incorporated project-based learning into the agricultural curriculum to help young farmers adapt to changing conditions.



In Panama, IYF's innovative partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United States Agency for International Development, local short-term training providers, and Google is supporting Venezuelan migrants to secure the Google IT Support Professional Certificate through mentorship and learning facilitation, as well as flexible learning modalities, training, job placement services, and wrap-around supports. The program has a 61% completion rate, with 100% of graduates demonstrating an improvement in life and technical skills.

IYF works with partners to develop, replicate, and scale effective solutions for today's generation of young people to realize their potential and transform their lives, communities, and the region. Using our proven systems change approach, we have implemented evidence-based approaches across the region, supporting an average of 36,000 young people each year to unlock and develop their potential.

Stark inequality has contributed to increasing violence in the region, alienating disadvantaged populations from society and making illegal activities more profitable than legal ones. Given that young people are disproportionately impacted by violence in the region, IYF works to create pathways to opportunity for young people so that they can remain connected to their communities, implementing interventions that interrupt patterns of violence commonly experienced by young people. These interventions include communications campaigns to challenge repressive gender norms, culturally relevant peace promotion using restorative justice methods, and psychosocial services for at-risk youth. Our programming with incarcerated young people has shown promising results, with completion rates above 83% and an initial job placement rate of 10%.



We address the opportunity youth crisis in the region at two levels: 1) intervening with opportunity youth and 2) intervening with the systems that exclude young people from education and employment. Our proven model engages opportunity youth with peer-led, short-term, demand-driven technical and life skills training, not to mention one-on-one support from a peer counselor case manager. IYF has successfully replicated its model with local partners that are continuing to scale and operate on the ground. On average, 86% of enrolled youth complete the program, and 90% of graduates are employed or enrolled in education. This work also engages TVET systems in transformative interventions to improve service quality. The adoption of IYF's PTS program in Mexican TVET systems transformed teaching and learning and led to a 32% reduction in the dropout rate. As part of the IDB-funded NEO program, we worked with 200 TVETs in 10 countries and increased the quality of 3 critical services by 70%. We also work with companies and enterprises to overcome the market failures and biases that prevent them from accessing local youth talent.



# IMPACTFUL APPROACHES



## DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Recognizing that young people live, work, learn, and play in an increasingly digital world, IYF invests in the development of leading-edge digital programming to meet today's young people where they are – and to help them get where they want to go. We offer tailored e-learning solutions for a range of learners, institutions, and sectors – from facilitated online IT technical training for in-school and out-of-school youth to diverse learning modalities via IYF's best-in-class life skills curricula. We leverage a range of media – from murals to social media – to create effective behavior change communications tailored to specific audiences. We also leverage information technology to overcome the information market failures that exclude young people from economic opportunities, including linking national employment portals with school data systems, developing sector-specific candidate databases, and more.



## GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

IYF programming is grounded in six core principles that together allow us to drive change for all young people.

- 1) We engage young people as partners and incorporate Positive Youth Development into our program design.
- 2) We are committed to using evidence-based learning to inform our programs.
- 3) We advance social inclusion by pushing to address the needs of all young people.
- 4) We prioritize empowerment and ownership of local staff and partners.
- 5) We work in partnership with young people and key stakeholders from the public, private, and social sectors.
- 6) We recognize that changes in social inclusion require work at both the individual and systemic levels.



## MEASUREMENT, EVALUATION, RESEARCH & LEARNING (MERL)

IYF is committed to MERL to guarantee that we are fulfilling our mission to connect young people with opportunities to transform their lives. Measurement and data help ensure that this goal becomes a reality. When IYF works to help youth develop the leadership, technical, and life skills they need to earn a livelihood, we measure those skills and assess those changes in livelihoods. When IYF works with local partners and systems to improve services for youth, we assess the outcomes on a systemic level. We have codified both our values and the American Evaluation Association's guiding principles into our MERL policy and systematically collaborate, learn and adapt across all of our programming. The resulting learning products –from initial research to inform program design, to built-in research to fine-tune interventions, to impact evaluations– are shared to improve our and our partners' practices.



# FACILITATING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS



## FUNDING PARTNERS

## IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



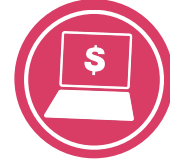
Thanks to three decades of alliance building, we have a trusted network of public and private, academic, and civil society partners that we have worked with to achieve scale and sustainability through national and regional programming.



We connect young people with opportunities to transform their lives and communities. We believe that educated, employed, and engaged young people possess the power to solve the world's toughest problems, and our youth development efforts are focused on three interconnected objectives:



**Unlocking Youth Agency**



**Driving Economic Opportunity**



**Making Systems More Inclusive**

**400+**

local youth-serving organizations

**40,800+**

youth directly reached in 2023





**25**  
countries

**49.7%** **50.3%**

**860K+**

young people reached since 1990

-  Current IYF programs
-  Historic IYF programs

