

SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM FORMING PUBLIC–PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

New Employment Opportunities (NEO) Program

A MILLION YOUTH

neo

A MILLION OPPORTUNITIES

ABOUT THE NEO INITIATIVE

NEO is an initiative led by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), through its Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) and Labor Markets Division (LMK), the International Youth Foundation (IYF), and partners: Arcos Dorados, Caterpillar Foundation, CEMEX, Fondation Forge, Microsoft, the Brazilian Social Service of Industry (SESI) and Walmart. NEO is a pioneering initiative in which businesses, governments, and civil society in 12 Latin American and Caribbean countries have joined forces to improve the employment opportunities for 500,000 young people, half of whom are women. The alliance pools resources, knowledge, and skills to drive effective and sustainable solutions to the problems of youth unemployment and skills gaps.

This study, entitled “Success Factors and Lessons Learned from Forming Public–Private Partnerships,” is part of a series of five thematic studies that analyze various aspects of NEO’s implementation at the local level, documenting achievements, identifying operational challenges and restrictions, and recording lessons learned and best practices.

THE AUTHORS

The “Success Factors and Lessons Learned from Forming Public–Private Partnerships” study was written by Aitor Llodio of the Foundation for Sustainability and Equality (ALIARSE) and Daniela Blanco of the International Center of Economic Policy for Sustainable Development (CINPE).

The opinions expressed in this publication are the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints of the IDB, its Board of Executive Directors or the countries it represents. Nor do they necessarily reflect the point of view of the MIF, IYF or NEO’s corporate partners.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document corresponds to the final report, “Success Factors and Learnings from Forming Public–Private Partnerships,” which studied the NEO initiatives in Panama, Mexico, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Paraguay. The study was led by ALIARSE Costa Rica in partnership with the National University of Costa Rica’s International Center of Economic Policy for Sustainable Development.

This report focuses on the systematization of the key lessons learned through consulting with various partners and the executing agencies of the five countries in which the study was conducted. It should be noted that one element in particular has been included, though it has not yet been systematized: the learnings of youth participants and graduates of the NEO program.

The lessons learned can be classified into general areas, the main ones being: the importance of defining a beneficiary profile, the need to explain what NEO implementation involves from the pre-design phase, defining criteria for selecting alliance members, the importance of the alliance coordinator profile and, lastly, aspects relating to the sustainability of the alliances.

With regard to the beneficiaries, the key lessons learned reveal that young people value the workshops and the individuals who take an interest in their professional training and personal growth. They also highlight the possibility of being placed in a job that allows them to help their families.

The study concludes with a series of reflections on opportunities for improvement to strengthen work performed by alliances. Among these numerous reflections, there is particular emphasis on the need to create sustainability strategies for the NEO alliances, which can scale best practices from the project in a way that influences public policy for youth employment and education.



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