

CARIBBEAN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

A **YOUTH:WORK** PROJECT



Grenada

CYEP





The Challenge

In Grenada, young people face significant barriers to reaching their full potential as productive and engaged citizens. More than one third of Grenadians live below the poverty line on less than US\$5 a day. Of this group, two thirds are youth, ages 15 to 24, who lack the resources to take full advantage of the education system and therefore are not prepared to enter the labor market. As a result, youth account for 42% of the country's unemployed. A growing number of young people in Grenada have simply lost hope in the future. With few opportunities for a productive life, these marginalized youth are too often drawn into the drug trade, gangs and criminal activities—thus continuing a downward spiral into poverty.

The Initiative

In 2008, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and the United States Agency for

International Development (USAID) launched the **Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program** (CYEP) to improve the job prospects of under-served young people in Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia. The program offers market-driven training in areas such as life skills, information technology, remedial education, and vocational and entrepreneurship skills, along with internship and job placement services. In addition to building the capacity of youth-serving organizations to address the employment needs of vulnerable youth, CYEP works to strengthen alliances with public and private stakeholders to further expand job training and other opportunities for the region's vulnerable youth.

In its initial phase, CYEP benefitted over a 1,000 young people through skills training and additional support services, with 92% of employers reporting satisfaction with CYEP-trained



Having worked directly with a number of trainees who came as interns and are now on the staff of Flamboyant Hotel & Villas, I see a different attitude and comportment about them that I don't usually find with those who have attended the highly esteemed institutions. I've watched some of them rise through the ranks to very high professional levels and it's always a pleasure to work with them.

— Ms. Shelly Belfon, Restaurant Manager, Flamboyant Hotel and Villas, Grenada

interns and employees. With additional support in 2011, the program is reaching an additional 1,100 youth across the region with an expanded menu of services that includes career guidance and entrepreneurship training.

Who Do We Serve?

CYEP targets young school leavers, ages 17 to 25, with particular attention given to young males, who are unemployed, under-employed, lack the skills to participate in the increasingly service-oriented economy, or are unable to successfully initiate and sustain small business enterprises. In addition, the program supports youth as positive agents of change in their communities through its service learning component.

In Grenada specifically, the project targets youth from the poorest parishes of the country. Priority is given to particularly vulnerable youth such as single mothers and those at risk of becoming involved in juvenile delinquency.



At first I was shy and lacked confidence but this class has provided me with the communication and interpersonal skills I need in order to be an Office Attendant. It helped me to be creative and organized. I can now communicate well and I have good interpersonal skills and have developed confidence in myself.

— Shereen Maitland, CYEP office attendant course

CYEP's Approach

CYEP partners utilize a market-driven approach to its employability training, which is viewed as critical to secure partnerships with employers for internships and job placement. Such a strategy helps young people launch micro-enterprises that reflect local needs and ensures vocational training is relevant to labor market trends. CYEP partners also engage employers and successful entrepreneurs as mentors for the program's youth and hold skills expos and other events to showcase youth's competencies.

Having worked with T.A. Marryshow Community College (TAMCC) in phase 1, CYEP currently partners with Grenada Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC) to provide youth at risk in Grenada with entrepreneurship training and business support services aimed at encouraging the start-up of viable businesses, and New Life Organisation (NEWLO) to provide vocational training and job placement services.

CYEP partners in Grenada collaborate with a broad array of private and governmental organizations to carry out their work. These local partners include:

- Grenada Chamber of Industry and Commerce (GCIC), the Government of Grenada's Market Access and Rural Enterprise Programme (MAREP) and the Ministry of Finance's Office of Private Sector Development — collectively promoting the project, channeling potential participants to apply for the training, and identifying business owners to give motivational presentations to prospective youth entrepreneurs;
- The Grenada Development Bank (GDB) — providing loans to qualifying entrepreneurship graduates;
- LLME — providing mass promotional text services, computers for IT training and discounted internet packages to youth entrepreneurs; and

- National Training Agency (NTA) of Grenada, the Grenada Employers Federation, the Camerhogne Foundation and the Ministry of Youth — supporting vocational training.

Supporting Long-term Change

Working together, CYEP partners in the region seek to maximize their institutional capacity and strengthen their services, thereby positioning themselves to secure additional funding and new partners to replicate and expand this successful model. The further development of multi-sector partnerships ensures that a network of collaborating agencies and organizations is actively advocating for a national youth employment agenda that is focused on the most vulnerable and at risk members of that population.

In Grenada, GIDC and NEWLO are becoming recognizable authorities on youth



I am grateful for the technical training which I received because I was able to acquire skills, knowledge and certification. [Upon completion of my internship], I was offered employment at Belair Plantation. I started off as an intern, worked my way up and was then able to secure a position as Assistant Chef. My experience has taught me to never give up hope and to continue putting my best foot forward.

— Abigail Fletcher, CYEP food processing course

employability, building a foundation for sustainability and advocacy strengthened by the support from government agencies and the private sector. Activities such as career days and partnering with job placement agencies connect employers to beneficiaries as well as build program visibility. These linkages also help build a framework for sustained pathways to employment for youth across the country and ultimately the greater Caribbean region.

CYEP in Grenada: Results to Date

- 517 youth enrolled in program
- 294 trained in life and employability skills
- 89% employee satisfaction with entry level employees and interns
- Successful targeting of at-risk youth beneficiaries; 96% identified as poor or extremely poor
- Strengthened capacity of partner organizations to deliver quality training and job placement services

Join Us

CYEP is working in Grenada to improve the lives and prospects of vulnerable youth. The project's ability to leverage in-kind support and financial resources and build multi-sector alliances is critical to its success. CYEP welcomes support such as assistance placing youth in internships and jobs, mentorship of youth, delivery of complementary training or services such as psycho-social counseling, and donations to sponsor events.

Please join CYEP in this far-reaching effort to expand opportunities among Grenada's youth at risk so they have the skills and support they need to be productive and engaged citizens.

For more information on CYEP activities in Grenada, please contact:

Grenada Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC)

Frequente Industrial Estate
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New Life Organisation (NEWLO)

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The International Youth Foundation (IYF) invests in the extraordinary potential of young people. Founded in 1990, IYF builds and maintains a worldwide community of businesses, governments, and civil society organizations committed to empowering youth to be healthy, productive, and engaged citizens. IYF programs are catalysts of change that help young people obtain a quality education, gain employability skills, make healthy choices, and improve their communities. To learn more, visit www.iyfnfnet.org.

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