

# EQUIP<sup>YOUTH</sup>

*South Africa*

## THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE

To address the challenges facing youth seeking to enter the labor force or start up businesses, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and the Caterpillar Foundation have joined forces to create **EquipYouth**, a global program that will provide 8,000 young people in 11 countries with market-relevant life and skills training along with job placement support and services. The \$10 million initiative will be implemented over three years (January 2012–December 2014) by IYF partners in each country. Employee engagement is viewed as an integral part of this global initiative. The **EquipYouth** program seeks to increase employability among disadvantaged youth through improved life and technical skills, internships and on-the-job training, increased job placement support, capacity building for local partners and trainers, and entrepreneurship development (where applicable). **EquipYouth** will work with training partners in each location to develop or adapt the curriculum to ensure it meets the demands of local employers. Youth in the following countries will be reached through this initiative: Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Russia, Singapore, and South Africa.

## SOUTH AFRICA: THE CHALLENGE

Young South Africans, who make up more than half the country's population under the age of 24, today are experiencing a significant unemployment and a skills gap crisis. In 2010, the jobless rate among 15- to 24-year-olds was 51 percent—or twice the national unemployment rate. Worsening the situation is a significant skills gap among young job seekers, coupled with the fact that 42 percent of South Africans drop out of school before they complete their secondary education. As a result of these many challenges, young people across South Africa are looking at potentially devastating effects on their prospects for becoming productive, engaged citizens.

## THE INITIATIVE

To help address these barriers to youth employment, **EquipYouth** in South Africa seeks to provide 720 young people with a package of services that includes technical training in key job categories, holistic life skills training, and post-training support for entering the labour market. To implement the program, IYF is working in partnership with St. Anthony's Education Centre, an NGO established in 1966 to address the educational and training needs of vulnerable youth and adults in their local community. Through the **EquipYouth** Program, St. Anthony's Education Centre will strengthen and extend the duration of its jobs training programs in targeted growth sectors resulting in more extensive skills development benefits to participants; in addition, the Centre will expand its linkages with local companies to ensure the relevance of its curriculum and create opportunities for mentoring, internships and job placements for its graduates.

Through **EquipYouth**, participants will receive 24 weeks of hands-on training focused on preparing them to acquire certification as electricians, welders, automotive mechanics, bookkeepers and plumbers. A life skills component will be integrated into the technical training which will cover such topics as workforce readiness, community and work, and self-sufficiency. Upon graduation, the trainees will register with the Centre's job and career counseling office where they will receive ongoing support in finding internship and job opportunities, as well as CV writing, interview preparation and other job-seeking skills. There will also be regular follow up with trainees who are placed in jobs by the Centre as well as with employers to track the progress and performance of **EquipYouth** graduates.

The **EquipYouth** program will serve as a model and generate lessons learned about public-private partnerships for expanding access to further training and internships for vulnerable youth that will be relevant to South Africa's National Skills Development Strategy.

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The Caterpillar Foundation and Barloworld

## LOCAL PARTNER

St. Anthony's Education Centre

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