



## Summary of Situational Analysis and Market Assessment Findings – Mexico

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### Introduction

As part of PepsiCo's global investment in employability for adolescent girls and young women, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) conducted a gendered situational analysis and market assessment in PepsiCo's priority areas of intervention in Mexico and India. In Mexico, the geographic focus is the metropolitan area of Guadalajara in the state of Jalisco.

The objective of the assessment was to deepen IYF's understanding of contextualized challenges and opportunities for young women, from both demand and supply sides of employment and education. Viewed through the lens of IYF's gender framework, analysis of the findings helped inform IYF's design of work readiness programming that will be locally-relevant, feasible, and meaningful for young women and the enabling environment around them.

### Methods, Timing & Tools

From April to October 2017, IYF led a mixed-methods research effort to analyze the labor market and employability support ecosystem in Guadalajara, Mexico. The work was implemented by IYF with support from a local research firm, Demoskopica Mexico. To achieve the objective of the assessment, IYF and Demoskopica collected and analyzed primary data through field research using quantitative and qualitative tools, as well secondary data through desk research. Prior to this research and to frame the study and possible interventions, IYF conducted key informant interviews with stakeholders such as the Regional Chamber for Processing Industry (Cámara Regional de la Industria de la Transformación- CAREINTRA); the American Chamber, Guadalajara; the Jalisco State Ministry of Labor (Secretaría del Trabajo del Estado de Jalisco); the Jalisco State Ministry of Education; the Instituto Jaliscience de Tecnologías de la Información (IJALTI) and PROMEXICO.

**Primary Data Collection:** IYF developed four research tools and deployed them to collect key information from four main segments of the population. These included:

1. An employer survey, conducted with 21 businesses;
2. A service provider inventory tool, conducted with 16 educational, training, and other youth-serving organizations; and
3. A specialized focus group protocol, used to facilitate discussions using participatory consultation methods with 45 young women and 16 parents, and
4. A key informant interview protocol, applied with 5 women from Guadalajara who succeeded in their careers.

The 51-question employer survey asked about current workforce composition and pay scales, projected workforce growth and supply of workers with the right skills, as well as the firm's hiring practices of women. The sectors represented included those that contribute most to Jalisco's economic growth, such as engineering, sales, manufacturing, Information Technology (IT), logistics, retail, communications, architecture and design, accounting, administration, banking and finance, construction, education and training, health, and tourism.

The service provider inventory is a tool that combines key informant interviews with desk research, to quantify youth reach and service offerings, while identifying barriers and assessing organizational needs. It was used with educational and community service providers including the two primary technical education subsystems in the state CONALEP and CECyTE, one baccalaureate educational subsystem COBAJ, other public institutions providing employment services, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The tool collected data around the services provided by each provider, the quality of those services, and the organizational capacity to manage change and collaborate with other organizations.

The focus group protocol used a dynamic and participatory consultation method, which included drawing, group work, and discussions, to inquire into young women's future expectations and aspirations in their personal and professional lives, their perceptions of societal norms as related to their employability options, as well as identify key influencers in their lives while selecting and preparing for a career. The 45 young women that participated in the focus groups included those enrolled in junior high school and high school, as well as others who had dropped out of school. An additional traditional focus group was conducted with 16 parents whose daughters are enrolled or have recently graduated from high school. In addition, five key informant interviews were held with women from Guadalajara who had similar background to the young women, and had succeeded in non-traditional careers for women.

**Secondary Data Collection:** The desk research sought to map the key actors in the community from whom to collect primary data, as well as analyze the context in which young women lived and the labor market for which they would be prepared. IYF sought to identify the industries with greatest growth potential in the next 3-5 years, industries with highest proportions of women, and occupational salary ranges disaggregated by gender. This was accomplished by processing and analyzing job vacancy data, current employment statistics, current socio-demographic statistics, regional development plans, international and national investments, and political priorities. To this end, the study consulted the following reports and datasets:

- The National Statistics and Geography Institute (INEGI in Spanish) database;
- The Jalisco State Development Plan for 2013-2033;
- The Jalisco Innovation Agenda 2015; and
- The National Employment Service's (SNE in Spanish) vacancy databases.

## Context: Young Women in Guadalajara

The Guadalajara metropolitan area has a population of approximately 4.8 million people—of which 51.2% are women—and represents 62% of the total population of the state of Jalisco. Youth are highly concentrated in this metropolitan area, with young people between the ages of 15 and 29 representing 27% of the population. The state of Jalisco ranks 5th nationally among early pregnancies rates and in Guadalajara, young people aged 15-19 experience 11,000 early pregnancies on an annual basis. This challenge disproportionately affects women who tend to take on the majority of childcare responsibilities and, along with marriage, is cited as one of the primary reasons for discontinuing their education.

## Findings: Labor Market/Employer Assessment

The labor market analysis triangulated secondary data around job vacancies and state economic investment reports with the results of the employer surveys conducted with 21 private sector companies. The companies surveyed ranged in size and economic sectors. The smallest company registered 19 employees, while the largest was comprised of 1,850 employees. Approximately half of the companies surveyed were medium sized (100-500 employees) and 43% of them have operations in more than one location in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara with the two most popular locations being Zapopan and Guadalajara. While the sectors represented were varied, the most common sectors surveyed were manufacturing and production followed by IT. Other sectors that were surveyed included transport and logistics, architecture, human resources and hospitality.

On average, these 21 companies tend to hire mostly men. In 2016, the companies combined employed 11,451 individuals of which 58% were men while 42% were women. In terms of the kinds of positions women typically held during this time period, it was found that women were 50% less likely to be holding a supervisory role than men in key company functional areas and 41% less likely to be in a non-support staff role. Certain companies in specific sectors stood out as having higher a proportion of women on their staff than others, such as human resources and tourism and hospitality companies.

The distribution of roles and occupations among employees fall largely along gender lines within the companies surveyed. Perceptions of “women’s work” vs. “men’s work” contribute to this segregation and are common. Of employers surveyed, 90% cited that women in their companies tended to be hired in specific roles – namely administrative, accounting, or human resources. Of those who thought this way, 58% cited that women were better suited for these roles because they required characteristics such as empathy or organization – skills they believed were naturally more attributable to women. In contrast, men tended to be hired in front line operator roles and engineering roles.

The companies surveyed are in sectors that are projected to grow in Guadalajara and will need more personnel in the future. Of the employers surveyed, 93% report a current positive growth trajectory due to investments in their sectors. Upon further analysis of those contributing most to the local economy and detailed analysis of regional development plans, the research identified six dynamic sectors in the regional economy:

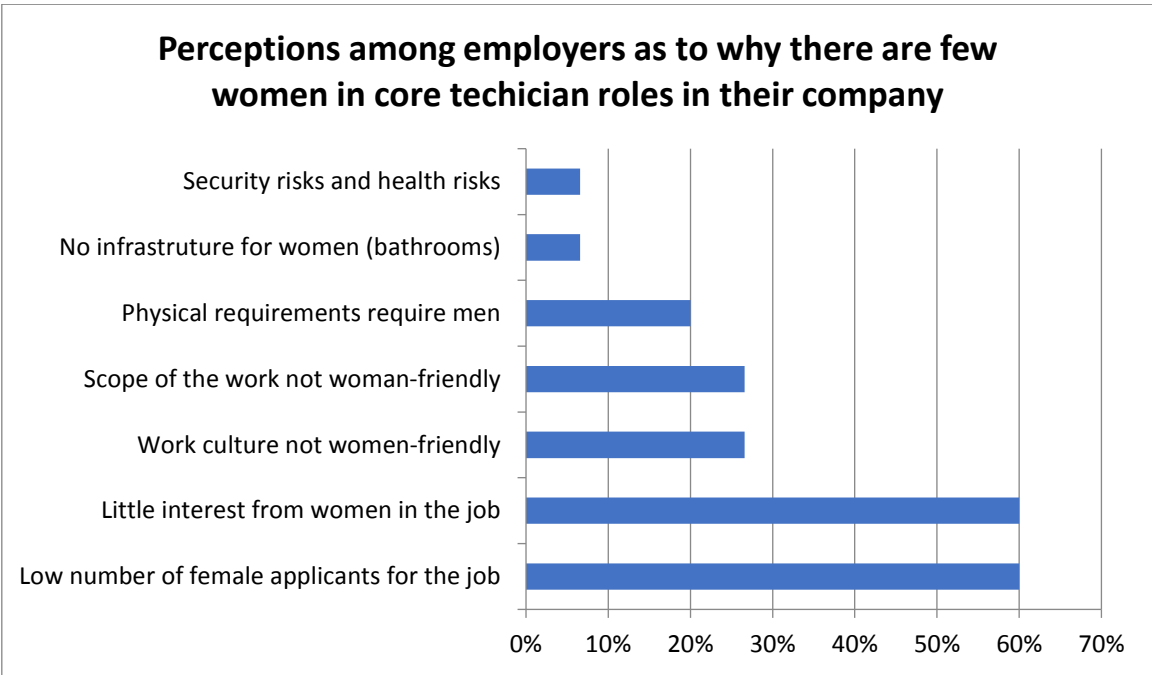
1. Pharmaceutical production
2. Electronic components
3. Private Hospital Services
4. Information technology (IT) and creative industries
5. Hospitality
6. Automotive and auto parts

The companies in the above-mentioned sectors anticipate tripling the number of technicians (non-university graduates with technical certification) they hire annually in the next year. While export oriented advanced manufacturing remains one of Guadalajara’s most important industries, public employment data show that women are largely absent from the production lines, aside from the

lowest-paying assembly positions. In contrast, women are well represented in industrial support services like export services and logistics, and the service sector including hotels, where salaries are above the regional average though still below the salary level on the production side.

In the Mexican context, technician positions are highly skilled, high-growth roles and are accessible to high school graduates who have received a high-quality vocational training. Technician maximum salaries among those companies surveyed tend to be higher than support roles. This is particularly true in the IT and Sales focused companies. Among those surveyed, 47% of employers found it much harder to find qualified female applicants for positions in their core businesses operations as technicians. Meanwhile, only 18% found it hard to hire women in support roles. Some of the reasons surrounding the technician hiring challenges vary by sector, but include:

- In the maintenance, manufacturing and transportation sectors there is a perception by both supervisors and applicants that the technician-level jobs are meant only for men due to a “need to be strong,” work varied hours, and travel to plant locations. As a result, the companies don’t recruit for women and women seldom apply.
- Among IT companies, the main challenge in finding women technicians is that women are not studying the career tracks they need and gaining the critical skills for the open positions. In IT companies, women tend to work in support roles but companies surveyed feel they could enter technical jobs if they only had the right skills.
- Generally, companies cited that they believe women want to work in office environments, hence their perception that support roles are more appropriate.
- Finally, two companies cited that women will always put first their families over work and as a result the company perceives that women will not prioritize their work and are offered less opportunities for advancement.



Through further analysis and triangulation of data the study showed that due to the cultural norms, young women do not enroll in strategic educational programs to have the necessary skills to apply for technical or supervisory positions. School data from at least 3 public high schools sub-systems showed higher enrollment rates for young men in careers related to strategic growing industries and higher salary positions, while young women have a greater presence in administrative and support-related careers, which in contrast tend to offer lower salaries and more limited growth opportunities.

While none of the surveyed employers have policies in place to promote youth employment or female employment, they did express openness and in some cases desire to employ more young women, particularly in technical and supervisory positions. Eight of the twenty-one employers reported having nondiscrimination policies in place that include gender, and reported complying with these policies. However, as evidenced above, women are generally not applying for high-growth jobs because they haven't gained the skills needed for the jobs through their education or are hindered by cultural barriers both on the employer and employee side that bars them from accessing these opportunities. Other such challenges include family care responsibilities, which employers perceive as being the responsibility of women and thus may not grant her opportunities if she has a family and limited support structures.

The survey asked how the employers would address these challenges, they suggested that more provision of services would be beneficial and cited childcare, part-time contracts mechanisms, or others that would allow young women to balance their family and work responsibilities.

Finally, there is overwhelming evidence that employers nationally and locally in Guadalajara perceive that young people and entry-level hires lack critical socioemotional skills. Forty percent of the employers surveyed during this assessment reported that socioemotional skills were either very difficult or difficult to find among applicants for their entry-level technician positions. In addition, CIDAC, via its national employer survey<sup>1</sup>, found that 20% of employers in Jalisco are unable to fill entry-level positions, due to lack of qualified candidates. They found that among human resource professionals in Jalisco the most important and scarce skills they sought to find among applicants were socio emotional skills such as communication, team work, innovation, leadership, self-management, emotional intelligence and presentation. In addition, they found that among hiring managers, these socio emotional skills were highly valued and considered scarce.

## Findings: Work Readiness/Employment Ecosystem Assessment

### **Formal Education**

Public high schools have the potential to be a motor of social mobility due to their wide reach across the region, accessibility to large numbers of students, and accessibility especially to young people from the lower socioeconomic levels of society. IYF conducted its research with the

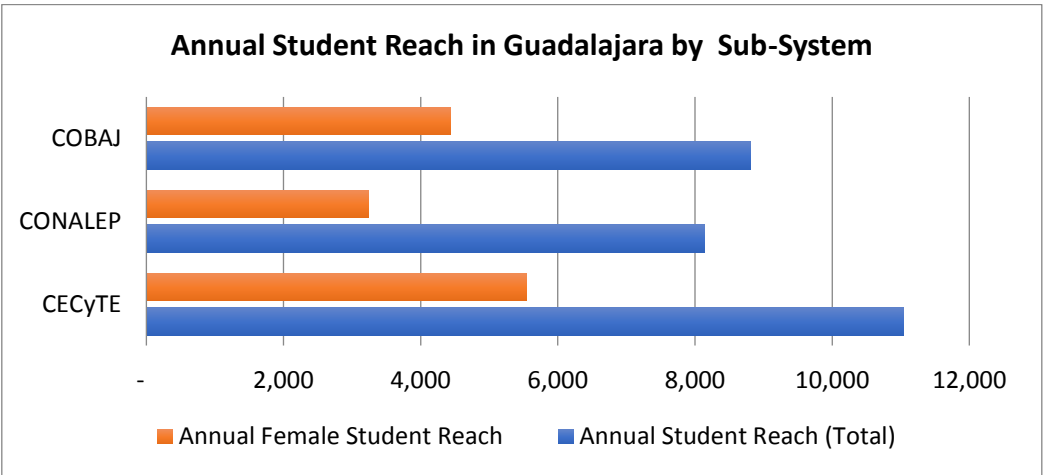
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<sup>1</sup> Encuesta de competencias profesionales: ¿Qué buscan -y no encuentran- las empresas en los profesionistas jóvenes? D.R. 2014, Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo, A.C. (CIDAC) Jaime Balmes No. 11 Edificio D, 2o. piso Col. Los Morales Polanco, 11510 México, D.F. T. +52 (55) 59851010

following high school sub-systems in Guadalajara due to their strong presence and reach in the metropolitan area:

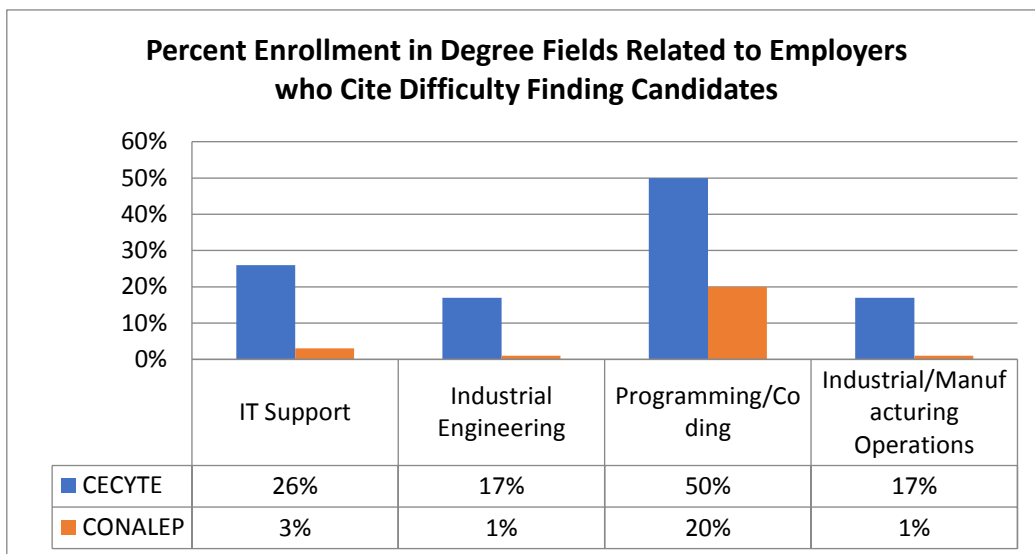
- Colegio Nacional de Bachilleres de Jalisco (COBAJ), a general studies public high school system;
- Colegios de Estudios Científicos y Tecnológicos (CECyTES), a technical-vocational public high school system, and;
- Colegio Nacional de Educación Profesional Técnica (CONALEP), a technical-vocational public high school system.

Together, these three high school sub-systems reach more than 27,000 students in all grades in Guadalajara on an annual basis, with CECyTES having the largest reach.



In the three systems combined, 47% of the students reached are young women. COBAJ and CECyTES’s student populations register 50% for each gender, while CONALEP has a slightly smaller female population of 40% of the student body.

Per the findings in our employer analysis, 37% of the companies surveyed struggle to find young men for their in-demand positions while 47% struggle to find young women for these positions. The sectors most represented in reporting these difficulties include engineering, IT, manufacturing, and logistics. The companies report that it is due to a lack of technical skills needed for these jobs among those who apply for them. CECyTE and CONALEP, the technical education providers surveyed, have degree programs that should produce young people with the requisite skills for these companies’ entry-level core operation positions – such as industrial/manufacturing operations, industrial engineering, programming/coding, and IT support. In fact, there is even decent enrollment in these degree programs as demonstrated below:



Upon further investigation with the academic planners and IYF’s review of the curricula offered in the degree programs, curricula in these fields were found to be outdated and equipment and technologies were several years old and no longer utilized in the industry. The outdated curriculum helps explain some of the reasons companies in these industries report having difficulties finding hires for their core positions, and young people especially. When IYF inquired as to how the schools update curricula, CECyTE, for example, indicated primarily engaging with the Jalisco Chamber of Commerce. Unfortunately, the Chamber of Commerce does not have the detailed information on key skills required for these industries and for these jobs. This kind of competency mapping must be done directly with companies or industry associations which have a stronger grasp of current technologies and technical skill requirements.

Not only are the school systems not training young people with the right skills demanded by key industries, but also young women tend to study traditionally “female” careers or as support personnel, including nursing (70% of degree program enrollees), accounting (67% female); executive administrative assistance (75% female); and hospitality (71% female). From the focus group discussions with young women, IYF learned that young women’s career choices are heavily influenced by their parents – their mothers in particular. When young women were asked to identify positions that were “most” suitable for men vs. for women, the four groups agreed on the following:

Jobs most suitable for men	Jobs most suitable for women
Computer programmer	Accounting professional
Industrial sales	Administrative professional
HVAC technician	Receptionist
Mechanical engineer	Secretary
	Nurse

The reasons cited included that women were “naturally” adept at these jobs because they required skills that women generally possessed over men, namely care-taking abilities and high

levels of organization – stemming from their household care responsibilities. Our analysis suggests, that due to the mothers’ primary influence as a role model and their identification with their mothers’ highly regarded responsibility of family caretaking, young women tend to opt into career tracks with more of a care-taking or organizational role. Moreover, young women also indicated that should they decide to study a more “male” position, their family and their communities would not be as supportive. This was further emphasized through the parent focus groups – where they cited that their daughters could “do whatever they want,” but they expressed a preference for societally accepted female careers. Both groups also expressed certain barriers, including a perception that employers won’t hire women for traditionally male careers because the work could be dangerous or need physical strength, and only males would be suited for such roles. In addition, the young women expressed an affinity for working in an office environment, given that there is little potential for danger and regular schedules that would allow them to complete their home care responsibilities.

In addition, the focus groups revealed that neither young women nor their parents really understood the career options available to them, the growth and salary potential of careers, the education requirements for different options or how to go about pursuing them. The focus groups with parents sought to consult a representative group of parents with middle school and high school aged children presently studying at one of the schools in the subsystems. The parents who attended the focus groups filled out a registration form that collected data around their education levels, occupation, and number of children to get a sense of the family environment of the students who attend the schools in Guadalajara. While both parents were invited to the focus groups, all but one of the attendees were mothers.

Given that the majority of these parents have low educational attainment and work in lower-income jobs, often in the informal sector, they can only provide limited career guidance around the options available to young women in school as identified in the focus groups. However, the mothers in the focus groups, expressed a strong desire to see their daughters advance in a “good” career, earn a good living, and be able to give more to their future families than they perceived being able to with their own families.

In addition, while the school systems have some career guidance offerings for students, the staff that carry-out these functions tend to hold many of the same sentiments as parents in regard to young women’s career opportunities. From interviewing the schools, it was found that the career guidance offered is also out-of-date, with little information around current labor market needs trickling into the career guidance sessions and virtually no discussion of career growth potential and related salaries. As a result:

1. Students often enroll in a college-preparatory school system, such as COBAJ, despite their family’s inability to finance their tertiary studies. This is common throughout Mexico, and results in over half of the students who come from public high schools dropping out in their first year of university.
2. In schools systems that seek to make young people job-ready at the end of high school, including CONALEP and CECyTEC, young women overwhelmingly choose



degree programs that are “traditionally female”, lead to lower-wage jobs, or are not aligned to the growth industries in the area.

In addition to the mismatch between the technical skills offerings at the schools and the employer demand, as well as the limited career guidance offerings that link students to in-demand careers, IYF found that schools are not effectively teaching the socioemotional skills that employers demand. A review of the schools’ curricula indicated that socioemotional skills – including teamwork, communication, and conflict management –are present and offered to all students. In fact, the national education ministry has formally included socioemotional skills in the standard curriculum for all high school students, recognizing the importance of these skills. <sup>2</sup> As a matter of education policy, each public high school system is required to submit documentation around how socioemotional skills development is incorporated into their educational offerings and how they will reach 100% of their students. As an example, IYF has identified over 600 hours dedicated to develop socioemotional skills in the standard CONALEP curriculum.

However, the inclusion of socioemotional skills in each school’s curriculum is not translating into workers with socioemotional skills, as identified in the labor market analysis. According to IYF’s 25+ years of experience developing socioemotional skills among young people and research in the field, we know that the most effective methods to instill these skills in youth is through practicing the soft skills taught in the classroom, using youth-friendly teaching methods, and engaging students through a variety of interactive learning experiences. Upon observation of the socioemotional skills curricula being taught in the schools in Guadalajara, it was found that teachers primarily deliver the lessons through rote learning coupled with written worksheets. As a result, students are not practicing the skills being taught and are not shown the linkage between the socioemotional skills and their real-world applications. As a result, skill acquisition is very limited.

From this analysis of the school systems, triangulated with the employer survey and youth/parent focus groups, IYF can conclude that:

- The technical skills curricula offered in schools do not prepare youth with the technical skills needed to enter high-demand occupations;
- Schools are not engaging with companies to align skills needs to educational offerings;
- Young women are largely studying degree programs for support role positions or traditionally female roles, such as nursing;
- Young women are primarily influenced by their mothers in selecting careers and degree programs to study, and neither group (young women or parents) have sufficient information around careers to make adequate decisions;
- Schools are not providing adequate career services to students or parents despite having a mandate to do so; and
- The socioemotional skills curricula offered in schools do not adequately prepare youth with the soft skills required to succeed in employment.

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<sup>2</sup> Secretaría de Educación Pública. ACUERDO número 444 por el que se establecen las competencias que constituyen el marco curricular común del Sistema Nacional de Bachillerato.

### **Provision of Complementary Services for Women and Youth**

The study identified that the state, community-based groups and non-governmental organizations in Guadalajara are offering a variety of services complementary to education to young people aged 15-25. IYF surveyed 13 public and non-profit providers, as well as 1 private provider to examine these complementary services. In terms of their primary service offerings, the majority offered job placement, health services and leadership development. In terms of their geographic reach most complementary service providers offer their services in almost all the metropolitan area of Guadalajara, with a great focus on the municipalities of Guadalajara, Zapopan and Tlajomulco.

The service providers were asked to explain the challenges they face in delivering their services and identified the following:

- Young people have limited work experience and thus are difficult to place in jobs.
- Service providers have limited resources to provide follow-up support to young people after they leave their programs.
- Young people lack key skills that make them employable – including verbal and written communication, how to use a computer, how to answer the phone, and professional vocabulary.
- Young people lack soft skills, face challenges related to early pregnancies, and school dropouts. They have immediate needs around money and thus tend to go into informal positions to make a quick income.
- Young people lack soft skills related to work ethic – once they are placed in a job, they don't show up for the interview, quit early, or are regularly late.
- Staff at the service provider organization often don't have the sensibilities or background to serve vulnerable youth.
- Youth have limited access to transportation and organizations have limited funds to support transportation needs, especially to jobs.
- Young mothers have limited access to childcare; during service provision, organizations seek to provide childcare but once in jobs, young women no longer have that support.
- There is a lack of coordination between different service providers, education providers, employers, and public institutes in the state of Jalisco that are serving similar populations.

In addition, the study examined the quality of services based on the organization's performance indicators, which showed approximately half of them reporting good performance, however, it also showcased that most of them were operating over capacity and failed to meet the demand for their services. To overcome this gap in services, some organizations combined efforts with other institutions providing similar type of services with the most coordination happening with formal education, workforce training and health. The study shows that the least coordination happens with institutions working in nutrition, perinatal care and gender equality, which indicates the need to better align and coordinate efforts in these key areas for young women. Finally, only

institutions with that work explicitly on gender equity included a gender lens approach in their services.

From this analysis of the complementary service providers, IYF can conclude the following:

- Young people face barriers to their employment including a lack of socioemotional skills, limited transportation, and limited access to childcare, faced especially by women.
- There are complementary services available that are beneficial to young people’s education and career success, especially for young women, but knowledge of these services is limited.
- There is a lack of systematized coordination among service providers, education providers, and employers.

## Findings: Target Population Assessment

As a part of the research study, IYF and Demoskopica conducted four focus groups with young women, one with their parents, and group interviews with adult women who had successfully transitioned from one of the subsystems in Guadalajara into a position in a growing company. The four youth focus groups had the following characteristics:

- Two groups were made up of young women currently studying in the CONALEP and CECyTES high schools systems;
- One group was made up of young women currently studying in middle school; and
- One group was made up of young women who had dropped out of high school.

The young women in the groups were asked to identify “typical women” in their communities to examine norms and societal expectations, trace their life milestones to date and their aspirations



*Example of a “typical woman” by focus group participants.*

for the future, and examine their perceptions around jobs available in the community and relevant degree programs.

Among the findings, the young women identified that they felt strong pressure from their families and communities to comply with societal expectations and norms as to the kinds of work they should pursue and the life trajectory they should follow. When asked to identify a typical 24-25-year-old woman, the majority (61%) identified these women as homemakers, dedicated entirely for caring for children, elderly, and the home overall. Women participants reported that women were responsible for the care of those living with them (children, elderly family members, etc.) and made the decisions about family spending. Women who fall outside of the societal role of wife and mother are perceived negatively. For those women who identified working moms as “typical,” the majority mentioned that they were working to help support their children or help their children get ahead. While study participants perceived positive societal expectation related

to women working outside the home, it was characterized as a secondary activity to complement their husband's or father's income.

Young women were asked to reflect on their lives and define their aspirations for the future, while identifying their feelings around each key moment. They unanimously indicated that they would become wives and mothers at some point in their twenties. They anticipated that becoming mothers would also be a difficult moment in their lives. While most expected to work, they indicated that once they had children or shortly thereafter, they would leave work to care for their children and the household. They noted other aspirations such as owning a home and travelling. There were few young women who highlighted pursuing additional educational opportunities and upon reflection, they cited that there is little encouragement and no expectations from their families to continue education beyond high school. When asked why the dropouts had left school or not continued onto high school, all the young women mentioned various family situations as the primary reason for leaving. This insight provides strong indication around the role of the family in how young women make decisions around their education and careers.



*Young women in the life mapping activity.*

Discussions with parents revealed a lack of awareness about the importance of cross-sectoral skills such as socioemotional skills, English language or digital literacy and the role these skills play in facilitating better life opportunities. Parents also felt that the majority of what young people learned at school was not relevant to their daily lives and especially their post-education lives. Parents agreed that young women face more challenges than young men to complete their education primarily due to the risk of early pregnancy. Young men aren't given the responsibility of caring for children and thus the young woman is the one who has to drop out of school. Further analyzing male vs. female barriers, they felt that men typically have better employment opportunities and subsequent career growth into supervisory positions over women. According to them, "men don't like it when a woman is in charge or above them in the hierarchy". When women are in supervisory roles, they feel men attribute negative reasons as to how they achieved this.

Finally, five "successful" women were interviewed to understand their career pathways from education into the workforce in Guadalajara, to identify the support structures that allowed them to be successful. The women agreed that their main source of support were their parents, particularly their mothers, from deciding their degree program to supporting them financially and emotionally through their studies and towards their jobs. The successful women also provided recommendations from their experience that allowed them to reach their career goals:

1. Having a mentor both during education and in their first job;
2. Building their career pathway as young as 16 years old, and gaining exposure to relevant opportunities;

3. Getting a wide array of employment opportunities early on, including short-term apprenticeships to staying in jobs a short amount of time in order to a variety of skills and knowledge from different organizations;
4. Using job portals actively and networking continuously;
5. Adopting a continuous learning attitude – always building transversal skills such as languages, management skills, and software used in the industries and backing those up with certifications; and
6. Having strong socioemotional skills including managing emotions, teamwork, and a good attitude.

The women, while successful, also identified challenges around hours and balancing motherhood and childcare responsibilities.

From this analysis of the young women, parents and successful women’s perceptions, IYF can conclude the following:

- Young women feel strong pressure from their families and communities to fall into traditional roles for women, including pursuing careers in-line with these roles.
- Parents are strongly dedicated to the success of their daughters, but do not have the right resources or information to steer them accordingly.
- Parents feel that young women have more challenges than young men in their education and work pursuits.
- Mothers are the main influencers in young women’s lives and can be both a barrier and support system in choosing and supporting career pathways.
- To be successful, young women should be exposed to career options early, have mentorship opportunities, gain transversal skills including languages and software, and strong socioemotional skills to be successful in the workplace.

## Validation of Findings and Program Considerations with Key Stakeholders

After analyzing data conducted during the research stage, IYF designed a validation workshop in order to receive feedback on research findings, share proposed interventions, and gauge consensus with a variety of stakeholders. The workshop was held on September 19, 2017 and was attended by 18 individuals representing PepsiCo, national and state governmental officials, school leadership, local industry chambers, and other local organizations. Most stakeholders agreed with research recommendations and with the following areas of proposed intervention:

- Prioritize strategic sectors that offered most promising economic opportunities for young women;
- Better align technical curriculum in schools with specific industry demands, including socio-emotional skills;
- Strengthen linkages between schools, industry and other service providers to provide a better environment for young women to succeed;

- Improve the delivery of cross-cutting life skills, and other functional skills, such as English, that lead to better employment;
- Offer more comprehensive career guidance, access to information, and job intermediation services; and
- Engage with parents and families around young women's life decisions.

The stakeholders validated the conclusion that these interventions were key to supporting young women to access quality opportunities and better paying jobs. The workshop provided valuable insights to guide the program design and identify local partners with whom IYF could work to achieve the program goals.

## Program Design Implications

Based on findings related to challenges and opportunities in the supply and demand side for young women's employability, there are many considerations for program design and implementation. In terms of scale, current activities and potential to move marginalized youth into good, entry-level jobs, public high schools represent the greatest opportunities for impact during the program that can also be sustained after the program ends. As a result, the program will partner with the following school systems operating in five sub-regions of the metropolitan area of Guadalajara:

- Colegio Nacional de Bachilleres de Jalisco (COBAJ),
- Colegios de Estudios Científicos y Tecnológicos (CECyTES), and
- Colegio Nacional de Educación Profesional Técnica (CONALEP).

Based on the study findings outlined in the sections above, IYF will work with the three school subsystems to address the following areas:

### **1. Aligning the labor market to industry demands in terms of technical skills and socioemotional skills development.**

The study showed a misalignment between the needs of the private sector and the technical skills curriculum being taught at the schools. Young people emerge without the skills needed to enter high-demand occupations and schools are not regularly coordinating with industry players nor analyzing the market systematically to update their technical skills curricula. In the timeline of the program, IYF will focus on reforming 3 degree programs to prepare graduates for industries that show the greatest potential for growth in Guadalajara and are most promising for providing quality, entry-level employment to youth, especially young women:

1. Coding for information technology (IT) and creative industries
2. Export Industry Operations Management (export management)
3. English language for the hospitality industry

Moreover, the socioemotional skills curricula being taught in the schools aren't producing young people with socioemotional skills, a problem identified throughout the study by the education stakeholders, company stakeholders, complementary service providers, and successful women. IYF will intervene by reforming the schools' socioemotional skills

development curricula and training teachers to be more effective in building socioemotional skills in young people.

**2. Addressing the lack of career guidance provided to young women and their parents**

Women tended to be over-represented in support role jobs in industries, as well as degree programs in schools. The reasons cited included societal expectations around women's work, the kind of work desired by women, and a lack of information around careers available in the region. In addition, parents were identified as being one the primary influencers in young women's career decision, but also lack critical information. As a result, IYF will reform the schools' career guidance practices with young people to orient young women towards non-traditional and in-demand occupations. IYF will also build the capacity of the schools to engage parents more meaningfully in career guidance activities, raise their awareness around career opportunities, and the pathways towards those in-demand careers. Access to information and counseling are key mechanisms to implement at earlier stages in young women's lives to create awareness with parents on the importance of secondary and technical education, mitigate gender biases on career decisions, and strengthen guidance on strategic decisions for their daughters' futures

**3. Improving linkages between complementary service providers to meet the needs of young women.**

The study identified complementary services that would be beneficial to young women's educational and career success, but that there is a lack of coordination among these services with the schools. IYF will seek to create referral mechanisms and engagement opportunities to support young women in the targeted schools to access these services in a systematic way. In this way, barriers identified such as childcare and transportation could be alleviated for the most vulnerable students, which often contributes to dropouts. In addition, complementary service providers could provide access to or coordinate role model and support group opportunities, a need identified by the successful women to encourage young women to pursue and access high-quality employment opportunities.