

CAREER GUIDANCE EXPERIENCES IN FIVE COUNTRIES: PANAMA, PERU, CHILE, EL SALVADOR, AND MEXICO

New Employment Opportunities (NEO) Program

A MILLION YOUTH

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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. This alliance pools resources, knowledge, and skills to drive effective and sustainable solutions to the problems of youth unemployment and skills gaps.

This study, entitled “Career Guidance Experiences in Five Countries: Panama, Peru, Chile, El Salvador and Mexico,” is part of a series of five thematic studies that analyze a range of aspects of NEO’s implementation at the local level, documenting achievements, identifying the operational challenges and restrictions, and recording lessons learned and best practices.

THE AUTHORS

The study “Career Guidance Experiences in Five Countries: Panama, Peru, Chile, El Salvador, and Mexico” was written by Fundación Chile, under the coordination of Víctor Illanes and Gabriel Rojas.

The opinions expressed in this publication are the author’s 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 of the study entitled “Career Guidance Experiences in Five Countries: Panama, Peru, Chile, El Salvador, and Mexico,” which focuses on the NEO initiatives in Panama, Peru, Chile, El Salvador, and Mexico. The study was led by Fundación Chile under the coordination of Víctor Illanes and Gabriel Rojas.

This study attempted to contribute to the complex web of pathways that must be opened up and explored to improve youth job placement in Latin America. In this area, the NEO initiative provides an opportunity to collect valuable information on how these pathways are being implemented, and on other new pathways to improve youth job placement.

NEO alliances in Panama, Peru, Chile, El Salvador, and Mexico have identified three distinctive aspects that hinder young people’s entry into the labor market:

1. The disconnect between the skills that the labor market requires and those that young people have.
2. The lack of comprehensive training programs combining technical and life skills training with internships and job placement services.
3. The lack of information on the various tools and mechanisms for identifying employment options, a life plan, a “calling” and everything related to career guidance.

The results of the NEO program should be used to create a useful model for public and private entities and civil society organizations interested in formulating policies and designing services and programs to promote young people’s entry into the labor market.

This document examines the factors that both hinder and promote the sustainability of the socioemotional skills component in organizations implementing youth employability programs. Lastly, it identifies the challenges facing PTS as a socioemotional skills component and makes a series of recommendations to improve the transfer, application, replicability, scaling-up and sustainability of the socioemotional skills component in the study countries once the NEO initiative ends.

This document examines the factors that hinder youth job placement and the main findings of the NEO program’s interventions. Finally, it identifies the challenges facing the local interventions examined and makes a series of recommendations for improving the transfer, application, replicability, scaling-up and sustainability of the NEO career guidance model in the study countries once the NEO program ends.



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