

## Youth:Work Focal Point of Policy Discussions

DC Events Engage Leaders in the Public, Private and NGO Sectors

**I**ntense discussions about the changing landscape of public-private partnerships as well as emerging solutions to the worldwide youth unemployment crisis were at the heart of two recent events sponsored by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and attended by top policy, corporate, and civil society leaders from around the world.

### Washington, DC — October 7–9, 2010

A “Youth Summit” on employment and citizenship (Oct. 7) as well as a two-day meeting of IYF’s global partner network (Oct. 8-9) in Washington DC offered unique opportunities for Youth:Work Associate Award partners to not only highlight their initiatives within the broader development community but also to exchange learnings and experiences with each other and plan next steps.

Strong participation from Youth:Work programs at these events included a seven-member delegation from Youth:Work Jordan; *Obra* secretariats from Peru, Guatemala and Jamaica; delegates from Antigua, St. Lucia, Granada, and Jamaica representing the Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP); and three local implementing partners from Youth:Work Mexico. The meeting also attracted top executives from global companies who are supporting IYF initiatives worldwide, including Youth:Work. Corporate participants included representatives from Microsoft and Starbucks, who supported the Oct. 7 event, as well

as MasterCard, Samsung, Nokia, Yahoo, Wrigley, and Laureate Education Inc.

A leading voice on youth employment issues was Jay Knott, USAID Mission Director in Jordan and a key player in the Youth:Work Jordan initiative. Serving as a panelist at IYF’s *Youth Leadership & Livelihoods Conference*, held October 7, 2010 at the Council on Foreign Relations, Mr. Knott underscored the huge social and economic challenges facing Jordanian youth as they struggle to stay in school and enter the workforce, and the rising levels of frustration — even among those who are highly educated. Youth:Work Jordan, he said, was one of the first and largest USAID programs in that country to concentrate specifically on improving the lives and prospects of disadvantaged youth.

“We want to engage them, build their skills, and get them active in their communities,” Mr. Knott said. “By matching their skills with jobs, we want to connect the dots and build initiatives with donors, IYF, the private sector, and the government to absorb this new wave of

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### ABOUT YOUTH:WORK

Youth:Work is a Global Development Alliance (GDA) Leader with Associates (LWA) assistance mechanism that USAID and other U.S. government agencies can utilize to access the youth employability programs, services and expertise of the International Youth Foundation (IYF).

Through the central Leader award, Youth:Work also promotes cross-project learning; targeted training and capacity building; rigorous monitoring and evaluation; support for partnership and leverage development; and other special initiatives.

USAID bureaus and missions may develop an Associate Award in a straightforward and rapid manner through the steps below:

- **Designate an Activity Manager** who will serve as AOTR when the award is signed;
- **Develop a Program Description**, in collaboration with IYF, as desired;
- **Clear the Program Description** with Youth:Work Leader AOTR (Patricia Flanagan, USAID/I&E, [pflanagan@usaid.gov](mailto:pflanagan@usaid.gov));
- **Send the Program Description to IYF** for proposal development (Missions may continue collaboration with IYF during process if desired);
- **Review and approve IYF’s proposal** and provide comments to the Agreement Officer. (Missions may continue collaboration with IYF during this process); and
- **Make an Associate Award to IYF.**

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Jay Knott, USAID Mission Director in Jordan (second from right) meets with Youth:Work Jordan partners and others at IYF’s Global Partner Meeting in Washington DC.

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young people so they can be a positive force in Jordan.” While clearly concerned about the magnitude of Jordan’s youth unemployment problem, Mr. Knott said that Youth:Work Jordan is maximizing its impact by building “cascading partnerships” with local and global organizations and businesses. Working with the private sector is absolutely crucial, he said, “if we are to create jobs that respond to the aspirations of Jordan’s young people.” Pamela Passman, Vice President of Global Corporate Affairs at Microsoft, agreed, adding that every sector has a responsibility to ensure young people have the skills to enter the growing IT field. Many companies have already embraced multi-stakeholder partnerships and are bringing with them their technological expertise and know, she said, “but I urge more companies to do so.”

Examining the changing landscape of public-private partnerships was the topic at a packed breakout session at IYF’s 2010 Global Partner Meeting (GPM)—where representatives of nearly 60 of IYF’s NGO partner organizations from 46 countries had come together Oct. 8–9 to share lessons, identify promising strategies, and network around youth development issues.

Helping to lead the discussion around global trends was panel member Patricia Flanagan, USAID Technical Representative for Youth:Work, who described her agency’s evolution toward building multi-sector partnerships and being a strategic player in those alliances. USAID, she said, is far more engaged with the private sector as a partner in its development initiatives worldwide than ever before. “The challenge,” said Ms. Flanagan, “is how to take the successful public/private programs that we support to scale.” One solution: ensure rigorous program evaluations, so that funding supports effective initiatives that are having a real impact.

Recent developments in public/private partnerships include a greater emphasis on the part of the private sector to ensure their CSR initiatives address a social need while also supporting the company’s customers and business strategies — including bringing jobs to the community. Such partnerships aimed at addressing social issues are becoming stronger between corporations and NGOs in the Philippines, said Victoria Garchitorena, President of the Ayala Foundation. “Because of lack of resources,” she said, “we’ve had to band together to get things done.” Participants discussed the added value of bringing multiple organizations and sponsors to the table as a way to address corporate concerns that there is too much duplication and waste in the development field. Ms. Flanagan said that partnerships are successful when



*Participants celebrate a recent Obra launch and learning event in Antigua, Guatemala.*

USAID’s development challenge intersects and overlaps with the private sector’s business challenge, creating a shared commitment to reach common goals. Partnerships are co-designed, co-funded and co-managed, so that the risks, responsibilities and rewards of the partnership are shared. USAID is a strategic partners at the table, not just a donor ticking the funding box. If you fail, she said to the group, then we fail. The benefits of public/private partnerships include improved employee satisfaction and retention; positive consumer perceptions of the company; an increased voice in the community; and greater innovation.

The challenges of working with youth in high risk communities — exemplified by Youth:Work Mexico’s activities in the violence-filled border towns of Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana — was also a topic of interest at IYF’s Global Partner Meeting. Carlo Arze, Program Director of Youth:Work Mexico and his panel described the soaring drug-related violence and corruption in those cities that have claimed 15,000 deaths over the past two years. Such activities have disproportionately impacted young people — a reality reflected in the rising number of youth gangs, the high dropout rate, and soaring unemployment. Breaking down that culture of violence and drug trafficking — through job training and entrepreneurship opportunities — is at the heart of Youth:Work Mexico. “This program will give these young people positive and productive alternatives to the despair that now fills their lives,” said Mr. Arze.

The Youth:Work Associate Award supports a robust learning and exchange agenda around best practices in the areas of youth employment and public private partnerships. These DC-based forums offered a significant and valuable oppor-

tunity for Youth:Work partners to exchange those learnings with each other and share them with top policy makers, corporate leaders, and the global NGO community.

PROGRAM UPDATES



**Obra**

Officially launched in Jamaica in April 2010, *Obra* (“work” in Spanish) is a two-year YW initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean, funded through USAID, to ensure young people at risk have improved access to services and programs needed to prepare them for citizenship, work, and life. The program was established in response to U.S. President Obama’s call for renewed and strengthened partnerships in Latin America and the Caribbean at the 2009 Summit of the Americas. *Obra* aims to directly benefit vulnerable youth through skills building, training, education support, and career assistance by mobilizing multi-sectoral partnerships to strengthen programs and services.

Over the past year, three *Obra* partnerships have been developed across the region (the Caribbean; Central America; and South America) and are headed by local organizations which serve as Secretariats. To date, over 40 institutions in seven countries have joined as members.

*Obra* has also organized two learning events: one in Jamaica in April and the other in Guatemala in July. These forums serve to highlight the challenges and barriers youth face and to strengthen alliances that will provide programs and services to address

these challenges. A third learning and launch event will take place November 17–19 in Lima Peru, sponsored by IYF, USAID, and Centro de Informacion y Education para la Prevencion del Abuso de Drogas (CEDRO), a leading Peruvian NGO.

## YOUTHMAP

### YouthMap

IYF, through Youth:Work, has launched a major needs assessment in eight Sub-Saharan countries to identify the conditions and gaps in services impacting African youth and their communities. Drawing on its expertise in the assessment field, with support from USAID, IYF's new YouthMap™ initiative will seek to capture a comprehensive picture of the lives of young people in each country, including how they spend their time, how they interact with each other and society, what services they utilize, and what needed services are not accessible. As part of the initiative, the YouthMap Innovation Fund has been established to support pilot activities that grow out of the findings of each assessment.

The four-year USAID-supported \$10 million program will survey both in- and out-of-school youth as well as those who are unemployed, and investigate opportunities and challenges related to youth development across sectors. Countries expected to be surveyed through the program include: Angola, Ghana, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Issues of interest in the survey include education, livelihoods, economic growth, health, democracy, governance, and local institutional capacity to respond to young people's needs. In each country, IYF will host a Dissemination Event to share the results of the assessment with key stakeholders, and will also sponsor regional learning conferences that engage youth as active participants.

## YOUTH:WORK Jordan

### Youth:Work Jordan

Youth:Work Jordan, officially launched in February 2010 under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania AlAbdullah, is a five-year, youth-led and community-based program that improves livelihoods and provides support for the long-term development of Jordan's youth. YWJ was developed in partnership with USAID, Jordan's Ministry of Social Development, and IYF. After completing a Rapid Community Appraisal (RCA) in targeted communities, YWJ selected three Coordination NGOs [the Jordan Career Educa-

tion Foundation, the Jordan River Foundation, and the Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development] to develop Community Action Plans for each community based on the findings of the RCA. To implement activities at the community level, the CNGOs are partnering with a network of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that will help implement and sustain the program activities being designed under the community action plans. To date, the CNGOs have identified 17 CBOs to implement employment activities, and it is expected that a total of 20 to 24 CBOs will be awarded implementation grants by the end of December 2010.

The CNGOs as well as service providers have now begun providing life skills, IT, and



### Kyrgyzstan

As part of the new Kyrgyzstan Youth Assessment project, IYF collected and analyzed data on youth (between ages 15 to 30) from 22 August to 4 September 2010. Data included interviews with public sector officials, university staff, donors, private businesses and civil society organizations as well as focus groups. The assessment will be made available to USAID in determining future programming priorities and development investments. The picture being painted of youth in the region is of a youthful population that feels anxious about their



CYEP students learn new construction skills in training class held in St. Patrick Parish, Grenada.

Business English training to out-of-work and out-of-school youth in the targeted communities. This basic employability skills training will be integrated with the technical and vocational training to give the youth a comprehensive package of youth employability skills to maximize their economic opportunities and better equip them to find a job and stay employed. To date, approximately 300 youth have benefited from these interventions. Youth have also begun implementing small-scale volunteer projects to improve their neighborhoods in each community. So far over 230 youth have participated in civic engagement activities. YWJ hopes to engage over 4,000 youth in employability and civic engagement training programs by the end of 2011, and over 15,000 by the end of the program.

future, yet generally lacks the tools (e.g., practical technical skills, life skills, entrepreneurial skills, and also citizenship skills) to change their circumstances. The report to USAID includes both the challenges and opportunities young people have in determining their economic futures.



### Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP)

Launched in 2008, CYEP equips vulnerable youth, ages 17 to 25, with the technical, vocational and life skills needed to develop sustainable livelihoods. A US \$2.5 million USAID-supported program, CYEP continues to expand its youth employment focus in the Caribbean, with programs in Antigua and

Barbuda, Grenada, Jamaica, and most recently, St. Lucia. By the end of the project in 2011, the initiative plans to deliver job training to 1,100 young people across the Caribbean, and place at least 40% of them in quality jobs.

CYEP's most recent project in St. Lucia — launched in September 2010 — is currently working with three separate organizations to train and place vulnerable youth in jobs. CYEP in St. Lucia was also chosen under the Planning for Life/Phase II grant to promote reproductive health as part of the training offered to CYEP participants. Thanks to the Youth:Work LWA, representatives from all four CYEP partners attended the IYF Global Partner Meeting (GPM) in October 2010 in Washington, DC, with some arriving early to participate in the reproductive health training session. The GPM also offered a valuable opportunity for CYEP partners to meet and reconnect face to face.

**YOUTH:WORK**

*trabajando con los jóvenes de México*

**Youth:Work Mexico**

A three-year \$3 million Youth:Work Leader with Associates initiative, Youth:Work Mexico (YWM) plans to build resilient communities in Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana by creating safe spaces for disadvantaged young people, strengthening after-school and summer programs, and prepar-

ing Mexican youth for viable futures through jobs or entrepreneurship opportunities. This summer, more than 1,600 at-risk young people (ages 4 to 20) attended 20 YWM summer camps operated by seven civil society organizations. Some 2,300 primary and secondary school students participated in after-school programs in 16 schools. A training program was also offered to strengthen the capacity of 32 facilitators to promote social and human development through the transfer of life skills, culture, ethics and values.



**YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM**

**West Bank/Gaza**

A new USAID-supported YW program in the West Bank and Gaza that emphasizes entrepreneurship has been established to improve employability skills among Palestinian youth. Building on IYF's experience in the area of job training through programs such as *entra21* and Education & Employment Alliance, the youth entrepreneurship program will provide young people ages 14 to 29 with access to high quality, comprehensive training linked with internships or apprenticeships that will prepare them for formal sector employment or the capacity to start their own enterprises.

A crucial aspect of IYF's approach is to feature youth prominently in all activities, including a significant role in defining and implementing the programs. The \$15 million initiative plans to reach 10,000 beneficiaries over the next four years with training in life skills, ICT, vocational and technical skills, basic education, and enterprise development. The program will also offer participants service learning opportunities through youth-led community activities. **Y:W**



Students enrolled in Youth:Work Mexico's after school programs in Ciudad Juarez explore their talents in dance and music.