



FACT SHEET

USAID Bridges to Employment

Currently, Salvadoran youth living in municipalities with high crime rates have twice the chance of being unemployed than the rest of the population. However, if these youth are successfully integrated into the workforce, their collective potential could significantly boost economic growth in El Salvador as they become fully qualified and productive citizens.

In support of the goals of the Alliance for Prosperity, proposed by the governments of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras and aligned with the El Salvador Seguro plan, USAID's \$42.2 million Bridges to Employment Project will help to improve those systems and institutions which link at-risk youth between the ages of 16 and 29 to improved employment opportunities.

The demand-driven nature of this intervention is the cornerstone of USAID's approach. Starting with an analysis of existing labor market demand, the project will work with training institutions to prepare beneficiaries according to the needs of employers in high-growth sectors. Through a holistic approach to capacity building, USAID will facilitate soft skills development and on-the-job technical training for beneficiaries' professional development, entrepreneurial initiatives, or a continuation of their formal education. Furthermore, USAID expects that youth will develop pro-social behaviors and a clear vision for their futures in El Salvador, which will reduce their risk of being pulled into illicit activities.

USAID's project will improve an enabling environment for workforce development and employment. This will be achieved by addressing policy barriers that limit at-risk youth employment, increasing access to high-quality data on labor market demand to facilitate youth entry into the workforce, and improving perceptions of the value of young Salvadoran employees.

Furthermore, USAID will contribute to improve the quality of workforce development services with an assessment and capacity building of selected local workforce development service providers; and also by fostering private sector engagement with service providers and municipal governments, and supporting the inclusive hiring of marginalized or vulnerable youth into the workforce.

The project expects an improved workforce readiness demonstrated by target at-risk youth. For this, it will evaluate and develop services and training; facilitate access to services, training and jobs for at-risk youth; and support youth entrepreneur initiatives.

USAID's ultimate goal is to help deliver beneficiaries with improved technical and soft skills, for these beneficiaries to obtain new or better employment (including self-employment), and training service providers with improved capacity to deliver holistic support services to at-risk youth.



Youth receive technical training.
Photo: Plan International

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Total investment: \$42.2 million

Period: October 2015 – September 2020

Geographic areas: Nationwide

Contractor: Development Alternatives Inc.

Partners:

- Technical and Planning Secretariat (STPP)
- National Youth Institute (INJUVE)
- Ministry of Labor
- Private sector employers and business associations
- National Institute for Professional Training (INSAFORP)
- Technical and professional training institutions

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