

VEGA Youth and Workforce Development



VEGA Member Youth & Workforce Development Experience

Asia / Central Asia

Afghanistan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Turkmenistan

Caribbean & Latin America

Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Brazil, Guatemala, St. Croix, Argentina, Colombia, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, Uruguay, Bolivia, Panama

Eastern Europe

Moldova, Russia, Georgia, Serbia

Middle East/ North Africa

Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Algeria, Bahrain, Lebanon, Morocco

Sub-Saharan Africa

Tanzania, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Benin, Eritrea, Madagascar, Liberia, Mozambique

VEGA actively implements programs that empower youth to lead healthy, productive, and equitable lives. By tapping youth's creativity and energy and expanding their opportunities, VEGA programs help young people make powerful contributions to creating more stable and thriving communities. Creating opportunities for youth is also an important means of reducing social unrest and fostering stabilization in post-conflict and natural disaster-stricken regions. In countries trapped by cycles of poverty and conflict, generating employment and enabling youth to focus on long-term education and career development goals can be an effective means to break the cycle.

VEGA's youth and workforce development projects have involved close collaboration with host country ministries of education/labor, vocational training institutes, associations, chambers, educational institutions, and private businesses.

VEGA incorporates youth and workforce development across its areas of focus, sectors, and regions. Nearly all programs include youth components and many programs focus on youth exclusively. VEGA is proud to be an industry leader generating widespread opportunities for youth.

VEGA youth programs include:

- Business skills, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and technology training
- Small grants and microfinance loans for young entrepreneurs
- Vocational training and career development services
- Apprenticeship and internship placements
- Youth-oriented agricultural and tourism value chain interventions
- Conservation education and employment programs (e.g., coral reef restoration and tree planting)
- Team sports, summer camps, leadership conferences, and exchange programs to help youth develop skills and re-enter formal education.
- Community volunteerism
- Scholarships

About Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA):

A 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, founded in 2004 through a Leader with Associate (LWA) cooperative agreement, VEGA is an agile vehicle for USAID Economic Growth Officers to tap the Alliance's 17 Member NGOs in building capacity for private, public and NGO sector development. VEGA is the world's largest consortium of economic growth volunteer organizations that collectively have assisted 140 developing countries & mobilized more than 67,000 experts to promote economic growth activities. VEGA's track record of delivering sustainable solutions throughout the developing world includes over 20 programs worth more than \$100 million

Program Highlights:

The following program highlights represent a sample of what VEGA Members have to offer:

Youth “Lift-Off” in Egypt with Entrepreneurship Opportunities. The LIFT-OFF Initiative was awarded to the Institute of International Education (IIE) by the U.S. Department of State’s Middle East Partnership Initiative in September 2010 to foster a culture of entrepreneurship among youth across North Africa. Activities include a virtual IdeaLab, contests and competitions at schools and universities, capacity building for youth entrepreneurial support centers, an Entrepreneurial Leadership Program, and support for young entrepreneurs as they enter the job market.



Vocational training program implemented by Partners of the Americas

“A Ganar Team” Sports Program Builds Job Skills. Led by Partners of the Americas, “A Ganar” (Vencer in Brazil) utilizes team sports to help youth in Latin America and the Caribbean find jobs, learn entrepreneurial skills, or re-enter the formal education system. “A Ganar” combats youth unemployment through the application of an integrated job training program to transform lessons and skills developed through sports into marketable job skills. Building on Partners of the Americas’ 45 years of experience and contacts throughout the hemisphere, the “A Ganar” Alliance plans to train over 9,400 youth in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2012.

Yes Youth Can! (YYC) is a Success in Kenya. YYC is an USAID funded program which aims to empower youth across Kenya to participate effectively in political leadership and governance and build their entrepreneurial skills to engage in livelihood activities that will enhance their socio-economic status. NCBA/CLUSA has partnered with two Kenyan non-governmental organizations, the Youth Foundation of Kenya and Participatory Approaches for Integrated Development, to initiate the YYC Program.

Cocoa-Growing Communities Provide Opportunities for Youth in Cote d’Ivoire and Ghana. In Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, through Empowering Cocoa Households with Opportunities and Education Solutions (ECHOES), Winrock is strengthening cocoa-growing communities—and in the case of Côte d’Ivoire, promoting peace and stability—by expanding opportunities for youth (eight to 30 years old). Participant-led programming includes developing improved agricultural practices and providing training in life skills, leadership, and small-business management. The program is a public/private partnership with the cocoa industry.

“Maharat” Jordan-US Business Partnership Matches Youth with Jobs. One of the major achievements of IESC’s Jordan-U.S. Business Partnership program was the establishment of an internship program called “Maharat.” Under the program, IESC placed unemployed recent university graduates in science, engineering, and business administration at small and medium enterprise (SME) clients. Each intern worked at the firm for one year with the cost of their stipend split equally between the employer and the IESC program. In about 80% of the cases, the intern was hired by the employer at the end of the internship.