


# LIFELONG OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN



Education Development Center (EDC) is one of the leading international organizations in youth workforce development, employment, and entrepreneurship. We have a proven track record of upskilling and improving the livelihoods of over 4 million youth worldwide. Since 1958, EDC has worked in more than 80 countries. Each year, we manage an average of 200 projects valued at USD 173 million, with support from USAID, the Mastercard Foundation, the World Bank, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, Bank of America, Hewlett Packard, Cisco, Google, and other public and private sector partners.



## EDC's Experience in Youth Skills and Employment:

  
20+ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

  
49 COUNTRIES

  
4,000,000 YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN

  
68% EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS RATE

  
32,000 YOUTH BUSINESSES

  
70% YOUTH ENTERPRISES THRIVING AFTER 2 YEARS

  
750+ YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS STRENGTHENED

## RESULTS AT SCALE

**EDC has a successful track record in upgrading skills and promoting employment opportunities for underserved youth in low- and middle-income countries.**

### Skills Upgrading and Employment

EDC works with a vast network of local service providers—public and private—to upgrade the skills of young people so that they are aligned with current and future market demand. Young men and women gain access to services that are grounded in Positive Youth Development (PYD) principles and include: demand-driven skills training, soft skills development, mentorship, job placement, coaching and career advice, entrepreneurship support, and access to financial services.

- In Rwanda, a network of over 65 Rwandan service providers has served over **91,000 poor and underserved youth** with a **65% job placement rate** and an average **225% increase in incomes** among young entrepreneurs. With an 85% satisfaction rate among the 2,500+ employers who hire program graduates, companies are also contributing to—and many paying for—these services. In response, the government of Rwanda has incorporated these state-of-the-art approaches into secondary and technical and vocational schools nationwide. Today, 275,000 students per year are gaining these essential work readiness skills.
- In Honduras, 80,000 at-risk youth from neighborhoods experiencing high rates of violence gained technical, vocational, and life skills through a network of 200 education and vocational and technical centers. In addition, in partnership with the Honduran Private Enterprise Council, chambers of commerce, and industry associations, young job seekers accessed internships in companies, and an overwhelming **96% of companies rated the interns as “good” or “excellent.”**
- Throughout the Lower Mekong sub-region of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, over **60,000 higher education students** accessed **project-based learning in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and accounting fields**. We partnered with over 1,000 instructors in universities and vocational colleges as well as international and local companies—resulting in the *MekongSkills2Work Network*. This network has spread to other higher education institutions to scale interdisciplinary technical, soft, and entrepreneurial skills alongside real-world problem-solving.

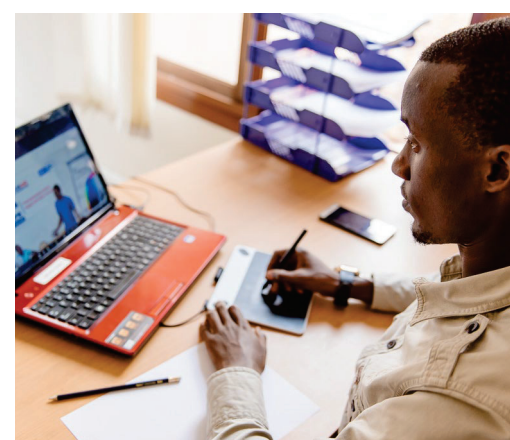
### Snapshot of EDC Performance in Youth Workforce Development

Country	Profile of Participating Youth	Total Number of Participants	Job Placement Rate among WFD Participants
Somalia	Unemployed, out-of-school youth	10,653	68%
Mali	Rural, unemployed, out-of-school youth	14,853	74%
Rwanda	Economically disadvantaged rural & urban youth	91,058	65%
East Timor	Rural youth living in conflict-affected areas	2,080	57%
Honduras	At-risk urban youth affected by crime & violence	8,572	55%
Haiti	Out-of-school youth with low literacy	13,050	53%
Guyana	Formerly incarcerated youth	3,072	46%
Kosovo	Start-up entrepreneurs	2,685	100%

## Youth Entrepreneurship and Youth-Inclusive Markets

Over the past five years, more than 32,000 young entrepreneurs in select countries have created and expanded their businesses due to EDC programs. We tap into local networks and engage diverse market actors so that youth access the skills and support they need to succeed in the market. These supports include entrepreneurship and soft skills, peer-based business networks, tailored business coaching, mentoring, market linkages, and access to finance through savings mobilization and loan facilitation. Among its results, EDC's programs have accomplished the following:

- Set up a **peer-based business coaching and accompaniment** mechanism for young entrepreneurs in five countries, which is being supported by a network of schools and private service providers. In the conflict-affected areas of Mali, for example, local service providers trained a network of 300+ youth volunteer leaders, who, in turn, offered business support to one another. As a result, 8,000 youth launched microenterprises, of which 70% were still operating two to four years later with an 84% increase in their profits.
- Established **private sector-led mentoring programs** through work-based learning, created incentives for employers to establish more inclusive policies and practices, and linked major buyers to businesses that are owned and operated by youth, women, and people with disabilities.
- Introduced entrepreneurship and soft skills curriculum into 268 lower secondary schools and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) centers in Senegal, reaching over 20,000 students per year. This model incorporates **after-school entrepreneurship clubs** where teachers help young people practice business skills and connect with the private sector.
- Established **youth-led savings groups** through our partnership with Catholic Relief Services across several countries. Through these savings groups, **over 60,000 young people** have increased their savings, built resilience to shocks, and started and/or expanded their own businesses. We also partnered with microfinance institutions and banks to create **innovative youth-friendly financial products** and expanded financial literacy training and loan facilitation services that link young people with those products.
- Created a **global virtual entrepreneurship curriculum** for Hewlett-Packard's HP-LIFE e-learning platform, reaching over 560,000 young entrepreneurs in 240 countries in seven languages with a 96% user satisfaction rate.
- Boosted the sales of small- and medium-sized technology companies in Bosnia & Herzegovina by 5% by improving their human resource management capacity and retention of young workers.



## SERVICE DELIVERY

Local service providers draw from and adapt a time-tested, evidence-based service package that works for young people—and puts them to work.

### Work Readiness and Soft Skills Development

Work Ready Now (WRN), EDC’s work readiness program, consists of a customizable, modular skills curriculum that emphasizes the skills needed in today’s ever-changing economies. WRN’s eight foundational modules are aligned with three internationally recognized work readiness frameworks. It relies on **hands-on, experiential learning approaches**, through which youth gain skills such as confidence, goal-setting, curiosity, and the ability to model respectful behaviors. It offers a set of complementary modules, including civic engagement, digital literacy, Healthy Actions, and Foundations of Resilience. It also enables youth to practice and apply their newly acquired skills in the real world, such as through work-based learning opportunities, savings groups, and entrepreneurship clubs. When first introduced into a new country, the curriculum goes through an adaptation process that involves local businesses, governments, youth-serving organizations, and young people. WRN has been adopted by local stakeholders in **26 countries** and in **20 languages**. Our statistically reliable assessment tools—the Anchored Big Five Inventory and the WRN Credential Test—accurately quantify the attainment of soft skills over time.

### Work-Based Learning

Work exposure and experience in the real world allow youth to observe and practice their skills. EDC partners with local resource providers—teachers, youth workers, youth clubs, savings groups, peer networks, and social media—to **empower young people to engage with the private sector**. Simultaneously, employers learn how to equip and retain a productive workforce with a work-based learning program that is supported by EDC’s local partners.

### Youth Leadership and Accompaniment

Through WRN, select female and male participants complete leadership training and then mobilize their peers to offer career support and business accompaniment to one another. Youth meet weekly for up to six months to support each other as they work toward their goals and connect to market opportunities. Young people design and complete a civic engagement project as a way of building local assets, networks, and resources.



- Entrepreneurship skills
- Marketing
- Business coaching
- Market linkages
- Financial services



- Work-based learning
- Informed career choices
- Relationships/networks
- Employer engagement, recruitment, & retention



- Learning
- ICT skills
- Digital literacy
- Digital citizenship
- Virtual work-based learning



- Youth-led solutions
- Business innovation challenges
- Demand-driven skills training
- Employer-led skills boot camps

## Cost-Effective and Inclusive Distance Learning

EDC promotes equity in education by leveraging diverse virtual learning platforms—from low-tech to high-tech solutions—and using both synchronous (real-time, face-to-face) and asynchronous (self-paced) learning. EDC programs accomplished the following:

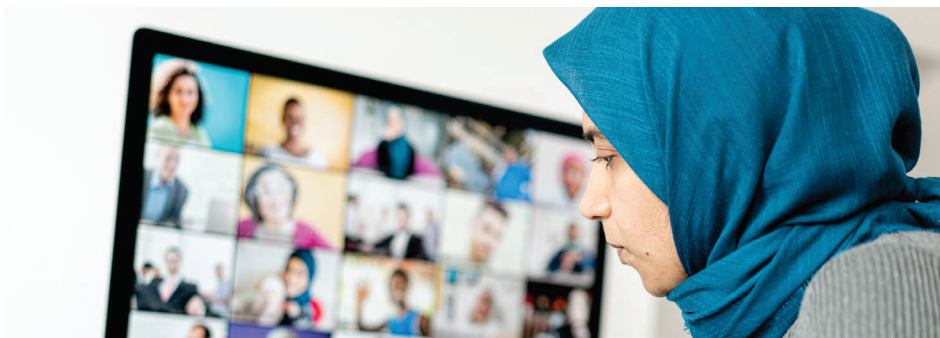
- Increased access to education and skills development for over **100 million learners** and hundreds of thousands of facilitators in the most remote settings through **interactive audio instruction (IAI) in 24 countries** over the past 30 years.
- Offered a free 12-week **cloud computing skills** training program in Senegal, which was led by the private sector and implemented in partnership with **Amazon Web Services**. More than 90% of graduates successfully obtained a job interview.
- Partnered with **Amgen Biotech** to create e-learning resources for face-to-face, online, and blended education in science and biotechnology, reaching 1 million secondary school students worldwide.
- Ensured the continued delivery of in-demand skills training among Lebanon’s higher education students during the COVID-19 pandemic by offering training to **853 instructors across 10 higher education institutions** in soft skills, entrepreneurship, distance learning techniques, and interactive instruction.
- Rolled out work readiness curriculum within Senegal’s Ministry of TVET’s **nationwide e-learning system**, reaching youth through entrepreneurship clubs in 260 secondary, technical, and vocational schools.
- Expanded access to **virtual work-based learning** for youth interested in jobs or self-employment opportunities in graphic design, coding, website development, or other “gig” work. Meanwhile, EDC programs have set up e-coaching platforms for teachers to support these youth in their career journey.
- Joined with local supply chain actors during COVID-19 lockdowns to print and distribute **13,000 self-paced learning packets** to out-of-school youth in low-resource areas of the Philippines.



### INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

EDC has promoted skills, employment, & entrepreneurship in sectors such as:

- ✓ Accounting
- ✓ Animal Husbandry
- ✓ Aquaculture
- ✓ Auto Mechanics
- ✓ Banking
- ✓ Biotechnology
- ✓ Caregiving
- ✓ Cloud Computing
- ✓ Engineering
- ✓ Food Processing & Packaging
- ✓ Graphic Design
- ✓ Health Care
- ✓ Horticulture
- ✓ Hospitality, Restaurant, & Retail
- ✓ Office Administration
- ✓ Recycling
- ✓ Renewable Energy
- ✓ Security/Public Safety
- ✓ Skilled Trade
- ✓ Technology & Mobile App Development
- ✓ Telecommunications
- ✓ Textiles
- ✓ Tourism
- ✓ Transport
- ✓ Water & Sanitation



## SYSTEMS

Our impact is sustainable and *at scale* because our approach reinforces a more accessible, equitable, and inclusive youth system.

As a leading member of the Youth Systems Collaborative<sup>SM</sup>, EDC applies a systems approach in its programs. Acting as a facilitator, we work with diverse stakeholders across the entire system—education and training providers, the private sector, youth-led and youth-serving organizations—aligning their interests and incentives so that, together, they provide the supports that young people need to thrive.

- **Partnered with over 5,000 small-, medium-, and large-sized enterprises around the world**, who invested cash and in-kind resources in skills upgrading. Today, many of these enterprises continue to partner with local education and training providers and pay for skills training and work-based learning among their workforce.
- Introduced demand-driven workforce development innovations that have been **embedded within the formal education systems** in at least five countries. EDC works closely with government ministries to conduct **cost analyses** that enable them to scale market-driven soft skills and entrepreneurship training and work-based learning at the national level.
- Supported mayoral offices in 18 regions of the Philippines to create **Youth Development Alliances**—locally formed public-private partnerships that mobilize the resources of local government, the private sector, young people, and youth-serving organizations to improve education outcomes for 200,000 youth nationwide.
- Promoted a culture of innovation, iteration, adaptation, and learning among local workforce development stakeholders, including the establishment of **data-sharing platforms and Web-based analytics dashboards** that offer real-time information on service delivery and help service providers and policymakers continually improve the quality, reach, and coordination of their investments.



## STRENGTHS

EDC's experience, resources, and partnership networks enable us to deliver results across challenging contexts.

### Building Youth's Resilience to Shocks and Stressors

EDC helps youth develop greater resilience with emotional, foundational, and livelihood skills. We also work to strengthen the enabling environment so that families and communities offer youth better opportunities for social, civic, and economic engagement.

- Strengthened the resilience of 12,000 vulnerable youth affected by violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Studies show that 61.9% of program participants improved their level of **self-efficacy**, while 56.1% improved their perception of **optimism and positive identity**. In addition, 54.4% of youth increased their **leadership self-perception** in solving community-level problems.
- **Measurably improved youth's perceptions of their communities and government** in the conflict-affected Mindanao region of the Philippines. A quasi-experimental study also showed positive changes in youth's **perceptions of violence**—including violent extremism.
- Pioneered the creation of four **Youth Development Resource Centers** through a **network of 30 Affiliated Youth Clubs** in the West Bank, reaching 27,396 at-risk youth with life skills, civic engagement, and internships.
- **Reduced recidivism and violent crime** among 3,000 youth in Guyana's juvenile justice system through cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), coaching, mentoring, and skills training, resulting in close to half of participants gaining tangible jobs.



### Creating More Inclusive Youth Systems

EDC is committed to building equitable and socially just systems by addressing the root causes of discrimination and barriers to education and employment for marginalized populations. To do so, we engage a diversity of actors with participatory program design and implementation approaches. We work closely with these partners to build their capacity to conduct gender equity and **social inclusion assessments** that lead to more inclusive policies and programs. Further, we support community organizations and local leaders to implement, monitor, and evaluate impact and sustainability

- **Partnered with thousands of employers (small-, medium-, and large-sized enterprises)** worldwide to adopt more inclusive and equitable hiring, retention, and workplace policies and practices, including disability inclusion in the workplace.
- Reduced barriers to engaging women in the workforce in Rwanda by **professionalizing the early childhood development (ECD) industry** through an official certification program and the establishment of ECD centers to support working women.
- Made skills upgrading more accessible to young mothers in Liberia by incentivizing local training centers to adopt **flexible training hours**. Mothers who were breastfeeding were also encouraged to bring their infants to the classroom.
- Mitigated **school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV)** in the DRC through multi-pronged approaches, such as SRGBV trainings for teachers, school administrators, and parents; scripted lessons for students; posters, theatre events, radio broadcasts, and youth clubs; and regional surveys and commission reports.
- Brought together employers and local disabled persons organizations to implement USAID’s first workforce development project focused exclusively on promoting equity, inclusion, and empowerment of **youth with disabilities**.

## Providing Thought Leadership in Education and Youth Workforce Development

EDC currently implements the \$37 million *Leading through Learning Global Platform* to assist USAID’s Center of Education in promoting knowledge management and demand-driven learning networks. Previously EDC was the implementer of the Education Quality Improvement (EQUIP3) project (a USAID global funding mechanism for youth workforce development) and the USAID-funded Education in Crisis and Conflict Network. EDC possesses a cadre of more than **75 in-house senior technical experts** in international education, distance learning, youth employment and workforce readiness, entrepreneurship and youth-inclusive markets, positive youth development, violence prevention, gender equity, adolescent health, research, monitoring and evaluation, and learning.

### EDC’s Global Presence (2003–2023)

Bolivia	Somalia
Honduras	South Africa
Peru	Tanzania
Colombia	Uganda
Dominican Republic	Zambia
Guyana	Armenia
Haiti	Azerbaijan
Jamaica	Bosnia
United States	Bulgaria
Egypt	Cyprus
Jordan	Georgia
Lebanon	Kosovo
Morocco	Macedonia
West Bank	Montenegro
Yemen	Serbia
Botswana	Afghanistan
Burkina Faso	Bangladesh
Djibouti	India
DRC	Pakistan
Ethiopia	Tajikistan
Ghana	Cambodia
Kenya	China
Liberia	East Timor
Madagascar	Indonesia
Malawi	Laos
Mali	Myanmar
Niger	Philippines
Nigeria	Sri Lanka
Rwanda	Thailand
Senegal	Vietnam

