



## TOWARD A YOUTH-INCLUSIVE GREEN ECONOMY



Photo: Programme de Formation Professionnelle et d'Insertion (PFPI), Senegal/Raymond Diop, AD Agency

Education Development Center (EDC) is one of the leading international organizations working at the nexus of youth workforce development and employment, education, climate change adaptation, and the green economy in low- and middle-income countries.

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 the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Mastercard Foundation, the World Bank, the Bank of America Foundation, the JP Morgan Chase Foundation, 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

  
**32,000**  
YOUTH  
BUSINESSES

  
**4,000,000**  
YOUNG MEN  
AND WOMEN

  
**70%**  
YOUTH ENTERPRISES  
THRIVING AFTER  
2 YEARS

  
**68%**  
EMPLOYMENT  
SUCCESS RATE

  
**750+**  
YOUTH SERVING  
ORGANIZATIONS  
STRENGTHENED

Through the **Our World, Our Work** initiative, EDC has committed to a 10-year mission to meaningfully integrate at least 1 million young people into the green economy and empower them toward climate action. Our commitment was inspired by our partners in the countries where we operate, who were indicating a disconnect between the climate change policies, programs, dialogues, and investments happening at the international and national levels and the realities of the priorities, assets, and capacities of diverse stakeholders at the local level. Together with its network of partners, EDC is bringing its expertise and convening power to bring about transformative change for a youth-inclusive green economy.

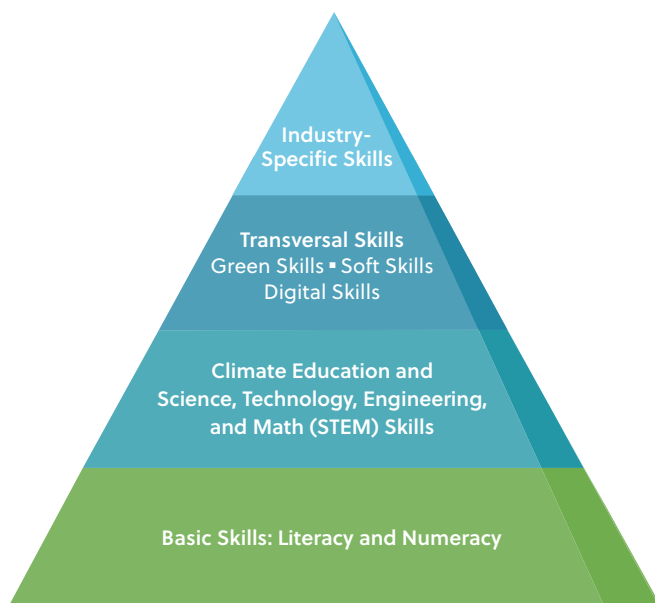
## **Education and Skills Development**

**EDC has a successful track record in upgrading skills and promoting employment opportunities for underserved youth in low- and middle-income countries, equipping them with the skills, assets, and agency they need to integrate into the green economy and adapt to the impacts of climate change.**

- + EDC partnered with the Government of Senegal to develop a demand-driven work readiness skills curriculum for its secondary schools and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, serving **40,000 learners per year** across the country. The Government of Senegal continues to expand the model to more schools and TVETs across the country.
- + Over **180,000 out-of-school youth** in the Philippines are receiving second-chance education and employment opportunities in partnership with the Government of the Philippines, USAID, the private sector, civil society, and young people.
- + Throughout the Lower Mekong subregion of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam, over **60,000 higher education students accessed project-based learning in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)**. We partnered with over 1,000 instructors in universities and vocational colleges, alongside international and local companies, to scale out interdisciplinary technical, soft, and entrepreneurial skills along with real-world problem-solving.
- + In Rwanda, a network of over 65 Rwandan service providers trained **91,000 poor and underserved youth** with in-demand work readiness skills, boasting a 65% job placement rate and an average 225% increase in incomes among young entrepreneurs, as well as an 85% satisfaction rate among 2,500 employers. Since then, the government of Rwanda incorporated these state-of-the-art approaches into secondary and technical/vocational schools nationwide, reaching **275,000 students with per year**.



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**Figure 1. Green jobs skills requirements for a just transition**

EDC has worked with scores of national and local education and workforce development systems around the world, helping them to prepare learners for the kinds of skills required by the green economy and climate adaptation—from expanding access to basic literacy and numeracy skills to developing STEM skills at the secondary and postsecondary levels to integrating durable green skills and soft skills into curriculum to developing short-term industry-specific green skills courses.

**We have empowered education and workforce development systems to prepare their workforce for the broad sets of skills required by the circular economy.** EDC works with a vast network of service providers—public and private—to upgrade the skills of young people so that they are aligned with current and future demands of the green economy. We have a wealth of experience in curriculum adaptation, bringing state-of-the-art practices in curriculum development, pedagogical approaches, work-based learning, entrepreneurship, distance learning, and micro-credentialing. And we have done so across all levels of skills required by the green economy (Figure 1).

- + Introduced demand-driven, transferrable work readiness skills to businesses, governments, and youth-serving organizations in **28 countries** and in **19 languages**. Known as Work Ready Now, this flexible, modular skills curriculum includes a dedicated **module on the blue and green economy**, as well as the **Blue and Green Trainer Facilitation Guide**, which incorporates design thinking principles as well as empathy, creativity, and continuous improvement. The curriculum is also supplemented with other modules, including project-based learning opportunity, internship or other work-based learning opportunity, entrepreneurship training and business support, financial literacy and savings mobilization, and technical training.
- + Equipping 700 young leaders in 11 countries throughout Southeast Asia with **environmental leadership development** so that they actively contribute to the sustainable development of the Mekong region. (See Box 1.)
- + Partnered with **Amgen Biotech** to create e-learning resources for face-to-face, **online, and blended education in science and biotechnology**, targeting 1 million secondary school students worldwide.
- + 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.

### Equipping Young Environmental Leaders throughout Southeast Asia

Across 11 countries of Southeast Asia, young university leaders are being empowered to act on environmental issues and to contribute to the sustainable development of the Mekong region. Through the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative – Mekong Program (YSEALI-Mekong), funded by USAID and implemented by EDC, youth take online courses on the environment, biodiversity, and climate change in the Mekong, coupled with leadership development. Youth apply what they learn through a work-based learning project in partnership with a company, university, or nonprofit organization. They connect with mentors and global climate change experts and can access changemaker grants, professional growth courses, and alumni networks. This initiative is hosted by the Vietnam National University – Ho Chi Minh City’s Institute for Leadership Development, which is serving as a regional center to sustain the program through a network of 95 local, regional, and international universities and organizations. The program will reach at least 700 leaders in the first three years and is expected to serve thousands of young leaders annually thereafter.



Photo: USAID Philippines Opportunity 2.0/Lisa Marie David

## Local Policy Coordination and Systems Strengthening

EDC is promoting subnational policy coordination around issues that are important to youth, including climate change—thereby closing a gap that is so critical to translating the national policies on climate resilience and green jobs down to the local level.

- + With EDC support, mayoral offices in 22 regions of the Philippines have created **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 and employment outcomes for marginalized youth in their region. These coordination bodies are ensuring that the supply of skills meets the demands of their local green economy, and they also are making efforts to ensure that all youth have pathways for employment and entrepreneurship in the green economy. In one recent example in Angeles City, the Youth Development Alliance partnered with out-of-school youth to launch Project Angelinis, an initiative that garnered multi-stakeholder support for the mayor’s priorities in the waste management sector. EDC is now supporting interested alliances in scaling this model to additional cities throughout the Philippines through a sister city twinning approach.

- + EDC formed similar Youth Development Alliances in Rwanda, where in 12 districts, private service providers, education and training providers, youth-serving organizations, local government agencies, the private sector, and young people have partnered together to improve youth program service delivery. These alliances were supported to collaborate on district-level labor market assessments. Called the “One Voice” approach, these local labor market assessments are highly relevant to local stakeholders who wish to stay abreast of the changing demands of climate adaptation and the green economy.

## Decentralized Information Systems for the Green Economy

**EDC offers cost-effective, decentralized labor market information solutions to low- and middle-income countries—a necessary component to connecting green job demand with supply, increasing productivity, and unleashing investment.** EDC’s research has so far identified over 270 different occupations in the fastest growing green and blue sectors in low- and middle-income countries: renewable energy, green construction, waste management, tourism and hospitality, and sustainable agriculture and forestry. However, in speaking to local workforce development stakeholders in at least a half a dozen countries, few were aware of these opportunities. There are several low-cost ways to bring this information to the subnational level:

- + **Localized green job labor market assessments:** In the Philippines, EDC partnered with Accenture to conduct a blue and green economy local labor market assessment, examining green job demand and growth constraints across eight sectors in six cities. Meanwhile, the Rwanda Development Board is working with EDC to identify short-term growth and employment trends in Rwanda’s tourism and agriculture, forest, and fisheries sectors, as well as occupational profiles and skills requirements for high-potential jobs in those sectors. In Senegal, EDC led an assessment of the agro-food market sector, including market trends and skills requirements for sustainable agriculture.
- + **Decentralized labor market information systems:** EDC has trained stakeholders in over 32 municipalities to conduct their own local labor market assessments and cost-effective ways for information dissemination, which has been institutionalized in a guidebook on local labor market assessments. Today these municipalities continue to collect labor market data on a regular basis.
- + **Youth-led mapping and labor market information crowdsourcing:** In half a dozen countries, EDC programs have trained young people to gain first-hand experience in mapping the education and employment services and opportunities in their local area. Youth then take this information to crowdsource it through their youth networks, such as in schools, in after-school clubs, through youth savings groups, and on social media. Recently in Liberia, with EDC support, hundreds of young people in three counties led a mapping process that incorporated a green economy lens.
- + **Media-led solutions:** EDC has established a collaboration with bird News Agency to develop youth-led and youth-centered stories in two countries. This and other media partnerships can be expanded to disseminate labor market information.

### Industry Snapshot

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

Sustainable Agriculture + Animal Husbandry + Aquaculture + Banking + Biotechnology + Caregiving + Cloud Computing + Food Processing and Packaging + Food Waste Management + Health Care + Hospitality, Restaurant, and Retail + Recycling + Renewable Energy + Security and Public Safety + Skilled Trades + Technology and Mobile App Development + Telecommunications + Textiles + Tourism and Eco-Tourism + Transport + Water and Sanitation

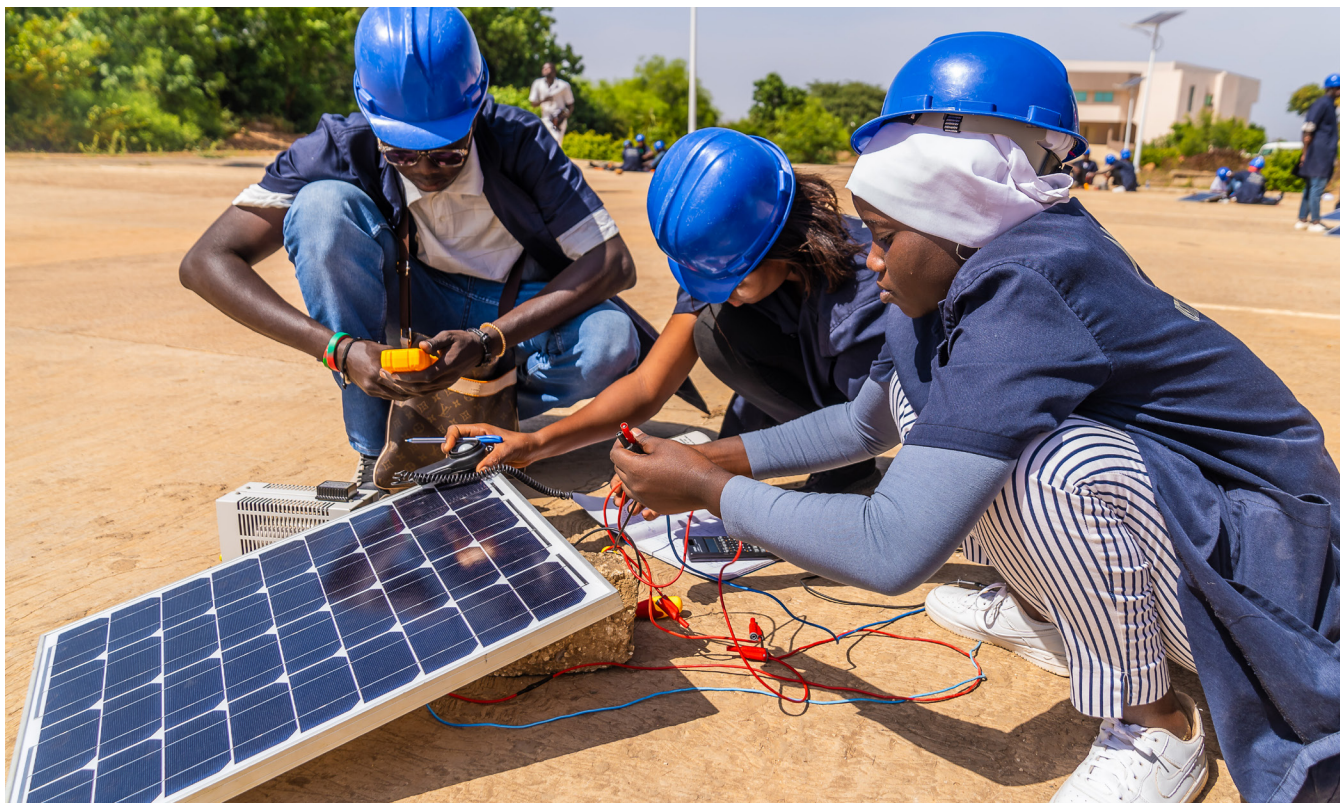


Photo: Programme de Formation Professionnelle et d'Insertion (PFPI), Senegal/Raymond Diop, AD Agency

- + **Local data analytics:** A Web-based analytics dashboard created in Guatemala provided real-time information on skills training programs—the first workforce development data-sharing platform of its kind in the country—thus helping service providers continually improve the quality, reach, and coordination of their services.
- + **Platforms for learning and exchange:** EDC uses its convening power to bring education stakeholders together with the private sector—be it through public-private partnerships, skills development councils, annual forums, informal networks, or funded partnerships. Through the Leading Through Learning Global Platform (LTLGP), a five-year \$36.8 million project, EDC is establishing and expanding a global education learning system for USAID and its partners.

## Equitable Access to Finance

Given the enormous investments going into modernizing sectors and toward climate finance, **EDC works with diverse partners to identify ways to equitably allocate public and private resources toward young people and especially women**, who are already more likely to be undereducated, unemployed, or underemployed in unstable work in the informal economy. EDC program achievements include:

- + Conducted **cost analysis exercises** with Senegal's Ministry of Education and Ministry of TVET, leading to the adoption of employability and entrepreneurship curriculum in all TVET centers and over 200 middle schools across the country
- + Supported two Rwandan financial institutions in creating **innovative youth-friendly financial products**
- + Established over **450 youth-led savings groups** globally, in partnership with Catholic Relief Services, helping young entrepreneurs start their own businesses

- + Facilitated linkages with two financial institutions in the Philippines to expand e-wallets to out-of-school youth entrepreneurs as a means to establish **mobile credit scores** and expand youth's access to finance
- + Worked with public-private partnerships in the Philippines, called Youth Development Alliances, to **leverage USD \$2.7 million in local resources** and direct it toward skills and employment opportunities for out-of-school youth
- + Conducted **research** on leading innovations in equitable financing solutions, such as preferential public procurement, green fund subsidies, and results-based financing

## **Youth Engagement and Social Inclusion for a Just Transition**

**EDC works to address the root causes of discrimination in education and employment so as to create the conditions for a just transition.** As a leading member of the Youth Systems CollaborativeSM, EDC uses a systems approach in its work, bringing together diverse stakeholders to create a youth-inclusive green economy. Throughout, we build the capacity of local stakeholders to conduct social inclusion assessments that lead to more inclusive policies and programs. Program highlights include the following:

- + With funding from the Bank of America Foundation, EDC is leading the **Community Empowerment for Racial and Environmental Justice in the Asia-Pacific Region (R&E)** program, empowering 5,500 ethnic minority youth and their communities in the blue and green economy and in environmental justice.
- + **Mobilized a network of 48 companies** in Rwanda to adopt **work-based learning programs for youth with disabilities**, and the network is modeling this approach to other companies across the country. One business, a **sustainable bamboo furniture company**, covered the costs of sign language lessons and hired more workers who were deaf and hard of hearing.
- + Under the Integrated Youth Development Activity in conflict-affected areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 35,560 youth developed resilience and work readiness skills that prepared them for further education and in-demand employment. Studies showed that 61.9% of program participants improved their level of **self-efficacy**, while 54.4% increased their **leadership self-perception in solving community-level problems**. In Bukavu, a group of green entrepreneurs applied these skills to innovate in the **recycled waste and green building sector**, increasing their incomes through the sales of sustainable paving stones.
- + 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 (including climate action), and internships.



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### Global Presence (2005–2023)

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



For further information on the OWOW initiative, please contact [OWOW@edc.org](mailto:OWOW@edc.org).



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