

Save the Children's Youth Employment Programs

Country Overview: Vietnam

In Vietnam, Save the Children is committed to helping improve the prospects for unemployed youth. We have launched a pilot to support 1,900 at-risk young people in Da Nang and Can Tho City through our Youth Employment Program. The project actively targets low-income youth, unskilled youth laborers, migrants and street youth to provide them with marketable skills that will enable them to secure safe and preferred jobs, whether in established businesses or in self-employment.

Youth Employment Program Strategies

The Youth Employment Program in Vietnam is built around four strategies as outlined below.

1. Assess Job Market Conditions and Needs

As part of this strategy, we looked to strengthen our partnership with the Department of Labour and Invalid and Social Affairs (DOLISA), engage community and private-sector stakeholders and sign agreements with local authorities. Existing needs were captured through a localized, job-market analysis and at-risk youth skills needs assessment. In addition, we conducted a baseline survey with 1,900 target beneficiaries (1,300 students already enrolled in six vocational schools; 200 financially supported to enroll; 400 out-of-school youth pursuing self-employment).

2. Inform and support training activities

Fulfilling this strategy called for reviewing the Vocational and Education Training (VET's) curriculum and infrastructure to identify gaps in training content and standards to meet job requirements and enterprise growth opportunities. In addition, we aim to facilitate

employer's involvement in strengthening technical training and soft skills curriculum and to deliver training-of-trainers courses on work readiness/life skills and entrepreneurship/financial literacy curricula to instructors from DOLISA, vocational schools and job placement centers.

The core of the strategy is built around delivering work readiness/life skills and entrepreneurship/financial literacy training to youth in six vocational schools, delivering entrepreneurship /financial literacy training to out-of school youth who seek to start or grow a business, and introducing a voucher system to partially subsidize vocational school fees for low-income youth. (The balance will be covered by youth themselves and subsidized student loans from the government.)

3. Build Strong Employment Linkages

Under this strategy, our goal is to build the capacity of vocational schools in job guidance and placement services for youth, including facilitating employer's involvement in strengthening service offerings. In this way, 1,500 vocational training students can be provided with access to career counselors equipped with local job and enterprise information, a directory of employment service providers, and job search resources.

In addition, job fairs were planned to help youth secure apprenticeships and internships, and we support youth interested in self-employment through the formation of financially viable business plans and by assisting them in accessing local credit service providers.

4. Advocate for Long-Term Change

Activities under this strategy include facilitating meetings and forums with private companies in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to ensure their understanding of the Youth Law and children's labor/protection rights. The strategy also encompasses advocating with the General Department of Vocational Training to incorporate work readiness/life skills and entrepreneurship/financial literacy training as standard offerings in VET schools.

Program Location

Da Nang City and Can Tho City

Target Beneficiaries

- Low-income youth, unskilled youth laborers, migrant youth and street youth
- Youth pursuing vocational training courses in vocational schools.
- Youth with plans to start their own business or a desire to improve and expand a business

Partners

The program partners with the Da Nang Youth Union and the Can Tho Employment Service Center.

Accomplishments to Date

To establish a basis for the program, we conducted both Labor Market and Youth Needs assessments. Based on our learnings, an initial training curriculum was established, encompassing life skills, work-readiness skills and entrepreneurial skills. The curriculum was communicated to trainers through two sets of training-of-trainers workshops on 1) life skills and work-readiness skills and 2) entrepreneurial skills.

In accordance with our strategies for the program, we held life skills and work-readiness-skills courses for 600 in-school youth. Out-of-school youth were reached through training courses on entrepreneurial skills, as well as through vocational training. Job fairs were also conducted to establish job linkages, and youth were provided with career counseling. In addition, we are actively providing equipment and mentorship linkages to the youth we reach who are interested in starting their own businesses, and we are establishing a network of schools/employment service centers for youth who choose traditional employment.

Ngoc's Story



Working as front office staff at the largest entertainment center in Da Nang, Ngoc is open, dynamic and a good communicator – as required. Every working day, she engages with customers to ascertain their requirements and provide information. She also partners with her team to solve problems that range from simple to quite complicated. Most important, she is the smiling face of the center as customers enter.

Being chosen for the position after a tough competition against approximately 100 other applicants, Ngoc is proud of herself, though she still tries every single day to cultivate and grow her own talents.

Like other classmates, Ngoc was quite unsure about future employment during the last few months before graduation. She knew it was time to get a job, earn an income and enhance her professional skills. However, she did not know how to obtain the best preparation.

Although soft-skills training plays a vital role in being ready for work and securing employment, vocational training at her school did not include soft skills in the compulsory curriculum. The Youth Employment program filled that gap.

As one of the first students to get a job after graduation, Ngoc highly appreciates the program training course in Da Nang. It equipped her with what she needed to know before entering the work force, covering not only communication skills, teamwork skills and work-readiness skills, but also how to write a better CV, how to prepare for a job interview and more.

Every day. In times of crisis. **For our future.**



For additional information about Save the Children's Youth Employment Program, please contact:

Kevin McAndrew

Associate Director
Corporate Partnerships
Save the Children USA
Office: 1.475.999.3161
Mobile: 1.413-636-2154
kmcandrew@savechildren.org

Patricia E. Langan

Program Director, Skills to Succeed
Hunger and Livelihoods Department
Save the Children USA
Office: 1.202.640.6839
Mobile: 1.202.294.2644
plangan@savechildren.org