EEA Case Study

No. 2

THE PHILIPPINES:

Building Community-Based Alliances to Foster Local Ownership and Sustainability

Edited by Lindsay Vignoles

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EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT ALLIANCE

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"Who would have thought that we would acquire these skills and jobs?" asks 21-year-old Rahib Alagasi, proudly gazing at the house he has just completed in Mindanao, the southern-most island of the Philippines. Alagasi is one of 600 out-of-school youth building houses for internally displaced persons in war-torn communities on the island. Alagasi's group has already built over 10 homes for displaced families in Lower Glad. Other out-of-school youth have rebuilt homes and schools in resettlement communities in Mindanao and in villages devastated by mud slides, typhoons and fires in Luzon.

Alagasi lives with his family in Cotabato, Mindanao, a region where decades of internal conflict have left youth with few opportunities to become productive members of society. Armed conflict has long hindered economic growth and torn apart the social fabric of communities throughout the region. The son of a former combatant of one separatist group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), Alagasi is no stranger to conflict. When asked how his family has been impacted, Alagasi is quick to respond, "Every aspect of our lives is affected during conflict especially our day-to-day activities. Because of the conflict, there is no peace of mind. You are always thinking that tomorrow will be war again."

Like many Filipinos living in rural areas, Alagasi's family farms to make a living. The family subsists on the meager earnings it receives working on larger farms planting corn, spraying mangoes and harvesting produce. On average, the daily wage for workers on Mindanao's largest farms and plantations is just over USD 3.[1] This makes providing for a family of six difficult. When persistent conflict made it impossible to survive solely on his father's income and inadequate roads limited opportunities to find employment outside of the village, Alagasi's mother secured employment abroad. "As farmers sometimes you earn and sometimes you don't. The small percentages given to us are not enough," he explains.

Since a ceasefire between the MNLF and the Filipino Government was signed in 1996, development organizations have poured into the area to help internally-displaced people return to their homes. Alagasi took advantage of one such opportunity when Eddie Yap, a Site Coordinator for a program sponsored by the USAID-supported Education and Employment Alliance (EEA) program in the Philippines approached him. Yap asked Alagasi if he'd be interested in learning how to work in construction. Although Alagasi joined, he was skeptical about the program. "We heard a lot about these kinds of programs, but it's just plain training."

Fortunately, he found the EEA experience different. EEA's unique approach to bringing community partners together in support of youth, linked Alagasi to multiple partners who worked together to overcome the education and employment challenges facing him, including lack of marketable skills, limited formal education and unemployment. The partners were able to address these challenges from all angles - a local NGO provided the training, the local government allocated trainers, the UNDP and USAID funded activities, and Habitat for Humanity employed him. After graduating from the program, Alagasi received his government-certification in construction skills and is employed as a construction worker with Habitat for Humanity. Asked how he feels about his job, Alagasi smiles, "My salary will be for my parents."

Community-based activities that engage diverse stakeholders from local government, private industry and civil society are at the heart of the EEA Philippines strategy. Each program is governed by a community-based alliance that is charged with ensuring that the program is locally owned, that program quality is maintained, and that activities respond to the real needs of the community. These alliances also position EEA programs within the development framework of the community and allow stakeholders to participate in, and meaningfully contribute to local development. EEA programs in the Philippines are providing over 2,700 youth with marketable skills and helping them secure employment. From recruiting participants to monitoring implementation and leveraging resources for sustainability, community participation has proven to be the cornerstone of EEA programs, and a key ingredient to their long term benefit for communities and youth.

Case Study and Overview

As we consider the success of Alagasi and the training program that served him, a number of critical questions become apparent. How can donors and technical experts most effectively partner with local institutions to meet the needs of youth? How can these partners come together to build a community-based alliance around a program that ensures local ownership and long term sustainability? As initial pilots are completed, how do these local alliances build on what they have accomplished to institutionalize and scale best practices? And how can international donors best nurture this process?

This case study is designed to begin to answer these questions through a more thorough examination of a core component of EEA programs –their powerful linkages to the communities in which they operate. More directly, the study explores how community-based alliances (CBAs) integrate demand-driven technical education programs into the community to ensure relevance and promote local ownership and sustainability. At the outset of this exploration, the study begins with an overview of the challenges faced by youth in the conflict ridden areas of Mindanao and the approach of the EEA program in addressing these challenges. The study then examines the structure, composition, outcomes, and challenges of community alliances through the lens of three EEA Philippines' programs. Finally, the study identifies lessons learned and draws conclusions about overcoming challenges.

1 *National Wage and Productivity Commission. Government of the Philippines. 2004.*

Annual Per Capita Poverty Thresholds, Poverty Incidence of Families and Population, Philippines and Mindanao by Region: 2003			
Region	*Annual Per Capita Poverty Threshold (in Pesos)*	*Poverty Incidence of Families (%)*	*Poverty Incidence of Population (%)*
	2003	2003	2003
PHILIPPINES	**12,267**	**24.7**	**30.4**
Region IX: Western Mindanao	**10,414**	**44.1**	**49.4**
Region X: Northern Mindanao	**11,609**	**37.9**	**44.3**
Region XI: Southern Mindanao	**11,276**	**28.1**	**34.4**
Region XII: Central Mindanao	**11,303**	**32.0**	**38.4**
ARMM*	**12,739**	**45.7**	**53.1**
National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) *Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao			

The study has been prepared through interviews with project staff, trainees and employers, focus groups with community alliances, donors and other stakeholders and literature reviews. It incorporates the experience of community alliance members working with Consuelo Foundation, the EEA Philippines National Secretariat tasked with facilitating alliance activities, in EEA Philippines.

Summary of Challenges in Mindanao

Mindanao is the second largest island in the Philippines with a population of 18 million. It is a land of abundance and opportunity, with a vibrant agricultural industry and a growing manufacturing sector. Sadly, however, decades of armed conflict have led to crippling poverty and untapped potential. The cumulative effects of conflict and violence on poverty and education are staggering. According to the World Bank, the conflict-affected areas in Mindanao are the poorest among the 77 provinces of the Philippines and the poorest provinces in Mindanao.[2] In 2003, 30% of the population lived below the Philippines' poverty line of USD 100 a month, compared with an average 44% in Mindanao (see table above). High unemployment rates and large numbers of out-of-school youth are also the result of conflict and poverty.

The conflict is largely concentrated in the Muslim-majority areas of central and southwestern Mindanao, which consists of four administrative regions: Region IX or Western Mindanao; Region XII or Central Mindanao; the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM); and four provinces in Region XI or Southern Mindanao. These areas are home to 13.3 million people of which 411,000 were displaced by military offensives in 2003.[3] The island is also home to some 27 indigenous cultural communities, as well as migrants from Luzon and the Visayas.

In conflict-affected areas, the security of displaced people is threatened. They have minimal access to health services, livelihood opportunities and education. The quality of education is compromised by minimal resources, poorly trained teachers and high student to teacher ratios. The Department of Education estimates it will need to build an estimated 4,000 more classrooms to fill the need. Literacy rates in Mindanao are much lower than the rest of the Philippines, which boasts 93.7% for males and 94% for females. In Central Mindanao rates are 85.9% and 88.89% for males and females, respectively, while in ARMM, rates drop to 71% and 69.4%.[4]

The school drop out rate of 12% in Mindanao is the highest in the Philippines, compared with 6.5% nationally. The percentage of out-of-school youth is also the highest in Mindanao at 23% compared to the national average of 14%. Youth leave school for various reasons, mostly to look for employment (see table over). A USAID study estimates that on average, youth unemployment in post-conflict areas is around 6 to 7 times higher than the national average. In particular, in the ARMM provinces, youth unemployment is 42%, compared to the overall national adult average of 6% and youth national average of 16%.[5]

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2 *World Bank, March 2003.*
3 *Philippine National Statistics Office, 2000.*
4 *FLEMMS Survey. National Statistics Coordination Board. 2003.*
5 *USAID/Asia and Near East Bureau. Jobs for the 21st Century: Synthesis Paper. June 2007*

The problem of out-of-school youth is particularly troubling given possible connections between leaving school and the propensity of youth to join the conflicts that surround them. For example, youth interviewed by a multi-donor Joint Needs Assessment team spoke of grinding poverty that forced them to drop out of school, leaving them with few or no marketable skills and vulnerable to recruitment by armed militias, gangs, and drug traffickers. Many youth, it was reported, had low self-esteem and could not envision a future.

More positively, however, the youth surveyed placed education at the top of their list of priorities, citing it as a viable solution to their problems and the passport to a better future.[6] According to the youth, education introduced a daily routine and a sense of purpose and order in their lives. It helped them earn respect and prestige in their communities. Older youth were keen on non-formal education and skills training that would help them secure income-generating employment. Irrespective of whether they chose formal or vocational skills training, the youth saw access to education as one of the first steps in resuming control of their strife-affected lives.[7]

Responding to Challenges: Building an Education and Employment Alliance for Mindanao's Out of School Youth

EEA Philippines builds its activities on a long history of public-private alliances in the Philippines. The idea of working in an alliance with multiple and diverse stakeholders has been accepted as good practice in this country and development practitioners have typically believed that greater impact will be achieved by working together. Section 16, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines reinforces this notion, "Private individuals and their organizations have the right to engage in effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political and economic decision making."

Despite this general willingness to work together, however, public-private alliances often fail to meet the needs of rural out-of-school youth (OSY). Until recently, multilateral donors, including governments and private industry typically channeled development funding to support formal education initiatives for in-school children and youth. There are a variety of reasons why government and private donors focused on improving the quality of formal education, including trends in the development community such as the Education for All Initiative (EFA), priorities of the Government of the Philippines, and a common belief that the link between education and employment would be strengthened if the quality of formal education was improved. These factors resulted in programs targeting OSY being poorly funded, poorly managed, and unsustainable.

> **"On average, youth unemployment in post-conflict areas is around 6 to 7 times higher then the national average."**
>
> *— USAID Report, 2007*

With this in mind, EEA Philippines seeks to reverse this trend and fully integrate OSY into the development process and to utilize the power of public-private alliances to provide these critically underserved youth with access to quality training opportunities. EEA Philippines programs seek to narrow the gap between the culture of building public-private alliances to advance development objectives and the ability of these alliances to more effectively respond to the needs on the ground. To provide greater context on the background and structure of the EEA program in the Philippines, this section describes the movement toward this development trend and outlines the EEA approach of levering its successes to go one step further to ensure sustainability.

Emergence of Public-Private Alliances in the Philippines

The emergence of public-private alliances in the Philippines dates back to the 1970s when the government began seeking innovative ways to meet the development needs of communities. Eager to find effective solutions to community-based challenges, multiple government agencies experimented with the idea. The Department of Interior and Local Government organized community cooperatives; the Department of Agriculture established the farmer's association, and the Department of Agrarian Reform implemented agrarian reform benefits. Other agencies organized community organizations charged with implementing their social agendas. However, many of these community-based organizations were implemented in an ad hoc fashion, lacked leadership and organizational management and disintegrated shortly after their conception.

Despite early challenges, the government and private industry continued to experiment with this increasingly popular approach. In 1970, the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), a group of companies committed to social development, was organized by Filipino business leaders. In 1991, the League of Corporate Foundations emerged as a sub-sector of the Association of Foundations to foster corporate philanthropy in the country. The founders of both organizations were concerned with the economic and social challenges facing the country's poor and believed that business could play an important role in helping to overcome these challenges. As early community development programs proved successful, these organizations forged strong partnerships with local and international NGOs and government.

In the 1980s and 90s, civil society slowly began endorsing the alliance approach. With private institutions such as PBSP and

6 *Rajendran, Shobhana. The Impact of Armed Conflict on Male Youth in Mindanao. World Bank. July 2006*

7 *Ibid.*

multilateral donors such as USAID and AusAID funding multi-sectoral development efforts, NGOs emerged eager to respond to increased funding opportunities. However, these parties were reluctant to work with local government units (LGUs), believing that funding would be used by elected officials for personal gain. The reluctance was mutual, as LGUs doubted the capacity of NGOs to respond to the needs of local government and suspected them of using funds for their own gains. This mutual mistrust led both groups to look for a neutral, third-party alternative, the private sector. Unfortunately, they found that businesses were predominantly focused on industry practices, such as marketing and development, and only participated in alliances in an ad hoc, project-based manner.

As the development community diversified its membership base and endorsed the notion of working as an alliance, it continued to work primarily in formal schools. Out-of-school youth were largely ignored despite the fact that approximately 40% of Filipino youth drop out of school before receiving their high school diploma. The Filipino Department of Education reports that out-of-school children ages 6 to 11 total 1.8 million while those ages 12 to15 number 3.9 million. Moreover, these numbers do not account for the millions of youth over the age of 15 who are illiterate and willing to learn.[8] According to the parties involved, the rationale for concentrating their efforts on the in-school population is simple: resources are limited and with so many unfulfilled needs in the formal system there simply isn't enough time and money to tackle the needs of OSY. This situation is especially true in Mindanao where the challenges of basic education are multi-faceted and far reaching.

While compelling, this rationale for focusing on in-school youth does not address the significant societal cost posed by OSY. Costs are incurred through potentially increased conflict, reduced economic development, joblessness and reduced earning potential. As such, in certain contexts, pilot training programs have been developed for OSY. However, while these programs have shown some promise, they are plagued with a lack of scale, resources and an inability to comprehensively address the problems facing OSY through strong partners and alliances.

For example, development initiatives targeting OSY have historically been managed by a few private institutions that provide income-generating skills to OSY. These organizations rarely work together and typically only have the capacity to implement small scale programs that reach 50 to 100 youth. The lack of coordination and capacity often leads to a lack of resources needed to scale and sustain programs. In response to the increasing need to support OSY, the government established the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in 1994 to provide technical training to unemployed high school graduates. While TESDA has made laudable gains in increasing employment opportunities for youth, it does not have adequate resources or expertise to reach the most vulnerable youth who cannot access paid training programs. In addition, OSY who do not have high school diplomas often do not meet minimal requirements for participation in TESDA programs.

EEA Philippines' Approach: Leveraging the Culture of Public-Private Partnerships

With this backdrop, EEA Philippines seeks to improve the circumstance of OSY in Mindanao through a multi-level alliance building strategy that mobilizes support from business,

8 *Inquirer. "Arroyo on Dropouts: Let Them Sweep the Streets." August 22, 2007. Manila, Philippines.*

Reasons Youth Drop Out of School

Reasons for not attending school	*Male (%)*	*Female (%)*
Schools are very far	**60.2**	**39.8**
No school within the barangay	**51.6**	**48.4**
No regular transportation	**65**	**35**
High cost of education	**61.6**	**38.4**
Illness/Disability	**59.1**	**40.9**
Housekeeping	**12.6**	**87.4**
Employment/Looking for work	**58.6**	**41.4**
Lack of personal interest	**76.1**	**23.9**
Cannot cope with school work	**65**	**35**
Others	**50**	**50**

FLEMMS Study. National Statistics Office, 2003.

government and NGOs at the international, national and local level. Each alliance is rooted in the community in order to ensure that programs respond to the needs of local OSY and provide access to quality and sustainable integrated technical education. EEA developed community-based alliances (CBA) as a way to foster local ownership to support and sustain training activities and ensure programs achieve stated objectives. This section briefly describes CBAs and examines why and how EEA uses them to address the education and employment challenges of OSY in Mindanao.

When EEA initiated activities in 2005, it recognized that the problems plaguing OSY programs, such as a lack of resources and an inability to address local needs were a result of weak partnerships that did not link programs to communities. EEA also realized that a majority of programs did not empower communities to participate in the development process and therefore were largely unsustainable. When programs failed, no effort was made to address the root of the problem, and they were repeated in the same ineffective and unsustainable fashion. A structure was therefore needed to reverse this trend. EEA realized that establishing a local community alliance presented a unique opportunity to involve communities in the development process, empower them as project decision makers and position them to assume long-term ownership. CBA's were seen as a way to implement locally demand-driven programs which could more easily demonstrate success and attract partners and funding to foster sustainability.

CBA's are at the core of the EEA Philippines strategy and each EEA project presents a unique approach to alliance-building. EEA defines a CBA as a group of institutions that are committed to working together and sharing resources to find solutions to community challenges. CBAs exist within communities, are accessible and invite international, national and local decision makers to participate in the development process. CBAs exist in different forms and have different development objectives. Some are formal and based on memorandums of agreement, while others are informal and largely based on verbal commitments. CBAs can also champion any number of development causes from improving the quality of education to increasing employment opportunities in remote communities. A common characteristic of CBAs is their ability to integrate programs into the community by responding to local needs, generating local buy-in and sustaining programs. EEA also designed CBAs to be able to:

- *Respond to a demand in or around the community for training, employment or economic development*
- *Bring together capable, respected and committed leaders from all sectors who work together to achieve a common goal*
- *Raise awareness about programs and mobilize resources to sustain activities*
- *Actively involve local government and community leaders to foster local ownership*

EEA Philippines is structured to implement sustainable projects that use CBAs as a mechanism to overcome the education and employment challenges faced by OSY. The program is managed by a local secretariat, Consuelo Foundation, and is governed by a national steering committee. The secretariat is charged with soliciting proposals and designing technical training projects with local NGOs. The steering committee reviews and approves proposals for EEA funding. Projects are funded from $50,000 to $150,000. Projects must include core components, such as a community-based alliance (CBA) and a leverage commitment from other donors. The level of leverage committed by projects must match the level of funding provided by EEA and must include cash and in-kind support.

Community-based alliances have proven highly effective in generating leverage for projects. In most cases, initial leverage commitments are exceeded with donations from local governments and industry. In instances where project implementers are struggling to meet their leverage commitments, the CBA will develop strategies to address the challenge. Ultimately, the structure of EEA projects, with national and local alliances governing and supporting objectives, promotes innovative and sustainable programs for out-of-school youth.

Towards Sustainability: Building a Locally Owned Program

Building on the development of an EEA framework as described in the previous section, this section profiles three EEA projects and the community-based alliances that support them: the Civil Trades Training Program for Ex-Combatants in Mindanao; the "MIAP Plus" Program; and the Training Out-of-School Youth in Agricultural Production "Mag-Agri" Program. It also examines the process for developing CBAs, which includes the following elements in each case:

- *Interested parties mobilizing around a common concern*
- *Project partners working together to formalize an alliance*
- *Stakeholders developing strategies to sustain project activities.*

Taken together, these cases demonstrate how overlapping interests were marshaled to support and sustain training programs that bridge the gap between education and employment for OSY. These cases also illustrate that there is no one definition, reason or operational method for a community alliance to take shape, and each project is unique in its approach to mobilizing, formalizing and sustaining its CBA. However, despite their differences, these CBAs share some common characteristics: they respond to a demand, are

> **“It’s strategic to help the youth who often join the armed revolution for lack of opportunities in conflict communities.”**
>
> *— Jun Obello, Project Specialist UNDP*

led by strong leaders, have a diversified membership base and are rooted economically and socially in the communities in which they operate. Further discussion of these common characteristics and lessons to be garnered from these projects appears in the section that follows.

Case 1: Civil Trades Training for Ex-Combatants in Mindanao

The Civil Trades Training for Ex-Youth Combatants program is an example of EEA’s strategy to implement technical training programs that equip OSY with marketable skills for employment and respond to the local needs of the community. This program addresses the critical need for housing in fragile Peace and Development Communities and provides livelihood opportunities for conflict-affected, unemployed youth. The program is the result of a partnership between Habitat for Humanity Philippines (HFHP) and Alternative Planning Initiatives (ALTERPLAN) that provides training in basic construction, masonry and steel framing to OSY and former youth combatants. Program participants also receive training in life skills and job placement.

EEA worked with local partners to design the initiative. The design process began by mapping local resources and opportunities to create a program that could activate economic and community development in a post-conflict area. The rationale behind the design—that a pool of skilled construction workers in conflict-affected Mindanao would stimulate economic activity and give internally displaced people the economic and human resources required to provide for their own housing needs—reflects local reality. Conflict has resulted in over 2 million internally displaced people living in 160 Peace and Development Communities throughout the region.[9]

Mobilizing Around a Common Cause: Rebuilding in Post-Conflict Areas

When Warren Ubongen, Building and Resource Center Manager for Habitat for Humanity Philippines (HFHP) heard about EEA, he saw it as a solution to the labor shortages facing the Peace Build project—a HFHP program charged with building 1,000 homes in post-conflict communities in Mindanao. Warren also viewed EEA as an opportunity to employ the youth of homeowner families, enabling them to pay off their home loans. Warren’s optimism faded, however, when he acknowledged that training was not HFHP’s core competency. Warren turned to the Executive Director of ALTERPLAN, Sarah Redoblado and her colleague Elisabeth ‘Beth’ Quijano, to see if they would be willing to partner with HFHP. ALTERPLAN is a technical service organization that works to modernize the construction industry for social good. It has a rich experience in training youth for jobs, particularly in the construction sector. Sarah agreed that ALTERPLAN would take the lead in training youth if HFHP agreed to provide the on-the-job training and employ graduates in the Peace Build program.

After receiving a grant for $107,000 from EEA, ALTERPLAN realized that their existing training forces were not enough to complete the project within one year. Determined to seize the opportunity, however, the ALTERPLAN/HFHP team reached out to two potential partners: the Association of Construction and Informal Workers (ACIW) for their technical trainers and the Notre Dame of Midsayap College for their life skills trainers. Additionally, because the project was being implemented in post-conflict regions, ALTERPLAN needed community coordinators who understood the history and cultural sensitivities. Community coordinators managed the project locally: recruiting and supporting youth, monitoring training and facilitating day-to-day operations. Eddie Yap and Ting Andal, who had once fought with the MNLF but had since become Peace and Development Associates with the UNDP, fit the criteria. It was their endorsement of the program that resulted in the UNDP Act for Peace program committing $81,500 to EEA.

With three financially committed partners working together with respected local groups that would play critical roles in implementation, the project began to see immediate results. Four months into the project, ALTERPLAN started attracting additional stakeholders, each that could play a needed role in broadening the success of the activities. According to Beth, “In the early days of the project our strategy included making partnerships. We identified the gaps in project resources and found people and institutions that could provide technical and financial resources. Some institutions willingly helped.” Among these key enablers: TESDA accredited ALTERPLAN’s training curriculum and certified trainees; the ILO provided support for training activities; local governments provided training sites, materials and transportation for trainees; and village leaders attended to the personal needs of youth. The cumulative

Program Results to Date:

- **900 youth undergoing training**
- **373 youth graduated**
- **293 TESDA certified**
- **224 employed**

9 *Schiavo-Capo, Salvatorre and Judd, Mary. Mindanao Conflict in the Philippines: Roots, Costs, Potential Peace Dividends. World Bank Social Development Papers, February 2005. UNMDP-Act for Peace website*

This program has produced positive results. Rahib Alagasi said that before completing the training he was preoccupied with guns. "We used to hold and play with guns," he recalls. "But now we're holding hammers." The recently trained youth feel empowered by their new skills. "We and our families are really happy here because we are able to help," says Alagasi. "It's a different kind of happiness to see the satisfaction of the homeowners."

— Rahib Alagasi, ALTERPLAN Trainee

effects of these contributions and those of HFHP and UNDP Act for Peace have allowed the project to leverage over $623,000 in cash and in-kind resources from partners. They have also guaranteed the long term support of a community eager to see the project continue to bring forward important benefits in their society.

Formalizing an Alliance

As trainees transitioned from classroom to on-the-job training, ALTERPLAN realized that employing the youth was more difficult than they had originally anticipated and would require a more formal commitment from alliance members. Construction workers in the Philippines typically cannot count on consistent work. Seasonal labor contracts that last for a few months mean that even well trained workers are often unemployed. As such, the project needed to develop a mechanism that could support construction workers over a longer term and help formalize the sector. At the core of this mechanism would be a database of workers which tracks their employment status and places them in jobs as they become available. To meet these needs, ALTERPLAN contacted the Building and Wood Workers International (BWI), a Geneva-based labor federation capable of linking HFHP workers to the National Union of Building and Construction Workers (NUBCW). BWI convinced NUBCW to provide the Habitat workers with support services such as entrepreneurship training, access to micro-credit loans, and access to basic social services such as health insurance or social security. BWI is also working with ALTERPLAN to build the database.

Further progress on formalizing the alliance occurred in early 2007 when Sarah began receiving calls from year one stakeholders asking how they could continue to support the activity. An important movement was underway: alliance partners' initial work together had built momentum and illustrated how interests could continue to converge and intersect. ALTERPLAN realized this was a golden opportunity to formalize the alliance and convened new and existing stakeholders to develop a strategy to build an alliance capable of professionalizing the construction industry. At the meeting, ALTERPLAN and HFHP presented what they believed were the positive factors supporting the formation of an alliance, including:

- *Strong, diverse and multiple partnerships formed in a short project period*
- *A community-based strategy that responded to the needs of the community*
- *A positive and visible impact of OSY on the community*
- *Powerful results, such as TESDA-certified trainees, newly constructed houses and paid internships.*

However, despite strong evidence suggesting that a formal alliance could be developed, ALTERPLAN and HFHP were also contending with significant internal and external limitations that required a phased development strategy. Internal challenges included a lack of infrastructure for on-the-job training, and external challenges included coordinating with diverse partners, These challenges meant the alliance would need to widen further and that partners would need to develop a strategy outlining which goals could be achieved in the short and long term. In the short term, the alliance would engage private industry to institutionalize apprenticeships to meet the need for greater practical experience and increase employment opportunities for graduates. In the long term, the alliance would organize partners to help professionalize the industry, increase job security and develop a system for job placement.

Sustaining the Movement

The development of the project's CBA from a small group of focused partners to a larger body of committed stakeholders demonstrates how multiple groups can work together to identify and effectively respond to a community need. The ability of the initial group of partners to attract a larger, diverse and ultimately more powerful group of players demonstrates the ability of CBAs to sustain and scale programs. It also suggests that the process of alliance building happens over the long-term and that careful planning and a sustained commitment by all parties is needed. What the early partners were able to do was to identify needs in the community, build a program that effectively addressed these needs and build momentum around the project's early success. For example, the presence of well-trained youth building quality houses in war-torn communities allowed ALTERPLAN to reach out to potential employers in the private sector and sign agreements to employ at least 100 new graduates. The UNDP Act for Peace was also impressed with the results, and is funding a second round of training for 300 youth.

Twelve months into the project, the partners are pleased with the progress. Although the alliance is still evolving, ALTERPLAN anticipates that it will grow from a community-

based to a regional alliance that will eventually have an impact at the national level. Evidence suggests that the project has reason to be optimistic. According to Sarah, "The need for a formal alliance will continue to be fueled by the increasing demand for skilled workers and a decreasing supply of the same. We can sustain our work if we make the economic case for training workers." The mass migration of construction workers overseas, the high number of OSY in communities and a growing awareness in the construction industry that it is cost effective to hire skilled workers locally continues to generate demand.

Case 2: MIAP Plus

The MIAP Plus program is an example of a locally-owned, demand-driven program that addresses the critical need for welders in the rapidly industrializing region of Northern Mindanao. The program is the result of a partnership between Consuelo Foundation, local government and the Metal Working Industry Association of the Philippines that provides training in basic and advanced welding to out-of-school youth (OSY). Program participants also receive training in life skills, academic subjects and job placement.

The program's design is based on a proven employability training model which MIAP tested prior to EEA. Under EEA, with a grant of approximately $60,000, MIAP added an employment element to the training and established a CBA. Like the Civil Trades Training program, the design process began by mapping local resources and opportunities to create a program that could respond to increasing demands for skilled welders and address the growing number of OSY. The rationale behind the design—that OSY, if properly trained in technical, life and employability skills, could fill industry demand for welders—demonstrates how EEA integrates programs into the community.

Mobilizing Around a Common Cause: Training OSY to Meet Industry Demand

The MIAP Plus program is led by a strong community-based alliance with active members from the private sector and local government. Its structure and membership base is unique in that MIAP is a national trade organization of small and medium enterprises that manufacture steel and metal-based machines. With over 60 member companies, it is acutely aware of the industry demand for qualified welders, and in 1992 it began training out-of-school youth to become welders in the hopes of creating a qualified labor supply.

With this backdrop, MAIP Plus brings together diverse partners who are committed to training OSY to become welders. Alliance partners, including private companies who are members of MIAP, local government and the local Chamber of Commerce, share the collective belief that they are better off when youth are trained and have the capacity to become productive members of society. Private sector partners value the skilled labor force, and local government values the positive economic and social impact trained youth have on the community. According to one local business owner and MIAP President, Al Brito, rapid economic growth has made training OSY to become welders a core industry strategy. As is the case in the construction industry, skilled welders are finding more lucrative jobs overseas and the increasing demand for qualified welders is met by a decreasing supply of the same. "We may wake up one day and find no more workers," Mr. Brito says with some alarm. "So I believe that there is no other formula than but to train youth to work."

Private sector partners have contributed to the successful implementation of the project's dual training strategy that combines classroom instruction with in-plant and on-the-job training. MIAP's member companies and other companies with operations in the region's industrial park have willingly provided valuable technical and financial support. Volunteers from the private sector serve as guest speakers during classroom sessions and mentor trainees during in-plant training. Member companies also provide trainees with transportation and food allowances as well as opportunities for minimally paid apprenticeships. It is thanks to MIAP's members that on-the-job training (OJT) is paid. According to Joel Maramara, MIAP Project Manager, "Paid OJT is essential since the trainees do not have the money to cover their commuting costs."

Program Results to Date:

- **240 youth undergoing training**
- **150 youth graduated**
- **125 TESDA certified**
- **90 employed**

Preparing for High Regional Growth

Region X is the largest regional economy in Mindanao, accounting for 27% of the island's production. Large industries are operating in this region and spurring economic growth, including the 3,300 hectare Phividec Industrial Authority, Global Steel Philippines and Korean ship builder, Hanjin Metal Industries. Phividec, which straddles the municipalities of Tagoloan and Villanueva, believes that in the next five years 12,000 to 15,000 new jobs will be created.

Local government is also actively involved in securing critical resources for the project. They see training OSY as a way to increase employment and activate economic development in the region. The Government's Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) has willingly partnered with MIAP and joined the alliance. TESDA is an invaluable partner, as private companies prefer to hire people who have TESDA certificates. The mayors of Tagoloan and Villanueva, two coastal cities, have also allocated funding to support the OSY, working line items into their budgets for training. The Department of Education-Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems has provided resources and a teacher to support non-high school graduates in receiving their high school diploma. Together, the alliance helps manage the training and job placement program as well as raise awareness about the needs of OSY.

Formalizing an Alliance

When MIAP received a grant from EEA, they committed to employing 80% of their graduates. MIAP realized that a systematic and sustained commitment from diverse stakeholders would be required to meet their ambitious employment target. Joel Maramara understood that more than a tacit commitment by stakeholders was needed. He believed that the alliance would have to work "sama-sama" or "together" as a collective whole. The alliance would have to be formalized and systematic, with MOUs signed between parties, meetings held regularly and attendance mandatory. Finally, the alliance would have to stay focused on and committed to the common cause which had brought its members together: training and employing OSY.

The formalization process began by convening alliance meetings, locally branded as tri-sectoral meetings, every month. At the initial meeting, membership in the alliance was formally outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement. These agreements were signed with the local governments of Tagoloan and Villanueva, Department of Education-Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems (DepED BALS), Phividec and TESDA. Each member agreed to regularly attend meetings, contribute in-kind and/or cash resources and develop a strategy to sustain the project after EEA-funding ended. Members were willing to work together to achieve the common objective of training OSY, although their individual incentives for doing so differed. At the meetings, members reviewed and discussed project developments, identified challenges and developed innovative solutions. What was unique about the process was that members assumed different roles and took on distinct tasks. Industry tackled employment challenges, while local government allocated financial and human resources for training. This process complemented the project's integrated approach to training youth to become productive members of society.

Monthly meetings also provided opportunities to assess how the youth were performing, zero in on issues that needed community support and work together to find effective and creative strategies. Community support was required to overcome various challenges such as youth absences, lack of companies who agreed to accept trainees for OJT, and the need for more training materials. One challenge raised by the DepED teachers was that the youth were not showing up on weekends to prepare for their high school equivalency exams. The group suggested that parents be asked to stress the importance of the equivalency tests and to offer youth the option of reviewing via Internet. When youth absenteeism persisted, the alliance agreed to take firm action and withhold the release of TESDA certificates if youth did not attend.

Members also discussed how to get parents more involved. One idea was to invite parents to discuss the training program and to train them in entrepreneurship and small income generating skills. According to Joel, "Parents have a major influence on whether trainees stay in the program. Often youth leave the training at their parents' request to work and supplement household income." With the parents themselves learning how to earn, Joel hoped they would be more supportive of their children's education. An ongoing initiative was to hold awareness raising workshops for the parents to teach the value of education and highlight the potential of the program to offer increased and better quality livelihood opportunities for their children.

OSY of Tagoloan and Villanueva

Tagoloan and Villanueva are coastal communities in Northern Mindanao that depend largely on fishing and farming. Cultural norms and financial constraints contribute to a large number of youth who do not complete high school. Although school tuition is free, students typically do not have the resources to cover daily transportation, food and clothing costs. Those who finish high school do not have the financial means to pursue tertiary education.
OSY often have limited opportunities to engage in income-generating activities and spend most of their time working in odd jobs and spending time with friends. Petty crime and drug use are also higher in these areas. If given the opportunity, many OSY say they would like to continue their studies.

Sustaining the Movement

The cumulative efforts of MIAP's alliance members have had a profound impact on the program's success and increased the likelihood that it will be sustained. Several factors, including active participation in alliance decision making, constant communication between stakeholders and agreement on a common objective have contributed to the alliance's sustainability. With these factors in place, the alliance benefited from the participatory process it nurtured, where all members felt they had a say in project implementation and a long term stake in project success. The formal structure of the alliance, such as signed MOUs and regular meetings also effectively engaged stakeholders in the program. Finally, the project's clear objective to train OSY to become productive and engaged members of society helped align the diverse incentives of alliance members and enabled them to work together. United by working toward a common goal, stakeholders maintained their commitment to the project and are committed to sustaining it.

Many members have expressed their commitment to sustain the project. Efledo Resma, Acting Chief of the Enterprise Assistance division of Phividec sees their continued participation in EEA as good community relations. "We often have to resettle poor families who live in our industrial zone and this is one way to maintain positive relationships with the local government," explains Resma. Ms. Beda Sebastian, the Municipal Social Worker in Tagoloan sees the project as critical to helping the estimated 2,000 OSY in the community. TESDA is confident in the quality of the training and has agreed to provide $6,500 to MIAP to keep it going for another year. Mr. Chan and Mr. Brito are also discussing the possibility of establishing a foundation to train youth in welding and charge a 'finders' fee to place them in jobs. The fees would be returned to the foundation to fund additional training. As long as the project continues to effectively respond to a real need in the community, alliance members will provide support and help guarantee sustainability.

Case 3: Training Out-of-School Youth in Agricultural Production: Mag-Agri

The Mag-Agri program is an example of a locally designed program that addresses the mismatch between the skills possessed by youth and the jobs available in their communities. The program responds to a serious skills mismatch in the agriculturally rich region of Davao, in which the growing demand for qualified agriculture technicians is not being met with a sufficient supply of adequately trained employees. The program is the result of a partnership between the Davao City Chamber of Commerce, the University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP) and the Asia Pacific Peace and Prosperity Initiative (APPPI) -- that provides training in food and fruit production and processing to OSY. Program participants also receive training in life skills, academic subjects and job placement.

Program Results to Date:

- **180 youth undergoing training**
- **142 youth graduated**
- **81 TESDA certified**
- **47 employed**

EEA worked with local partners to design the initiative. The design process began by assessing the demand for agriculture technicians and then mapping the technical training programs available in the region to meet that demand. The assessment found that not only were training programs not keeping pace with growing industry demand, but that most programs did not offer two key components -- life and academic skills -- that were highly valued by local industry. In an effort to respond to and reverse this trend, Mag-Agri brings together a diverse group of stakeholders who are committed to providing industry-demanded skills to vulnerable out-of-school youth. The strength of the alliance is demonstrated in the ability of the program to engage industry in a sustainable manner and employ graduates in these companies.

Mobilizing Around a Common Cause: Responding to the Skills Mismatch

Agriculture technicians are highly demanded in Davao, a region that produces 60% of Mindanao's produce. Mango farming is a growth industry in the Philippines, one of the three most exported fruits in the Philippines, and Davao is positioning itself to become a major mango producing region. The Davao Region Mango Producers Association or DAREMCA, which consists of 59 mango contractors, anticipates that it will experience a substantial increase in its workforce. Food processing companies also expect to benefit from the increased agricultural production, and PhilFruit, the largest exporter of canned fruits in Davao, also realizes that additional skilled workers will be needed to handle this increase. Jun Hernaez, Davao City Chamber Executive Director, projects that "Over the next five years, more industries will seek experienced workers to remain competitive and the training offered by EEA will be able to help."

A skills mismatch occurs when the policies and programs of education and training institutions do not promote the skills needed by the private sector.[10] This was the challenge facing the Davao Chamber of Commerce when it heard about EEA. "Our member companies needed assistance finding qualified employees and we didn't know where to turn," explains Tina Ramos, President of the Food Processors Association of Davao. This acknowledged need gave the Chamber an incentive to support the program, and it knew that through

10 *USAID/Asia and Near East Bureau. Jobs for the 21st Century: Synthesis Paper. June 2007.*

providing its support it would be meeting a real demand in the community. For the Chamber, a partnership was required to address this need, as they did not have the capacity to train and certify youth. With APPPI, USEP and TESDA on board, these requirements were fulfilled. In recognition of their complementary strengths, the partners committed to work together and presented EEA a proposal for $100,200 to train 180 OSY in fruit farming, food processing and organic farming. Trainees would also study English, Math and IT as well as life skills before learning the technical skills.

After receiving EEA funds, a year into the project, the alliance of partners was having a demonstrated, positive effect. The core partners had fulfilled their commitment and training was underway. Twelve members from the Chamber were providing direct support to the project's three training tracks, and USEP opened up their computer labs and provided teachers for IT training. Moreover, APPPI had developed a curriculum for the organic farming track. Nonetheless, despite the progress, the partners realized they had a long way to go before reaching their ambitious employment target of 80%. Accordingly, in November 2007, the members drafted a strategy to open-up the alliance to include additional members who could help the project meet its target and sustain activities beyond EEA-funding.

Formalizing an Alliance

Positioning the project to respond to the skills mismatch in the city was at the core of the alliance building strategy. The partners realized that successfully expanding membership to include Davao's largest agriculture-based companies and local government meant they would have to market the project as a viable solution to the shortage of skilled agriculture technicians. Through effective marketing, the partners believed they could form an alliance with a shared vision, mission and commitment to the OSY, in which a broad membership base engaged in program planning, the decision-making process and generated sufficient resources to sustain the program.

The first step in this effort was securing buy-in from TESDA to certify the training. The partners took advantage of the fact that TESDA did not offer training courses for fruit and organic farm technicians and presented TESDA with the curriculum they had developed for the project. After several rounds of negotiations, the curriculum was certified on the condition that TESDA could use it for its own training programs. The partners also succeeded in brokering a deal with TESDA to open up their training sites for hands-on training in fruit farming. With TESDA firmly on-board, the alliance was ready to turn to private industry.

When the project was designed, it was assumed that it would be easy for the Chamber of Commerce to provide employment to the trainees by matching them to their 400 member companies. While it was true that the Chamber had direct links to business, it emphasized the need to prove to its members why youth who were trained should be hired. Select members had agreed in principle to hiring graduates, but the project was required to demonstrate that the training was up to industry standards. Many companies were reluctant to hire OSY, believing that they did not have the technical or life skills to succeed in the workplace. Disproving this sentiment, and demonstrating the quality of the training, required the alliance to work with industry to secure OJT for the trainees.

After extensive negotiations with member companies, the alliance was able to convince the mango, durian and food processing industries to open their doors to trainees for OJT. USEP took advantage of its position as one of the most respected public universities in the Philippines to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Davao Region Mango Producers Association (DAREMCA) to provide hands-on training in mango production in member farms. 60 newly trained fruit farm technicians were placed in paid apprenticeship in the mango farms of DAREMCA. USEP has also negotiated a similar arrangement with durian fruit producers. By June 2007, 161 trainees were participating in OJT, and formal employment had been offered to 16 graduates. Twenty food processing trainees who will complete their OJT at PhilFruit will also be offered jobs with the company. In the past, PhilFruit had not accepted on-the job trainees, but according to Ms. Ramos, "After we saw the quality of trainees, we were happy to open our doors."

The alliance the project built with TESDA continues to bear fruit. The Chamber is now formally partnering with TESDA to develop arrangements with industry to provide OJT and employment to TESDA's technical training graduates. The collaboration led to TESDA turning over management of their state-of-the-art training facility to the Chamber. The KorPhil Training Center provides access to eight technical training facilities that will enable the Chamber to sustain the EEA program. However, despite these advances, the alliance realizes that it will need more than facilities to sustain the program, and has hired a consultant to identify resources to address that need. The mapping exercise has identified a list of 19 potential members from all sectors and demonstrated the potential to further formalize, expand and sustain the program.

Sustaining the Movement

Davao's alliance-building strategy demonstrates the importance of building a program that brings together partners who are capable of reversing the skills mismatch. What Mag-Agri has achieved thus far can be attributed to the multisectoral nature of the partnership where businesses, educators, NGOs and local government work together to provide critical inputs from all perspectives. The skills mismatch cannot be viewed solely as a supply or demand side problem, and therefore any feasible solution must address the problem from both sides. With multiple stakeholders actively engaged in developing solutions, the program has created an employability training model for OSY that creates a supply of qualified employees to meet the growing demand.

Although the alliance has not finalized its sustainability strategy, the partners are optimistic that the program will continue to market itself. After hearing about the project from trainees who shared their experience with their communities, representatives from local government are asking the Chamber how to continue the project. The mango industry is also enthusiastic. They are confident that the well-trained youth will fill the gaps in their growing workforce and help professionalize the sector. The early enthusiasm of industry is influencing other companies to participate. In August 2007, an MOU was signed with Mindanao Fruit (MinFruit), a leading company in Davao, to support efforts to employ youth. MinFruit sees their participation in the project as complimentary to their goal of fostering national economic development through the creation of employment opportunities.

Cesar Ledesma, Executive Director of APPPI believes that the alliance has what it needs to flourish. "There are four factors that will sustain our efforts: strong relationships, the formal alliance structure, a committed and effective leader and the need to work together," he explains. "Imbuing youth with employable skills is good, but more important is the ripple effect it has on helping a family gain the same opportunity."

Sustaining Community-Based Alliances: Lessons and Challenges

In examining the EEA Philippines' model of building community-based alliances to support and sustain technical education programs for out-of-school youth, a number of important lessons can be drawn from the experience. Similarly, an analysis of the challenges faced can provide insights about how community-based alliances can integrate demand-driven technical education programs into communities to respond to local development needs and spur economic development. This section analyzes the cases presented in the previous sections and identifies the lessons learned and challenges faced. Lessons are classified into three stages that together constitute the alliance building process: building the alliance, nurturing the coalition, and taking action. The importance of strong leadership is also discussed as part of the alliance building process. Finally, three challenges and solutions based on the development of community-based alliances are identified.

Lessons Learned

Stage 1: Building the Alliance: A key lesson learned in building a CBA is that partners must be committed to working together to achieve a common goal. The projects described here illustrate that an alliance must be built on a strong foundation of sustained commitment and collaboration. Each project portrays an alliance as individuals, groups and organizations working together for a common cause. Each partner brings complementary expertise, an institutional mandate and assets to achieve a comprehensive goal. The operative word is collaboration, where each participant contributes what it can to accomplish an agreed upon objective. It requires a relationship that fosters ownership and participation, in which members exhibit mutual respect, trust, transparency and accountability. The concept of an alliance subsumes the idea that alone it will be more difficult to achieve a goal, and that an alliance satisfies mutual needs and from it flows mutual benefits.

For the Civil Trades Training program, convening a group was imperative from the start of project planning. Eager to seize the opportunity presented by EEA, the project implementers saw the fit between their organization's mission and EEA. However, each knew instinctively that their respective organization did not have the capacity to implement and sustain the project on its own. They therefore mapped the needs of OSY in the community and engaged local institutions and government to work together to meet these needs. Each alliance member committed to advocating for former youth combatants and OSY and collectively contributed to achieve project goals. In this respect, different partners provided critical inputs, with ALTERPLAN providing training and leading alliance building, HFHP providing infrastructure and expertise for training, and the UNDP Act for Peace providing resources.

MIAP Plus's alliance building strategy evolved from their need to meet industry demand, their past experience training OSY, and the recognition that building a sustainable program meant engaging community leaders and leveraging additional resources. MIAP's members mobilized around their belief that training OSY would allow them to meet increased industry demand for qualified welders. Leaders from local government shared a similar willingness to support OSY in obtaining marketable skills as a way to spur economic development in the area. Under EEA, MIAP mobilized financial support from local government and used its position as a trade association to leverage resources such as on-the-job training and mentoring from local businesses.

The Mag-Agri community-based alliance was built on the mutual commitment of partners to train OSY as a strategy to overcome the skills mismatch in Davao City. Partners mobilized around the realization that youth had minimal training opportunities and those that were available taught outdated, unmarketable skills. Spearheaded by the local Chamber of Commerce, project partners collaborated to design the training curriculum, identify potential employers and organize local alliance members. The complementary strengths of alliance partners enabled the project to leverage critical resources for sustainability, including training and infrastructure from TESDA, as well as technical expertise, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and employment from the Chamber's member companies.

Stage 2: Nurturing the Coalition: The lesson learned in nurturing the alliance is that partners must be actively engaged in developing the project and participate in the decision making process regarding its development and execution. Mobilizing people to discuss community development challenges is relatively easy compared to actively engaging them to work as change agents. In order to overcome this challenge, EEA

uses various strategies to build cohesive bodies capable of maintaining CBAs. Having a regular venue for discussion and keeping the members informed are crucial to the life of an alliance. For EEA, regular meetings and frequent reporting serve as mechanisms for sustaining the interest of project stakeholders. Meetings are conducted using a participatory approach that invites members to take part in the implementation process. Meetings provide a venue for partners to highlight successes and propose innovative solutions to overcome challenges. Engaging alliance members in programmatic issues such as the welfare of OSY and the visible outcomes of their involvement is also key to maintaining their involvement. Common needs draw stakeholders together; positive results keep them committed.

The Civil Trades Training program uses its alliance meetings as brainstorming sessions to discuss development trends and ongoing needs in the construction industry. These sessions facilitate discussions about gaps in the training, employment and continuing care of construction workers. Discussions also provide opportunities to identify individuals and groups who are capable of filling the gaps. These meetings have been instrumental in determining the project's future direction and ensuring that it continues to respond to an industry demand for construction workers and a community demand for housing and youth employment in conflict-affected areas. Continued financial support from new and existing partners illustrates that investing time in meetings and planning helps build stronger partnerships, greater commitment and ultimately better programs.

For MIAP Plus monthly meeting are used primarily to review project developments and chart out future directions. Collective problem-solving is used to analyze challenges and propose solutions. Meetings also provide an opportunity to hold members accountable to their commitments. Members present their individual progress on reaching project objectives and solicit support from the alliance when they were not able to fulfill them. While MIAP is clearly the lead facilitator, the alliance would not be maintained without the active and regular participation of all members. According to a local government official in Tagoloan, "Our participation is primarily as a support to MIAP because we believe in the program."

With three lead partners, the Mag-Agri project relies on regular meetings to maintain interest, generate solutions to project challenges and facilitate project implementation. Consistent communication and collaboration have allowed the project to address real challenges such as reaching employment targets and accrediting trainees. When employing youth became a challenge, the alliance met to develop strategies to engage industry. The result was commitments from the mango and durian industry to open their doors to OJT for trainees. Core members also work together to market the project to industry and government stakeholders whose involvement in the alliance is necessary to achieve project goals. When asked what strategies they are considering to formalize the alliance, partners explain, "We'll make sure Mag-Agri continues to respond to a demand in the community and that the quality of training is upheld."

Stage 3: Taking Action: The lesson learned around taking action is that concrete and tangible contributions from partners improves program design, effectiveness and promotes sustainability. Participation, which is the most tangible way to gauge involvement in an alliance, manifests itself in two ways: providing financial resources and providing in-kind contributions such as training facilities, curriculum development and training support costs. While many project implementers prefer financial support because it gives them the freedom to execute the project with minimal intervention, EEA projects have benefited from in-kind contributions. That support has included allowances for apprenticeships, transportation to project sites, and meals during training -- all critical elements that promote trainee participation and commitment to the project. Financial and in-kind resources represent the backbone of the alliance and are the tangible commitments of members to support the project.

Members of the Civil Trades Training alliance identified their individual roles in the project and committed resources to produce results. As the lead implementer, ALTERPLAN secured the grant from EEA and committed to providing technical training. HFHP provided on-the-job training and employment to trainees. The Association of Construction and Informal Workers, the Notre Dame of Midsayap College and TESDA committed to providing training and certification services. The ILO and UNDP joined the alliance when they recognized the project's unique and effective approach to skills training and employment. Together they committed over $81,500 to the project. As the second phase of the program begins, in-kind resources have been leveraged from new partners tasked with facilitating employment and helping to formalize the sector. Taken together, the concrete and tangible commitments of partners guaranteed their participation and willingness to promote long term sustainability.

MIAP Plus solidified the financial and in-kind commitments of its alliance members by signing formal agreements. Their strategy for generating and sustaining support was to identify the needs of industry and the community and then identify local groups that can meet the need. Members are thus mobilized depending on what each can do for project participants. Using this strategy, the local government committed its support to recruit, select and provide social services to trainees; member companies provided in-plant training and employment; TESDA provided training facilities and certification; and Phividec monitored quality and offered apprenticeships. By securing formal commitments from its members, the alliance effectively integrated the project into the community and created an opportunity for local ownership to sustain activities.

The core members of the Mag-Agri alliance are engaging additional stakeholders to participate in and sustain the project. Now that the curriculum has been developed and accredited, and over 142 participants have graduated, the quality of the training is beginning to be recognized by local government and industry. This early success has already attracted employers such as Philfoods and the mango and durian industries to join the alliance. MOUs with over 5 industries have been signed to secure on-the-job training and employment for trainees. The alliance has learned that the tangible commitments of diverse stakeholders are necessary to sustain the project.

Leadership: The Foundation of an Alliance: The lesson learned in this final area is that strong leadership at both the individual and institutional level is a prerequisite for program success. Membership is by a participating institution, thus decisions about the alliance carry the full weight of the institution's commitment. This gives the relationship some degree of stability, protecting it from internal institutional changes such as staff turnover. However, it is the individual representing the institution that fundamentally influences the degree to which an institution participates in an alliance. The representative promotes the alliance within the institution and ensures the goals of both remain complimentary over the life of the project.

The alliances described in this study are led by strong and dedicated individuals who have succeeded in engaging their respective institutions to collaborate with EEA. Alliance leaders hold executive positions and are key decision makers in their organizations. This has facilitated whatever internal actions are necessary to foster collaboration within their respective organizations. Moreover, their understanding of the needs of out-of-school youth and private industry, coupled with their ability to work as one among equals in an alliance, has enabled the alliances to work effectively toward a common goal.

The importance of getting the composition of alliances right, particularly in engaging strong leaders is demonstrated by ALTERPLAN's ability to access employment opportunities in Manila for program graduates from Mindanao. ALTERPLAN's strong leader addressed the employment challenge by using her influence and connections to forge strategic partnerships with HFHP and UNDP. HFHP provided the building sites and UNDP and EEA provided the money to transport graduates to employment sites. Ultimately, strong leadership enabled the program to overcome the significant challenge of employment in Mindanao.

Challenges Faced

Alliance building is not an easy or simple enterprise, and EEA Philippines has confronted significant challenges in building strong community-based alliances capable of sustaining EEA programs. Several challenges persist, including employing graduates and generating funding. New challenges arising from an increased demand from local communities for larger programs must also be overcome before the program is sustained. Nonetheless, properly developed and nurtured, CBAs appear to be uniquely positioned to address these challenges, providing alliance members with a framework to continue to work together to tackle problems in order to meet and exceed project goals.

Employing Graduates: Despite relative success and ongoing efforts to employ program graduates, EEA alliances continue to struggle to secure employment for all graduates. A variety of factors contribute to this challenge. Stagnant economic growth has limited employment opportunities in many parts of Mindanao and trainees do not have the financial resources to easily travel to potential employment sites. The perceived notion by many employers that out-of-school youth lack the technical and life skills required to succeed in the workplace has also added to the challenge.

The structure and composition of CBAs, however, allows them to confront the employment challenge. Alliances that are integrated into the community are better at recognizing the source of challenges, potential opportunities and in developing solutions. In this area, alliances that engage local industry as active participants can directly engage potential employers to assist them in addressing employment issues. Moreover, with the right framework in place, private companies can come to consensus with competitors to participate in the solution. This was demonstrated in the Mag-Agri program when a traditionally competitive mango industry endorsed the quality of the program, concluding that it was to the advantage of the full sector to improve the quality of this workforce. With this consensus, the durian industry was convinced to provide OJT to graduates -- training which has ultimately resulted in over 42 jobs.

Generating Funding: The majority of contributions from alliance members to the projects are in-kind, with limited cash resources outside of EEA seed-funding provided. Since seed-funds acted as the magnet which attracted complimentary resources, EEA partners are now faced with the task of securing further cash funds to finance activities and leverage counterpart funding. As part of its long term sustainability strategy in this area, EEA will continue to provide leverage and alliance building workshops to build the capacity of partners to market results and write proposals for new funding.

In this area, a framework is also being constructed to overcome this persistent challenge. Community-based alliances bring together powerful leaders with diverse strengths that can be built upon to effectively market programs and secure new funding. In furtherance of this aim, strong alliance leaders are capable of leveraging their contacts with business and government to sell program results. Moreover, the diverse composition of CBAs means that one or more members are likely to have important marketing skills necessary to secure funding, an important complement to partners with stronger technical than fundraising skills. In this respect, the MIAP case study provides a strong example. There, the president of MIAP demonstrated a leader's ability to leverage contacts for project

resources when he brought in the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Northern Mindanao (OPANORMIN) and private companies. Ultimately, through his efforts, these groups were convinced to contribute $71,665 in leverage, enabling a second stage to the project.

Managing Growth: Initial program success has increased demand from local communities and industries to expand trainings in and around Mindanao. New goals have emerged, such as formalizing the construction sector and establishing a foundation to train welders. While important, these goals may destabilize the focus of EEA alliances and dilute their ability to bridge the education and employment gap for marginalized youth. As the alliance and number of partners grow and become more diffuse, priority areas will evolve into more varied interactions that require quality and committed management.

Ultimately, however, while the challenge of managing growth can be difficult to overcome, it demonstrates the overall success of EEA in implementing quality training programs for OSY. The ability of CBAs to commit to working together to achieve comprehensive goals suggests that despite increased demand and new objectives, projects will continue to manage priorities to achieve results. Constant communication and the active participation of members will become increasingly important as alliances are tasked with achieving greater goals. In this respect, for example, ALTERPLAN has already succeeded in prioritizing multiple goals by bringing in new partners who are committed to the cause and have the ability to focus on a specific task. Building and Wood Workers International and the National Union of Building and Construction Workers were brought into the alliance to help formalize the construction industry and protect workers' rights. Their interaction with the alliance again demonstrates the importance of leadership to both engage new partners, and to coordinate their efforts for the long term benefit of the program and alliance structure more broadly.

Conclusion

The EEA Philippines' strategy of building community-based alliances to integrate demand-driven technical education programs into local communities has enabled the program to train over 2,700 youth and leverage over $1,600,000 in funding. Building locally owned programs that can be sustained by diverse stakeholders is at the heart of the program's strategy. Engaging multiple stakeholders from local government, the private sector and civil society has been a key ingredient in the program's overall success. Of course, the examples presented in this study also illustrate that while the successes can be great, so too can the challenges, particularly as alliances grow and become more diverse and require more resources to be sustained. Nonetheless, the strength of the alliances and the tested relationships they bring are well suited to begin confronting these challenges and continue their strong momentum toward constructive change for disadvantaged youth. Indeed, as relationships are tested and progress is made toward key objectives, momentum builds for broader expansion, greater emphasis on resource development and more scaleable outcomes. As such, these relationships ultimately present important pathways to bridge the gap between education and employment for out-of-school youth in Mindanao. They offer as well significant lessons to all seeking effective approaches to sustainable training and employment programs for disadvantaged youth.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ALLIANCE

The Education and Employment Alliance (EEA) works in six countries with high youth unemployment rates — Egypt, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan, and the Philippines — to develop and expand quality education, job training and placement programs. The program is funded through a four-year US$13 million grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and US$9 million to be leveraged from the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and its partners. IYF hosts the Alliance's Global Secretariat and coordinates all Alliance activities.

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INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FOUNDATION

The International Youth Foundation is a global nonprofit organization uniquely dedicated to preparing young people to be healthy, productive, and engaged citizens. Founded in 1990, IYF's worldwide network of partner organizations has grown to 70 countries, helping young people to shape their futures through proven programs that tie education to work, improve employability, and enable and inspire them to play a positive role in their communities. IYF collaborates with businesses, governments and civil society organizations to build effective and sustainable programs that positively impact the lives of young people worldwide. For more information, please visit www.iyfnet.org.

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