



**TRIP REPORT:**

**Proposed Workforce Development Strategy**

**for USAID Honduras**

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## **Executive Summary**

USAID Honduras requested an assessment of current education and vocational education approaches and recommendations for supporting a workforce development strategy.

This report targets two populations:

- 1) In-school youth, beginning with career awareness and employability awareness as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade in order to retain youth and connect learning to the workplace;
- 2) Out-of-school youth, reconnecting them to education programs while building their competencies in the workplace.

Strategies to improve basic and employability skills for the workplace are recommended approaches for reaching, retaining and serving both in-school and out-of-school youth. For in-school youth, strategies to reach and retain youth in education programs should include employability skills development as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade, both as a school retention strategy and to build job and career awareness, connecting them to the world of work.

For out-of-school youth, employability skills also are intended to build job awareness and connect them to the world of work. These kinds of approaches are effective recruitment and retention strategies, often having the effect of reconnecting youth to education programs, particularly alternative education programs. Alternative education settings are important to those already working. Therefore, alternative learning centers such as those of *Educadores* should be considered as places for delivery of employability skills and job readiness.

Recommendations are discussed in two phases (short-term and long-term) with discussions in detail beginning on page 8 of this report.

### *Phase I*

- Labor Market Assessment
- Analysis of Employability Skills Resources
- Review of Best Practice Models in Youth Employment/Youth Development
- Sustain Private Sector Involvement

### *Phase II*

- Workforce Development Data for Decision-making
- Workplace Competency Development and National Standards
- Connect Technical Preparation to Formal Education
- Build on Community Service Projects of *Educadores*

## **Purpose and Scope**

The Honduran Mission requested assistance from USAID under the Global Workforce in Transition (GWIT) project to gain knowledge of workforce development programs in place in Honduras and to recommend national strategies for improving the outcomes for youth in the workplace. The purpose of the assessment was to:

- Assess and deliver preliminary recommendations on how workforce development programs and systems in Honduras might be improved and aligned with current best practices;
- Provide recommendations for short-term and long-term workforce development model(s); and
- Assist in identifying synergies within the Mission and other donors.

In the few days allotted to this task, it has been possible to gain only an impression and prepare preliminary recommendations. While additional work is needed, this report:

- discusses efforts that are working,
- identifies points of coordination or synergies in place, and
- proposes short- and long-term recommendations for reconnecting youth to education and the workplace, thus improving retention and reducing school dropout rates.

## **Context for Honduran Mission Focus on Workforce Development**

The Education for All-Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI) international commitment pledges to bring the benefits of primary education to "every child in society." Participating countries pledge to provide primary education for all children by the year 2015. Goals to invest in human capital in Honduras include "quality, efficiency and equity at the pre-school, basic and secondary education levels, thus guaranteeing a better-prepared workforce."

The country's Poverty Reduction Strategy of August 2001 delineates national education of:

1. achieving 95 percent net coverage in access to the first two cycles (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade) of basic education through teacher training, curriculum innovation, reducing school dropout and grade repetition, and strengthening the demand and supply of basic educational services;
2. achieving 70 percent coverage in the third cycle (7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade) of basic education through improvements in teacher training, curriculum innovation, scholarships or subsidies for the poorest students, and strengthening or creating alternative models of education with community participation; and
3. achieving 50 percent completion of secondary education for new entrants to the labor market by improving educational quality, expand and develop incentives to allow students to continue secondary education, especially in technical school, increase substantially the number of school centers and achieve a greater participation by NGOs, employers and parents.

In addition to the specific goals for education, the Poverty Reduction Strategy discusses industry sectors with high production and employment potential, including recommendations for using a cluster approach in areas like agro-business, forestry and tourism, and defining support and financing for small and medium-sized enterprises (see pp. 67-68, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper). The Mission's Strategic Objective #3 Investing in People as outlined in the Honduras Country Plan (August 2003) complements the Poverty Reduction Strategy, stating that the workforce will be "more capable of meeting the country's needs for a better educated and more skilled workforce to meet evolving private sector demand for qualified workers."

As a result of investments in formal education, there is adequate coverage, or sufficient numbers of primary schools.<sup>1</sup> Retention, perhaps owing to youths' economic need and perception of relevance, is the real challenge to meeting the PRS and EFA-FTI goals. Besides the goals of completing primary school, the PRS states that 50 percent of the emerging labor force should have attained *Educacion Media* (11<sup>th</sup> grade completion) by 2015, an ever higher goal that is further from the reach of the poorest youth.

USAID assistance that continues education reform and preparation of youth in 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grades through EDUCATODOS support a workforce development agenda. There is energy and support of the Mission staff and within the Ministry of Education to reach and retain youth, connecting and reconnecting them to education and better jobs. There is much in the Mission--lessons learned and quantitative data--on formal and alternative education, standards-setting and a history of support for vocational education in Honduras, that make this an opportune time to prepare a youth workforce development agenda.

### **Education and Vocational Education: What's Working?**

Through the Mission's work over the last twenty years, and using results and data to drive programs and management decisions at the national level, there are a number of efforts that have and continue to greatly reduce failure rates of early primary school students and reduce school dropout rates in primary school. USAID's work in the last ten years has capitalized on data from traditional education systems and now seeks to improve youth outcomes using alternative delivery systems and programs, developing standards that will improve teacher training and lead to higher student achievement rates.

#### **Vocational Training Centers**

USAID has actively supported a network of vocational education centers since 1984. The *Centro Asesor para el Desarrollo de los Recursos Humanos de Honduras* (CADERH) was established to address private sector training needs. Originally approved as a USAID-sponsored pilot program, amendments to the project focused the work and expanded the scope over ten

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<sup>1</sup> Salvemos Primer Ciclo (Save the First Grade) is a USAID-sponsored program that demonstrated reduction of 1st-3<sup>rd</sup> grade repetition and dropout rates through teacher interventions: the use of Mentors and time management (in order that the full curriculum be delivered in the year) and use by teachers of student progress charts. The evaluation found it is not the weaker students who repeat the earliest grades. Rather, efforts that develop teacher capacity will improve the passing rates of the youngest students, improving their chances of continued education necessary for better jobs.

years' time. The organization is fully operational and linked to the private sector through a Board of Directors. CADERH's charge is to define training needs, develop certification exams and develop competency-based instructional materials. In 2004, approximately 5,000 young people participated in vocational skills programs, with the agency reporting an 89% completion rate. A thorough evaluation of results of the three-component program (institution-building, in-plant training and materials development and delivery) was completed in 1994. The organization is presently conducting an evaluation to find and follow up with program participants in order to learn more about youths' successes following training.

The National Vocational Training Institute, INFOP, is an autonomous institution with legal status created to provide training to Honduran workers. Goals are to contribute to national productivity and economic development of the country, and establish a national system of vocational training for all sectors of the economy and all levels of employment according to the national plans of social and economic development.

### Educational Standards

USAID, through EQUIP2, supports *Mejorando el Impacto al Desempeno Estudiantil de Honduras* (MIDEH), an effort that seeks to:

- Develop articulated standards and an effective national testing system for students in 1st-6th grades (and eventually for students in higher grades);
- Establish a decentralized training program for education staff and officials at all levels of primary education, linking standards of learning to standards of teaching;
- Present solutions for alternative education for those in grades 7-12; and,
- Facilitate consensus nationally and locally around education policy reform

Through the combined work of donor agencies and other projects of EQUIP2 including MIDEH, the educational outcomes are expected to be transformed through teacher delivery and a more consistent student testing scheme.

Also contributing to improvement of student outcomes for Honduras and the region is USAID-sponsored Centers for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT), announced by President Bush in 2001 to improve the quality of classroom reading and writing instruction in 1st-3<sup>rd</sup> grades, with emphasis on poorer countries and disadvantaged communities. Phase I involves implementation in 1,800 schools in the region throughout the Caribbean and Central America, reaching 20,000 youth. Phase II of CETT will focus on sustainability of the program, especially addressing quality issues in implementation as the programs are transferred to host countries.

### Alternative Education

*Educadores*, also financed by USAID and the Secretary of Education, began in 1994 to focus on rural and urban areas where formal education was limited. It began as a program to serve those in 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades and expanded in 2001 to serve 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grades. The program uses cassette tape instruction in language and math for youth and adults in any number of community-based locations, including private homes, vocational centers and businesses. A facilitator from the

community, who is expected to have completed at least the grade he/she is teaching, is responsible for determining with students the meeting times and obtaining equipment (cassette player) and textbooks. A “promoter” assesses and determines community need, finds students and facilitators to participate and delivers needed materials to the facilitator.

Of particular interest for workforce development are early results of *Educados* program participants in the workplace and vocational centers. A number of observations involving age of participants, enrollment and re-enrollment suggest a high motivation factor for participants already in the workplace. A recent evaluation shows that learning centers within vocational centers and private businesses have the lowest rates of attrition. At the same time, 39 percent of people who drop out of the program cite “work pressures” as the primary reason for leaving. The evaluation raises a number of additional questions for further study including participants’ attachment to the facilitators and presence of community service projects as determinants of success.

Other large alternative education programs include *Programa de Alfabetizacion y Educacion Basica de Jovenes y Adultos en Honduras* (PRALEBAH), financed by the Secretary of Education with assistance from the Ministry of Education of Spain; *Instituto Hondureno de Educacion per Radio* (IHER), El Maestro en Casa with private funds; and educational television.

#### *Privately-funded Vocational Training*

San Juan Bosco Vocational Training Schools assist youth with sustainable employment through education, training and production. The Salesian schools, founded in 1859 in Turin, Italy by an Italian priest, aim to create skilled apprentices easily placed in jobs upon graduation. The Honduran school trains up to 400 youth per year in areas including carpentry, metal work, electronics, electricity, machinery, information sciences, tailoring and automotive mechanics. Training lasts two years, depending on the difficulty level of the course, and is complemented by theoretical instruction. Except for information sciences (these graduates are CISCO and Microsoft-certified) students are certified by CADERH. So, in addition to gaining the Salesian certificate of completion, students passing the examinations also receive a state-approved certificate. In 2004, average job placement rates were 70 percent, according to a draft report.

Special emphasis throughout Honduras, especially within San Juan Bosco vocational centers, is on integration of young women in traditionally male occupations. In the Honduran context, both students and teachers at San Juan Bosco report they are more comfortable with integration of young women in training programs than even a few years ago. In a short visit in country it was striking to see a number of female painters and carpenters.

*Fundacion para la Educacion Tecnica Centro-Americana* FUNDETEC is a model that began in Indonesia in the 1990s at the time of the Asian economic crash. A group of Rotarians formed a consortium to train very poor youth and, with funding from the World Bank, the program was replicated in Vietnam. In Honduras, the effort has grown as a result of President Maduro’s leadership and demand from employers that traditional vocational training programs do not meet the needs of business. Combined, \$500,000 has been raised by the private sector for this effort, with additional requests made from the government of Canada. CADERH’s San Pedro Sula training center, with the construction of the center financed by USAID and

CADERH, is the location for the FUNDETEC program. FUNDETEC's goal is to be self-supporting in three years.

*Foro Nacional de Convergencia* (FONAC) is a national consortium of members of the government and community leaders charged with the role of developing priorities for educational change. This public-private partnership, developed under EQUIP2, functions independently of the politics of elected government. Its members of government and leaders in civil society are brought together to solve problems of Honduras' education system.

*Fundación para la Educación Ricardo Ernesto Maduro Andreu* (FEREMA) is a foundation formed in 1988 by President Ricardo Maduro through Executive Order . The foundation seeks to have direct impacts on educational outcomes of youth. Its programs include Institutional Strengthening, Promotion of Educational Politics, Improving the Quality of Education<sup>2</sup> and Benefiting Students. A recent alliance with Microsoft to deliver technology training for teachers, will instruct teachers on models of evaluation and introduce them to educational software.

### **Synergies with International Donor Community**

Of the programs described in the section above, expected results of MIDEH, FEREMA and FONAC under the EFA-FTI and Poverty Reduction Strategy include a plan for education reform approved of and supported by both government and civil society stakeholders. In terms of teacher training, the Mission funds MIDEH standards development project to improve training at the local level. Decentralized teacher training at the school, district, departmental and central levels is expected to 1) enhance the role of school officials in monitoring the progress of low-performing schools, and 2) generate consistency throughout the educational testing process.

*Mesa Redonda de Cooperantes Externos en Educacion* (MERECE) is a consortium of donor agencies that came together to help rebuild the country following Hurricane Mitch in 1998. MERECE formed as a result of the conviction that education is a central factor in eradicating poverty and generating sustainable development that includes the country's workers as productive citizens. Members are involved in supporting EFA-FTI and the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Included in the MERECE strategy is a statement supporting alternative education. And, recent work details development of strategies for improving education by: supporting implementation of the national curriculum; teacher training; addressing dropout and school retention rates. One of the tenets of the MERECE strategy is to "put into place an integrated strategy for reducing the dropout rate, grade repetition and raising academic achievement."

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<sup>2</sup> One of these programs is PREPI, a project of the Secretary of Education and FEREMA, with USAID financing and technical assistance from EDC. The program is a pedagogical model of alternative education for those in pre-school. It grew out of the Poverty Reduction Strategy; FONAC's Proposal for the Transformation of National Education; Action Plan and Strategy of the Secretary of Education and EFA's Quality Education for All. There has been large growth in PREPI in the last year.

*ProEmpleo* and *Mi Primer Empleo*, funded by the Interamerican Development Bank and World Bank, respectively, are programs managed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. *ProEmpleo* will provide training to 8,000 youth and young adults ages 18-29. *Mi Primer Empleo* seeks to reach 6,000 youth ages 16-19 and orient them to the workplace. Both programs are administered by the Labor Secretary who will evaluate and document the outcomes for youth in each program. Service delivery will be contracted for with CADERH.

At the time of this writing, a regional dialogue on Dominican Republic-CAFTA involving five countries was occurring that involves funding through the World Bank and *Banco Centroamericano de Integración Económica* (BICE) for micro-enterprises and the self-employed. More information is needed on the industrial and geographic sectors to be targeted and how the Mission can be involved.

### **Recommended Points of Coordination**

Recommendations target two populations: 1) in-school youth, beginning with career awareness and employability awareness as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade in order to retain youth and connect learning to the workplace, and 2) out-of-school youth, reconnecting them to education programs while building their competencies in the workplace in order to attain better future jobs.

Employability skills and strategies to improve skills needed for the workplace are recommended approaches for reaching, retaining and serving both in-school and out-of-school youth and beginning as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

For out-of-school youth, employability skills are intended to build job awareness, connecting them to the world of work. These kinds of approaches are also effective recruitment and retention strategies, often having the effect of connecting youth to education programs, particularly alternative education programs. Alternative education settings are important to those already working. Therefore, alternative learning centers such as those of *Educadores* should be considered as places for delivery of employability skills and job readiness.

Recommendations below all are presented in the context of reaching and serving in-school and out-of-school youth. The first section describes those that are short-term (Phase I) and meant to be integrated with current projects; the second section described longer-term (Phase II) recommendations that build on current work.

### **Phase I Recommendations**

A number of short-term recommendations directly complement the Mission's work and may be undertaken over the next few months.

*Labor Market Assessment:* The purpose of a labor market assessment is to provide a snapshot of the current and future labor supply and demand, resulting in local area data for workforce development policy. The labor market assessment should build on the strategies in the Mission of the education staff and on those important to the trade and economic development staff.

Additional time is needed beyond this study to determine the capacity of employers, employer associations, unions, and labor market intermediaries to further define workforce needs in the country, by locale, by industry and through more time spent with business leaders.

The data from a labor market assessment should:

- be used as the primary informational tool that builds the national workforce development agenda, complemented by the information from the *Servicio de Intermediación Laboral* (SIL), being developed by the Ministry of Labor with six job placement centers (three public and three private groups with COHEP), which should provide ongoing information on the demand for employees in different areas;
- include identification of a manageable number (2-5) of industrial clusters based on local labor market needs;
- recommend an action plan for matching skills required by employers within those industries to available education and training programs; and
- describe the gaps in education and training needed by employers within those industries.

*Analysis of Employability Skills Resources:* Presentation and agreement on a set of employability skills for in-school and out-of-school youth is recommended. Employability skills include learning experiences such as finding and keeping a job, financial literacy, types of careers in an industry, writing a resume, critical thinking, discipline, responsibility, cooperation and team work, understanding the culture of the workplace, and communication skills.

For youth, acquisition of employability skills is a developmental experience leading to positive outcomes. For employers who state that young people entering the workforce lack preparation for work, it is the opportunity to involve them in development and adoption of materials.

There are numerous examples of employability skills modules available throughout the international community and good examples already in use in Honduras. An analysis of those appropriate for graduating 6<sup>th</sup> graders and continuing through 9<sup>th</sup> grade would be useful in itself, in addition to informing any MIDEH work incorporating workplace competencies. San Juan Bosco has written an employability skills training manual (*Modulo de Insercion Laboral: Habilitacion para el Trabajo*) and offered to share it with any agency making the request.

*Review of Best Practice Models in Youth Employment/Youth Development:* EQUIP3 for Out-of-School Youth is a USAID-sponsored program designed to prepare and engage out-of-school children, youth and young adults for their roles within the world of work, civil society and family life. Through the effort, youth and youth-serving organizations, including nongovernmental organizations, government agencies, private businesses, and education and training providers gain access and assistance to best practices of youth employment and youth development. EQUIP3 would be a valuable way in which to draw on the assets of youth and recommend ways for involvement of youth in the design, implementation, and evaluation of these recommendations.

One of the partners of EQUIP3 is the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC), a network of youth-serving programs whose members, along with experts from the field, developed a set of effective practices and principles common to effective youth programs. NYEC's Promising and

Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) is a resource to practitioners, policymakers, funders and government leaders alike. The PEPNet standards for promising youth programs are available to all in the youth community and available in a variety of formats. Programs recognized by this set of national standards agree to be helpful and to share information with others in the field. Additional information and resources of PEPNet can be requested through EQUIP3.

A Resource Guide on Promising and Effective Practices in Education for Employment compendium is in draft and will soon be available from Education Development Center. This document includes numerous descriptions of international programs and the program results. Of particular relevance to the Honduran Mission are the program descriptions of Chile Joven and YouthBuild. These two are described briefly below, and contact information for each is included at the end of this report.

- Chile Joven in Chile seeks to integrate youth into the labor market or reconnect them to the formal education system by providing practical work experience in business and industry through the simple rule, “no demand, no training.” The goal of Chile Joven in its first years (1991-1995) was to train 100,000 young people within four years. As many as 128,106 youth (accurate numbers vary) were trained. In 1996-1998 the program’s goal was to train 70,000 additional youth, and that goal was also reached. Close to half of participants in training and on-the-job experience were women and approximately 56 percent of young people in a research study on the program were 20-21 years old.
- YouthBuild engages unemployed young men and women, most of whom have not completed high school and all of whom come from low-income families. The program supports youth in their communities through the building of affordable housing. Participants spend up to one year in the program, dividing their time between a housing construction site and time at an alternative school. YouthBuild educates those who have dropped out of the public school system by combining classroom study with hands-on experiential learning, enabling young people to achieve academic success beyond what may have been expected of them in the classroom. Since 1994, 47,000 YouthBuild students have built more than 13,000 homes while preparing themselves for jobs and further education.

Models like Chile Joven and YouthBuild demonstrate that traditional vocational can be improved by an approach that provides meaningful opportunities for youth beyond traditional, low-skilled jobs. Rather than propose a particular model in this report, examples like these and the PEPNet programs are intended to highlight practices and principles this author believes would be strongly embraced in Honduras.

The Mission may request the Resource Guide on Promising and Effective Practices in Education for Employment from Education Development Center.

*Sustain Private Sector Involvement:* Private sector involvement is present in educational programs at the highest levels of government (e.g., FONAC and FEREMA) and is an important and necessary prerequisite for local level involvement. At the local level, however, involvement is less robust and participation of the private sector in curriculum development, program

implementation and teacher training seem sporadic. The concept of private sector involvement in education and training appears to be well-received in Honduras, as evidenced in frequent discussion of “business advisory committees.” However, few examples in publicly-sponsored programs evidence any sustained presence of local level business and employer involvement.

One local example of local business involvement is San Juan Bosco school. Leaders are involved in a sustained way through regular, ongoing meetings and designed to gain input on equipment, tools and youth’s preparation for the workplace. Improvements in these areas occur as a result of active and vocal involvement by business leaders.

Other specific strategies for involving members of the private sector include:

- Take steps to establish the standards of quality and high performance that now characterize the most competitive companies.
- Develop internal training programs to equip present employees with the full range of basic and employability skills.
- Engage them in communicating to schools the critical importance of instilling employability skills in students.
- Collaborate with local schools to provide learning experiences that will foster students' development of employability skills.

In addition to offering youth an opportunity to explore options and ideas about work, it is through these activities that employers too gain exposure to qualified and skilled workers. There are numerous ways to develop, support and sustain private sector involvement in ways that integrate education and workplace readiness for youth as early as 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Again, it is important that these connections be formalized and sustained at the *local* level.

### **Phase II Recommendations**

*Workforce Development Data for Decision-making:* Although data are used little, if at all, by the Ministry of Education for formal education programs, USAID emphasizes the use of data for educational program improvement and replication. There seems to be little interest at the government level in gaining or using data on job placement, job retention, wages, etc. for youth. As documented in the soon-to-be published evaluation of *Educatodos*, evidence is available on completers and non-completers. Future analyses/additional research of *Educatodos* should include studies that capture youth and young adults’ success with job placement, further education, wages at placement and promotion for both completers and non-completers. At minimum, workforce development approaches should include data collection and analysis of the variables above. A good source for the kinds of variables that can be collected and are in use is the U.S. Department of Labor [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov).

*Workplace Competency Development and National Standards:* The MIDEH project that is developing academic standards is now complete for through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Work is beginning on development of standards to fit the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade national curriculum. This is an opportune time to incorporate career awareness and workplace readiness competencies. For all involved in the EFA-related work, inclusion of workplace competencies in the standards process also presents the chance to involve private sector members by asking them to validate proposals.

Private sector members should also be involved when the time comes to develop 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade standards. Numerous examples of workforce competencies are available. One example widely embraced in urban and rural communities throughout the U.S. is the Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS, 1991) included at the end of this report. In addition to SCANS, Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) is a national curriculum comprised of 81 competency-based modules. Participants undertake three years of developmental activities. JAG graduates are required to attain thirty-seven (37) youth core competencies in the following areas.

- Career Development Competencies
- Job Attainment Competencies
- Job Survival Competencies
- Basic Skills Competencies
- Leadership and Self-Development Competencies
- Personal Skills

The labor market assessment described in Phase I should recommend a process to convene business leaders and government officials to react to 2-3 models of workplace competencies like SCANS, Jobs for America's Graduates and others. The set of workplace competencies should also be linked to national academic standards/incorporation in the MIDEH project.<sup>3</sup>

*Connect Technical Preparation to Formal Education:* Technical preparatory education is a course of study that connects academic to vocational education with technology curricula. The emphasis on experiential learning (including time in the workplace) shows students the practical applications of their course content. Tech Prep includes good labor market information, requires the involvement of the private sector for instruction and involves appropriate career guidance for youth. When properly implemented, the distinctions between vocational and academic education begin to blur.

The labor market analysis recommended in Phase I is an opportunity to think through an action plan for matching skills required by employers within certain industries to available education and training programs. In the event there are gaps in education and training needed by employers within those industries, FUNDETEC might be approached to help develop solutions for better training

*Build on Community Service Projects of Educadores.* Community projects like those delivered through *Educadores'* model of implementation is active learning through service to the community. This approach to self-directed and active learning is recommended in the draft evaluation of the program. It also is an idea expected to be well-accepted throughout Honduras. Community service learning can be developed in the classroom as part of the regular curriculum or delivered out of school. Career awareness, counseling, student internships, networking with the business community are examples that may be incorporated in a community service model. Community service projects serve in-school and out-of-school youth.

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<sup>3</sup> Note that SCANS and JAG are competencies that describe program participants while PEPNet is the network/set of standards that more generally describe best practice programs.

## **Addenda**

### **National Youth Employment Coalition Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) Standards**

#### **3.1 Working**

**3.1.1** The program provides opportunities for youth to develop competencies appropriate to securing employment, including resume writing, interviewing and job search skills.

**3.1.2** The program provides opportunities for youth to develop competencies appropriate to maintaining employment, such as communication, dealing with supervision, and interpersonal and lifelong learning skills.

**3.1.3** The program provides opportunities for youth to assess career interests and explore a variety of career options.

**3.1.4** The program provides opportunities for youth to participate in work-based learning activities, such as job shadowing, internships, occupational training, work experience and community service.

**3.1.5** The program helps youth set personal academic and career goals and create realistic plans to achieve them.

**3.1.6** The program ensures that youth develop competencies that are relevant to local/regional labor market demands, post-secondary requirements and/or industry standards.

**3.1.7** The program ensures that youth can communicate the competencies they have gained to employers and others.

**3.1.8** The program provides youth with access to employment opportunities and placement assistance.

#### **3.2 Academic Learning**

**3.2.1** The program uses accepted assessment tools to identify academic skill levels.

**3.2.2** The program provides opportunities for youth to gain basic literacy and numeracy skills, including English as a second language.

**3.2.3** The program designs activities that reinforce the connection between academic learning and work.

**3.2.4** The program provides youth with opportunities to progress towards a recognized credential, such as the GED, high school diploma, or post-secondary education or training credential.

**3.2.5** The program helps youth learn how to access post-secondary education or advanced training opportunities.

#### **3.3 Connecting**

**3.3.1** The program develops and nurtures sustained relationships between youth and caring, knowledgeable adults.

**3.3.2** The program provides youth with opportunities to forge positive peer-to-peer and peer group relationships.

**3.3.3** The program ensures that activities, materials, tools and organizational structures promote acceptance and awareness of diverse groups, races and cultures.

**3.3.4** The program provides youth with opportunities to work cooperatively with others.

**3.3.5** The program works to increase youth's support from family and/or other responsible adults for meeting goals.

**3.3.6** The program ensures that youth learn how to successfully navigate the community.

#### **3.4 Leading**

**3.4.1** The program provides all youth participants with opportunities to contribute to the program and to the community.

**3.4.2** The program provides structured opportunities for all participants to lead in the program and community.

**3.4.3** The program provides youth with training/preparation for leadership opportunities.

**3.4.4** The program implements a strategy, which may include community service and service learning, to build civic engagement.

**3.4.5** The program helps youth develop a sense of purpose, e.g., belief in their own ability and desire to contribute to something greater than themselves.

**3.4.6** The program sets high expectations for youth and holds youth accountable.

### **3.5 Thriving**

**3.5.1** The program takes steps to prevent or divert young people's engagement in risky behaviors.

**3.5.2** The program supports youth in accessing physical and mental health-related services.

**3.5.3** The program supports youth in developing independent living skills, including financial and computer literacy.

**3.5.4** The program uses multiple strategies to promote healthy decision-making and teaches youth how to address societal, peer and familial pressures.

*Note: PEPNet pertains to all aspects of an operation and not solely developmental aspects for youth. The complete outline of program standards is available from NYEC and includes those that address management, organization and also evaluative data programs use for continuous improvement.*

**U.S. Department of Labor**  
**Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills**  
**(SCANS)**

**Basic Skills**

1. **Reading:**  
Identify relevant facts; locate information in books/manuals; find meanings of unknown words; judge accuracy of reports; use computers to find information.
2. **Writing:**  
Write ideas completely and accurately in letters and reports with proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation, use computers to communicate information.
3. **Mathematics**  
Use numbers, fractions, and percentages to solve problems; use tables, graphs, and charts; use computers to enter, retrieve, change, and communicate numerical information.
4. **Speaking:**  
Speak clearly; select language, tone of voice, and gestures appropriate to an audience.
5. **Listening:**  
Listen carefully to what a person says, noting tone of voice and body language; respond in a way that shows understanding of what is said.

**People Skills**

1. **Social:**  
show understanding, friendliness, and respect for feelings of others; assert oneself when appropriate; take an interest in what people say and why they think and act as they do.
2. **Negotiation:**  
Identify common goals among different parties; clearly present one's position; understand party's position; examine possible options; make reasonable compromises.
3. **Leadership:**  
Communicate thoughts and feelings to justify a position; encourage or convince; make positive use of rules or values; demonstrate ability to have others believe in and trust you because of competence and honesty.
4. **Teamwork:**  
Contribute to group with ideas and effort; do own share of work; encourage team members; resolve differences for the benefit of the team; responsibly challenge existing procedures, policies, or authorities.
5. **Cultural Diversity:**  
Work well with people having different ethnic, social, or educational backgrounds; understand the cultural differences of different groups; help the people in these groups make cultural adjustments when necessary.

**Personal Qualities**

1. **Self-Esteem:**  
Understand how beliefs affect how a person feels and acts; *listen* and identify irrational or harmful beliefs you may have; and understand how to change them when they occur.

2. **Self-Management:**  
Assess one's own knowledge and skills accurately; set specific, realistic, personal goals; monitor progress toward goal.
3. **Responsibility:**  
Work hard to reach goals, even if task is unpleasant; do quality work; display high standard of attendance, honesty, energy, and optimism.

### Thinking Skills

1. **Creative Thinking:**  
Use imagination freely, combining ideas or information in new ways; make connections between ideas that seem unrelated.
2. **Problem-Solving:**  
Recognize problem; identify why it is a problem; create and implement a solution; watch to see how well solution works; revise as needed.
3. **Decision Making:**  
Identify goals; generate alternatives and gather information about them; weigh pros and cons; choose best alternative; plan how to carry out choice.
4. **Visualization:**  
Imagine building, object or system by looking at a blueprint or drawing.

## Additional Readings and Resources

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