



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment (SKYE) in Guyana



Assessment Report &  
Program Design  
*November 2011*



## Acronyms

**BIT** – Board of Industrial Training

**CRMA** – Central Recruitment and Manpower Agency

**CRS** – Catholic Relief Services

**CSP** – Citizen Security Program

**EDC** – Education Development Center, Inc.

**EQUIP3** – Educational Quality Improvement Program 3

**GTIC** – Guyana Industrial Technical College

**GoG** – Government of Guyana

**GTI** -- Government Technical Institute

**GTIC** -- Guyana Industrial Technical College

**GTIS** – Guyana Trade and Investment Support

**GYBT** – Guyana Youth Business Trust

**ICT** – Information and Communication Technology

**IDB** – Inter-American Development Bank

**ILO** – International Labor Organization

**IPED** –Institute for Private Enterprise Development

**M&E** – Monitoring and Evaluation

**MCYS** –Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports

**MFI** - Micro-Finance Institution

**NGO** – Non-Governmental Organization

**NOC** – New Opportunity Corps

**SKYE** – Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment Project

**TVET** – Technical and Vocational Education and Training

**UNDP** – United Nations Development Program

**UNICEF** – United Nations Children’s Fund

**USAID** – United States Agency for International Development

**VYC** – Volunteer Youth Corps

**YEP** – Young Entrepreneurs Program (Kosovo)

**YCG** – Youth Challenge Guyana

**YSO** – Youth-Serving Organization

# “Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment (SKYE)” in Guyana

## Table of Contents

### ACRONYMS

<b>I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III. FINDINGS FROM PHASE I – CROSS-SECTORAL YOUTH ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>5</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	5
FINDINGS OF THE ASSESSMENT .....	5
<b>IV. PROJECT DESIGN .....</b>	<b>9</b>
A. APPROACH.....	9
<i>Principles of the Program Design .....</i>	<i>9</i>
B. CORE PROGRAM STRATEGIES .....	11
<i>Strategy One: Detention Prevention .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Strategy Two: Welcome Home.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Strategy Three: Get Ready to Work .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Strategy Four: Be Your Own Boss.....</i>	<i>16</i>
C. CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES .....	20
<b>V. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.....</b>	<b>22</b>
A. START-UP PROCEDURES AND SCHEDULE FOR PROJECT ROLL-OUT .....	22
B. SELECTION AND ROLE OF PARTNERS .....	22
C. TARGET BENEFICIARIES .....	24
D. GEOGRAPHIC REACH.....	25
E. STRATEGIES FOR COORDINATING WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA .....	25
F. STRATEGIES FOR LINKING TO AND COMPLEMENTING OTHER DONOR-FUNDED PROGRAMS.....	26
<b>VI. PRINCIPAL PROJECT RESULTS .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>VII. ACTIVITY TIMELINE –NOVEMBER 2011 TO AUGUST 2012 .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>VIII. MANAGEMENT PLAN .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>ANNEXES .....</b>	<b>32</b>
ANNEX 1. WORK READINESS CURRICULUM OVERVIEW .....	33
ANNEX 2. KEY PERSONNEL CVS .....	36
ANNEX 3.MEETING SCHEDULE.....	49
ANNEX 4. DATA GATHERING TOOLS .....	50

### FIGURES/GRAPHS

Graph 1 Summary of Crimes of Offenders with the NOC.....	4
Graph 2: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Detention Prevention Component .....	12
Graph 3: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Welcome Home Component .....	14
Graph 4: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Get Ready to Work Component .....	15
Graph 5: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Be Your Own Boss Component.....	17
Graph 6: All Components – Youth Targeted 2012-2013.....	18

## I. Executive Summary

The Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment (SKYE) project seeks to strengthen youth's access to justice and equip youth with market-driven skills and attitudes to improve their ability to transition to the workforce. SKYE will consist of two phases: Phase I, complete with this report, has involved an intensive assessment and project design, shaped by the youth assessment findings and recommendations. Phase II will involve program implementation of the program design.

From September 5-21, Education Development Center (EDC) and its EQUIP3 consortium partner Catholic Relief Services (CRS) conducted the cross-sectoral youth assessment and project design in Guyana for SKYE's first phase. A team of international and local consultants spoke with senior Government officials, non-profit organizations involved in youth programs; training centers involved in providing necessary skills to at-risk youth; the business community; micro finance enterprises and donor agencies. In addition, EDC organized several focus groups and roundtable meetings designed to validate the views of the youth and of individual perspectives and to consider other suggestions and feedback generated during the interviews and stakeholder meetings. The following are some key findings of the assessment:

- Young people can find themselves tangled with the law for small offenses.
- For youth charged or arrested for minor offenses, there are very limited diversion or alternative sentencing opportunities
- Collectively, Guyana's youth corrections systems lack effective discharge planning, which contributes to high recidivism and unemployment
- Employers are not inclined to hire younger workers, and believe most youth are not work-ready
- There is a lot of training, but little successful placement
- There are few good linkages to likely growth sectors of agro-processing, construction, ICT and certain service industries
- There is no reliable tracking system for documenting employment results of public or private training systems
- Youth have little access to entrepreneurship training, credit, and other supports for starting a small business

In response to these findings, the team developed a project design that includes four key, complementary components: Detention Prevention, Welcome Home, Get Ready to Work, and Be Your Own Boss.

1. Detention Prevention – alternative sentencing, diversion and work readiness training for minor offenders
2. Welcome Home – community reintegration of all youth of working age leaving the New Opportunity Corps (NOC) through work readiness training and referral
3. Get Ready to Work– system of planning, career coaching, work readiness and soft skills for out-of-school youth and unemployed recent technical/vocational education graduates
4. Be Your Own Boss – entrepreneurship training and business support for selected young people with business ideas and enterprising aptitude

These four strategies are complemented by five cross-cutting components:

1. A labor market survey in the first quarter of project implementation
2. A tracking and monitoring system for SKYE that could be made available for adoption by other organizations.
3. A private sector partnership council or advisory structure to ensure employer perspective and direct employer engagement is reflected in program strategies and components.
4. A youth advisory council to incorporate young people's perspectives in ongoing program activities.
5. A communications strategy for high visibility of SKYE, including consideration of thematic "Get Ready to Work" PSA and public education campaign

Pending approval from USAID, Phase 2 of SKYE will begin with project start-up in November 2011. The project will be implemented by EDC in conjunction with several partners: Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Youth Challenge Guyana (YCG), Volunteer Youth Corps (VYC), and Guyana Youth Business Trust (GYBT).

In addition to the four partner organizations, SKYE will work with several government ministries and groups within those ministries. While the principal day-to-day relationships will be with institutions and organizations under the jurisdictions of related Ministries, we will seek to develop high-level working relationships with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Education. While we may propose a formal "key liaison relationship" with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, SKYE will also require working agreements with others, as succeeding with SKYE will require their support and participation. Notably, the Ministry of Education will be vital to providing introductions and access to training facilities from whom SKYE will recruit both young people and professional staff to offer training. The Ministry of Home Affairs, with responsibility for the Sophia Holding Center and the Police, will be key to accessing young people for many of the justice-related aspects of SKYE, while the Ministry of Labor, Human Services, and Social Security will be needed to approve and backstop an important working relationship with the Board of Industrial Training. Of course, SKYE will also work with magistrates and the court system on the Detention Prevention component, to encourage them to divert or refer minor youth offenders to the SKYE program as an alternative sentence.

The implementation of the SKYE project will focus on four regions, two along the more densely-populated coast (Regions 4 and 6), one farther inland in a mining area (Region 10), and one in the south, in the isolated interior of the country (Region 9). These regions were selected for their high populations of vulnerable youth, high crime areas and high rates of unemployment.

SKYE will target a total of approximately 600 youth beneficiaries who are :i) school dropouts; ii) youth who have completed formal education, but did not achieve minimum academic requirements to gain a certificate to access higher education or employment; and iii) those with education, skills and behaviors that are insufficient for integration into the workforce, including being in the juvenile justice system. Participants will also be selected based on demonstrated need; it is anticipated that more young men than young women will be engaged in the juvenile justice-focused aspects of the program, while young women may be more represented in the balance of the program strategies.

SKYE will also provide significant capacity-building support to benefit the three local partner organizations mentioned above, as well as the four government ministries and the court system, as noted in the partners section above.

SKYE will link with and build upon existing USAID and other donor programs, particularly with USAID's Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS) project and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)-funded Citizen Security Program (CSP). During the labor market survey, SKYE will further explore the viability for youth employment or self-employment in at least three industries that GTIS has supported: eco-tourism, agriculture, and aquaculture. The work of the CSP will be directly continued with SKYE, by working with young people in the ten high crime or high-risk communities in Regions 4 and 6 where CSP has trained youth and built community capacity.

## II. Background

Guyana faces many development challenges, from weak democratic institutions to a limited domestic economy, a rising crime rate and continued out-migration that directly impact its young people. A lack of employment opportunities, a rising youth crime rate, and a system institutions not directly addressing the unique needs of youth are all directly linked to the economic, social, and political state of Guyana. High secondary school dropout rates and increasing levels of youth unemployment provide an environment of uncertainty for Guyanese Youth. Within the Caribbean region, studies note a disturbing difference in attitudes and visions among youth aged 10-14 and those 15-29, with older youth becoming starkly negative about their lives and futures, using expressions like, "living like dogs" and "living without hope."

Despite sustained economic growth over the last several years and a stable macro-economic environment (in 2010, Guyana ranked 104 in the Human Development Index Report), it is estimated that approximately 36 percent of the population lives in absolute poverty (i.e., US\$ 1.40 per day), 78 percent of whom live in rural, remote areas(*Guyana HIV / AIDS Indicator Survey, 2005*), translating to about 80 percent of Amerindian communities living under the poverty line. Poverty is especially prevalent among children ages 16 and under, who make up more than a third of the population. Among children, nearly half (47.5%) were considered to be living in poverty during a 2006 survey.

This poverty results in many youth leaving school and seeking income-generating activities to supplement family incomes. Nationally, enrollment in primary education among boys and girls is close to 90%, although it drops to 41% of 15-19 year-old youth at the secondary level, and 10% of 20-24 year-olds attend the tertiary level. The figures are lower for the hinterland regions, where distance to schools and generally less qualified teachers discourage school attendance. For those who do enter higher levels of education, the education system fails to equip young people with relevant skills for the workforce, further contributing to young people losing interest and seeing little value in schooling. Moreover, many employers are unwilling to hire youth, who often do not have work experience. Youth unemployment in Guyana is about five times higher than for older age groups, at 36% for 15-19 year-olds and 17% for 20-24 year-olds. In addition, *underemployment* is a large concern; youth may not work as much as they would like, or may be employed in a position for which they are overqualified.

Guyana's high youth unemployment contributes to growing crime in the country. An IDB report estimates that approximately 80% of violent crimes are committed by unemployed or underemployed male school dropouts between the ages of 14-25. The Juvenile Justice system currently serves young people under the age of 18 and is continuing reforms that include separate facilities for young people and adults, introduction of education and vocational training opportunities, and behavior change training to reduce recidivism. Despite these reforms, the Juvenile Justice system faces many systemic inadequacies in regards to sentencing, conviction criteria, pre-release planning and post-release services and institutional reform.

Graph 1 Summary of Crimes of Offenders with the NOC



Graph 1 provides a summary of crimes of offenders within the New Opportunity Corps (NOC) – the correctional facility for youth younger than 18 – as of August 2010. Within this institution, students are housed and placed in programming together, regardless of the severity of their offense. As seen in Graph 1, the majority of the population in the NOC is serving time for the crime of wandering,<sup>1</sup> and yet, they are placed with a general population also housing felony offenders. Although juvenile offenders sentenced to the NOC amount to just about .2% of the Guyanese youth, not providing such offenders with programs preparing them to transition to society has far-reaching ramifications on the cycle of unemployment, hopelessness, and increased crime.

Boys and young men in Guyana experience unique challenges and pressures in their communities that contribute to their sense of marginalization in society and in school, and make them more vulnerable to participating in violence. Meanwhile, traditional gender roles in employment impact young women’s employment choices. Further affecting youth opportunities is a rise in domestic violence that is limiting young women’s and men’s ability to fully take advantage of education and training opportunities and participate in internships or economic opportunities. Domestic violence is often a major concern in poor communities or weak economies where men’s traditional role as “breadwinner” is threatened due to unemployment or low wages or lack of opportunities for political engagement.

There are a number of youth programs and initiatives led by donors, the Government of Guyana and youth organizations that can serve as potential platforms for strengthening youths’ economic participation and positive engagement in civil society, including the Sophia Training Center, New Opportunities Corps, Citizens Security Project, and Guyana Legal Aid Clinic. However, many of these programs are just being launched, and others lack resources, materials, and/or state of the art curricula.

---

<sup>1</sup> As noted in the *Caribbean Basin Security Initiative Juvenile Justice Assessment*, “Wandering is a coverall offense for, *inter alia*, children who have run away from home or whose behavior is otherwise deemed uncontrollable.” (p. 32)

### III. Findings from Phase I – Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment

#### Introduction

Education Development Center (EDC) conducted a cross-sectoral assessment of At-Risk Youth in Guyana over the period September 5-21, 2011. The objectives of the assessment were to test and confirm the basis for (i) providing expanded employment, education and skill-building opportunities for at-risk youth; and (ii) facilitating re-integration of youth offenders into society and the work place.

In conducting the assessment, EDC with the support of USAID met with a wide range of key informants and groups, including senior Government officials, non-profit organizations involved in youth programs; training centers involved in providing necessary skills to at-risk youth; the business community; micro finance enterprises and donor agencies. In addition, EDC organized several focus groups and roundtable



meetings designed to validate the views of the youth and of individual perspectives and to consider other suggestions and feedback generated during the interviews and stakeholder meetings.

#### Findings of the Assessment

Several Government of Guyana departments – The Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports, along with the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and the Ministry of Home Affairs – are responsible for different aspects of the juvenile justice

system. Most recently, for example, following the deliberations of the Rights of the Child Commission, the Ministry of Home Affairs opened the Sophia Juvenile Holding Facility in April 2011 for juvenile offenders. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports oversees the New Opportunity Corps (NOC), while Human Services and Social Security is responsible for other aspects of services to young offenders. It is, unsurprisingly, a system with cracks, gaps, and often uncertain delineation of organizational responsibility. Young people might be placed at the new Holding Facility when 1) they are awaiting their court appearance; 2) they have been committed by the courts, but not yet escorted to the NOC; 3) they have completed the period of their sentence and are awaiting return to their families or to the community; and/or 4) it is otherwise determined appropriate by the Minister of Home Affairs. Perhaps explained by the newness of the facility or the varying responsibilities of different ministries, there appears to be only *ad hoc* communication and coordination, producing uncertainty among youth and professionals alike. As a result, young people can be held pre-trial, post trial yet pre-commitment, or post-commitment and pre-release, without clear or well-understood criteria for assignment.

Based on interviews carried out with representatives who interact with young offenders, it seems clear that many *young people can find themselves tangled with the law for small offenses*. This is further evidenced by the 2010 register of the NOC, which recorded 57% of the population being committed to the facility for the offense of “wandering” – a catch-all phrase with many possible meanings, from literal wandering, to a combination of small offenses observed or suspected. The term is often used when a number of minor offences are committed and officers are unable to properly describe the situation.

#### *Detention and prison are fertile grounds for growing future and more serious offenders*

Discussions with the Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports confirm this common concern. Youth who have committed serious offenses, such as robbery with the intention to use force, are placed alongside youth who were committed to the facility for wandering, or other minor offenses. The danger of

escalation of offenses from minor to major as a consequence of incarceration is a universal concern in corrections everywhere; Guyana is no exception.

***For youth charged or arrested for minor offences, there is very limited diversion or alternative sentencing opportunities***

The law does make provision for alternative sentencing and pre-trial diversion, but in practice it is left up to the discretion of the courts. Interviewees said that the police, probation officers and parents would often times try to come to a common ground – and informal “diversion” arrangements – in the hope of providing alternative sentencing but there is no organized system of involvement of magistrates and the courts. There are common fears about releasing youth to dysfunctional home and neighborhood environments – often justified, to be sure – but it seems as a result that no real system has developed to move young people out of the system with constructive alternatives. As one interviewee suggested, there are three main aspects of the juvenile’s life that need work: education, alleviation of poverty, and the need for leadership/role models. The involvement of youth in crime and justice are, he asserted, “symptoms, not causes.”

***Collectively, Guyana’s youth corrections systems lack effective discharge planning, which contributes to high recidivism and unemployment***

At the MCYS there is a “one-man”- managed reintegration program. The program seeks to reintegrate all youth coming out of the NOC into society by giving them the opportunity to either ease back into school or find jobs if they can no longer return to the general school system. To do this, the reintegration officer would work with the students three to four months prior to release with the goal of gaining their trust and working out a life plan with them. By all accounts, this is an earnest effort, and as the system’s assigned officer asserts, “once one child is successfully reintegrated I am happy.” However, the capacity is inadequate, and ultimately too few young people are served. Officials within the MCYS pointed to the lack of support from the parents of committed youths and the lack of coordination between the relevant ministries to work with the young person and the home environment simultaneously to ensure effectiveness.

***Youth are pessimistic about finding their way to employment***

Both the youth focus group participants and the private sector representatives expressed the view that jobs were simply not available for young people. The pessimism of the youth was validated in several ways. First, there are few job vacancies advertised in the newspapers, and these vacancies were often limited to clerical work. Second, the government’s labor exchange, the Central Recruitment and Manpower Agency (CRMA) at the Ministry of Labor, recently reported more than 3000 applications for only 826 vacancies. Finally, it takes an average of about six months for youth graduating with artisanal skills from the technical institutes to find a job. Because there is no real tracking system for job placements either from school, technical institutes, or public employment agencies, it is difficult to know the quantitative truth of the matter – but the pessimism of young people is unquestionable.

***Employers are not inclined to hire younger workers, and believe most youth are not work-ready***

From the discussions and feedback generated from the business round table meeting and meeting with representatives of larger firms, it became clear that most employers are not inclined to hire young workers as they believed, among other factors, that the youth are not work ready. The perspectives of larger companies (and older employers) were anchored by the following assertions:

- Female applicants and employees are viewed as more reliable than males;
- Males have no regard for upward mobility and no drive for setting up their own businesses;
- Male youth are eager to make money quickly with little or no effort.

On the other hand, younger entrepreneurs and small business people with whom we spoke argue that youth employees can:

- Bring new perspectives;
- Adapt to new technologies/ideas; and
- Bring energy and enthusiasm.

The challenge, both acknowledged, is to bridge the current generational gap between the older and younger entrepreneurs, and between job providers and job-seekers.

### ***Youth lack the “employability skills” to find jobs and the “soft skills” to succeed at them***

Young people and employers alike stressed that success at job-finding is not simply a matter of presenting credentials of school graduation, or even certificates of vocational skills. Presentation skills – a professional-looking CV, a well-prepared job application, an ability to relate to another person in an interview, an ability to present evidence of previous experience – all are important, and young people generally do not possess or exhibit them. Other qualities and behaviors relate to being successful at work – teamwork, punctuality, accepting supervision, demonstrated ability to learn new tasks, even whole new jobs – are key qualities of successful employees.

From the assessment carried out both with employers and the focus groups with youth, it became clear that both groups believe that resumes are poorly- prepared, there is little preparation for job seeking and interviewing, and little or no instruction in personal presentation. Employers believe that young people show poor attitudes towards work and prove to be unreliable. Taken together, these are the *employability skills* of job search, self-presentation, interviewing, CV preparation, and application – the things one needs to understand and know how to do to *find* a job and be hired. Then there are the skills one needs to *succeed* at a job once hired – communications, punctuality, accepting supervision, working as part of a team, the so-called *soft skills*. Failing demonstration of these skills, given the choice, employers will hire older, experienced workers, even if they have to pay more money.

### ***While some vocational training provides a good theoretical base, most graduates lack practical experience***

Work internships, work-based learning and other forms of employer-based work experience are not popular in Guyana. Although some private sector companies are offering work programs under the direction of the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) programs, most graduates from technical vocational training lack practical experience, and both employers and students regret this lack. While some businesses attribute this to the lack of fiscal incentives (subsidies), the main reason may be that small- and medium-sized businesses (those with fewer than 200 staff), employing the most youth, have not yet been engaged.

### ***There is a lot of training, but little successful placement***

According to government information and interviews of institutional representatives, about 3,000 Guyanese youth graduate from some form of vocational or technical training every year. These youth are trained at several training centers including the BIT, National Youth Empowerment Program, Government Technical Institute (GTI), Guyana Industrial Technical College (GTIC) among others. Technical vocational, computer literacy office management and administration, engineering, automotive and several skills training are offered to students. However, it does not appear that many young people find employment after graduation. Interviewees suggest several explanations for what appears to be a low placement rate for training graduates. First, there are simply not enough jobs in the economy to provide opportunities for all graduates – even if employers were inclined to hire young people. Second, there may

be a mismatch between vocations in demand and skills profiles of new graduates, though the lack of a comprehensive labor market survey over the last decade makes it difficult to say for sure.

Related to this, while there are advisory structures for training programs, there is scant private sector input to the course content of the technical vocational curriculum. Indeed, the Ministry of Labor designs programs largely on the basis of job advertisements placed in the print media – a notoriously unreliable gauge of actual skills demand. Thirdly, there is virtually no career counseling and guidance to youth pursuing technical vocational courses. As a result, training does not reflect the demands of the market, leading to little successful placement. Finally, the absence of a tracking or monitoring system to track graduates and their success in finding jobs makes it hard to actually know how training graduates are faring in job search, or in job retention once they find employment.

***There is no reliable tracking system for documenting employment results of public or private training systems***

As cited above, one of the major findings of the assessment was the absence of proper tracking systems to document the outcomes or results of public or private training systems. Although the Ministry of Labor has a computerized system of matching applications with placements, the system is not well populated with data. Moreover, the institutions that train youth also do not have a system for tracking their graduates and their success in finding employment. Likewise, NGOs that provide employment support to youth, including literacy training, can offer only anecdotal evidence of outcomes, successes and failures. In such a situation, it becomes difficult to argue for greater investment in training and education if there is no way to document their results.

***Youth have little access to entrepreneurship training, credit, and other supports for starting a small business***

If there are not enough jobs in the mainstream economy, the economist's response is that demand needs to be stimulated through job creation, and that means support of both new and existing small enterprises. The assessment confirmed that only a little of this exists in Guyana. Entrepreneurship is not mainstreamed in the education curriculum. In fact, the only public institution that provides some sort of entrepreneurship program is GTI. This program started about two years ago and it is earmarked for its final year students. While the Government has a program of supporting graduates of technical courses such as electricians, fitters, and carpenters to start their own businesses with a small start-up capital, the rudiments of entrepreneurship are not presently taught at any public institution. Moreover, financing is difficult to access, and if available is expensive. For example, Guyana's largest micro-finance institution (MFI), the Institute for Private Enterprise Development (IPED) provides loans with interest rates of more than 25 percent. This makes it challenging for small (and especially for new) businesses to meet their debt service obligations, and may also account for the high default rate at the institution. In recent years, other banks such as Bank of Nova Scotia, Guyana Bank of Trade and Industry, and Republic Bank are accepting the challenge of providing micro enterprise loans to businesses, but all observe that young people especially lack the skills and knowledge of business planning, finance, and business management to be successful entrepreneurs. The Guyana Youth Business Trust (GYBT) reports the most ambitious program, but its parent organization, IPED, is currently contemplating a major revision and restructuring of the GYBT to reflect current challenges.

***There are few good linkages to likely growth sectors of agro-processing, construction, ICT and certain service industries***

In spite of the likely growth sectors, training programs are not necessarily aligned to meet the job demands of these sectors. The absence of direct linkages between the growth drivers and appropriate skills training poses a problem in meaningfully reducing youth employment. The assessment found that the medium-term development supports that should underpin the pace and growth of these sectors are not readily available.

## IV. Project Design

### A. Approach

#### *Principles of the Program Design*

---

While the assessment results form the foundation for the program design for SKYE, EDC has confirmed that it will incorporate into the design certain principles in youth development from its lessons learned and successful strategies developed through our youth programs. The design is a set of Guyana-specific strategies for positioning young women and men for increased economic opportunities. The overall program strategy will prioritize building on the work of promising youth organizations, existing institutions and programs to leverage resources and foster sustainability. For this reason, the program will also be structured to work in close coordination with government institutions and their initiatives and builds in mechanisms for engaging the private sector from the project's start. Running throughout the program is a fundamental premise: young people bring energy and smarts to their own futures that need to guide any program created for their benefit; accordingly, there will be channels for engaging youth's voices in program implementation at the level of strategic direction as well as at the grassroots activity level.

The following design decisions follow the extensive consultations with young people, employers, government officials, NGO's and USAID:

1. SKYE should deliver services through capable existing organizations, and not reinvent new organizational structures;
2. SKYE should strategically select those services that are most likely to leverage systemic change, without getting lost inside current systems;
3. SKYE should include strategies that add value to existing governmental and non-governmental organizations and programs;
4. SKYE should demonstrate and teach best practice approaches, not simply deliver them directly to youth;
5. SKYE should find ways to engage employers in the "production process" of workforce preparation, and not just as "consumers" of potential employees and applicants;
6. SKYE should be careful about scale and ambition: "Don't try to do everything; succeed at what you do";
7. SKYE should design for long-term scalability and sustainability. The ambition ought to be to leave something behind when SKYE completes its brief, two-year tenure in Guyana.

#### **The EQUIP3 approach to implementation mirrors the approach to assessment and design:**

- *Working in partnership with USAID/Guyana:* The implementation team will consult with USAID/Guyana at regular intervals, and work as partners, not simply as "funder" and "implementer." Confirming the experience with the assessment, EDC has found the depth of local

USAID knowledge and of regional strategies to be helpful, and anticipates that similar guidance will be helpful in implementation;

- ***Listening carefully to the voices of youth:*** In EDC’s experience, any successful youth development initiative needs to be grounded in understanding the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of youth. Hence, a major priority of the assessment was focus groups and interviews with Guyanese youth, ages 15-25. This process will be incorporated into implementation, as well, by way of a Youth Advisory Council, to be developed in the first 60 days of implementation. Listening carefully to the voices of youth will help ensure that SKYE will be demand-driven and youth appropriate.
- ***Consulting with the Private Sector:*** Private sector representatives were key to establishing the direction of the assessment and design phase. Based in part on the individuals and groups met during the assessment and design phase, structures and processes will be developed to engage leaders from the business community in the further design and implementation of SKYE. A Business Advisory Council is a likely mechanism for this engagement of business people. Mere consultation, of course, will not suffice; SKYE will model an approach to private sector involvement, which goes beyond advice to active participation and engagement. The structure of this process will have three levels: 1) the project level Business Advisory Committee; 2) designated industry sector representatives, who will provide linkages between the SKYE project and employers in key sectors; and 3) individual employers, who will be sought out to serve as mentors, business advisors, and as sources and locations for work-based learning and internship placement.
- ***Learning from the Experience of Local Youth-Serving Organizations:*** As outlined below, SKYE will implement services through partnerships with carefully vetted NGOs and other partners, and strive to expand their capacities going forward. Youth Challenge Guyana, Volunteer Youth Corps, and Guyana Youth Business Trust have been selected as delivery partners for services, described below.
- ***Building upon national youth policies and initiatives:*** Key to a cross-sectoral approach is to understand and build upon national and regional efforts and policies, such as the UNDP’s *Enhancing Public Trust, Security and Inclusion Project*, the IDB’s *Citizens’ Security Project*, and GoG efforts such as youth training or rehabilitation centers under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport. This process, begun during the assessment and design phase, will continue to be a priority of SKYE. For example, the Citizens’ Security Project developed useful approaches to one-on-one vocational training, especially in outlying areas and smaller communities; this would be useful to build upon. Within the judicial system there is permission – but not yet a regular practice – of alternative sentencing or pre-trial diversion. SKYE can provide an opportunity for these policies to be implemented for the project, and also to serve as an example for broader adoption by the public system.
- ***Paying consistent and priority attention to opportunities for young women as well as young men:*** Within each community, SKYE will also use the results of the focus groups during the assessment and design phase to address the factors that affect women’s access to training and education such as socio-cultural norms for women’s mobility during the evening, childcare needs, or less available time to devote to classes or studying due to household responsibilities. As SKYE develops its training, the program will develop tailored modules that explore male and female roles in and out of the workplace, possibly adapting earlier work done under the IDB Citizens Security Project to address gender role issues, and child abuse prevention strategies.

- *A focus on system-building and sustainability throughout the two-year life of the program:*  
The overall strategy for SKYE is fundamentally influenced by the idea that we will leave something behind us. In practical terms, this should include: 1) the design of a labor market survey that might be used by others in future; 2) demonstration of practices for diversion and alternative sentencing that could be adapted by the juvenile justice system, and – if effective in demonstration mode under SKYE – be adopted by law and regulation; 3) practices and protocols for individualizing career planning and for coaching; 4) improvement of curricula for work readiness and for entrepreneurship that could be adopted by others; 5) development of a tracking system for program graduates that could be adapted by training programs throughout Guyana; 6) capacity building through partnership with local NGO’s to improve the management and program practices of Guyanese organizations; and 7) Prioritizing the development of policies through work with government agencies and Ministries that can improve opportunities for Guyanese youth beyond participation in SKYE.

## B. Core Program Strategies

SKYE will maximize its resources to achieve higher impact and sustainable results by implementing four key, complementary components: Detention Prevention, Welcome Home, Get Ready to Work, and Be Your Own Boss.

1. **Detention Prevention** – alternative sentencing, diversion and work readiness training for minor offenders
2. **Welcome Home** – community reintegration of all youth of working age leaving NOC through work readiness training and referral
3. **Get Ready to Work**– system of planning, career coaching, work readiness and soft skills for out-of-school youth and unemployed recent TVET graduates
4. **Be Your Own Boss** – entrepreneurship training and business support for selected young people with business ideas and enterprising aptitude

These four strategies are complemented by five cross-cutting components, as described in Section C below.

### ***Strategy One: Detention Prevention***

---

The purpose of the Detention Prevention strategy is to reduce and/or divert the flow of young people age 15-18 into corrections systems. If young people can be offered other opportunities besides detention, more may return to school, seek other training, or transition successfully to employment. Some are offered second chances, yet the end result is usually assignment to the NOC. While magistrates are authorized to seek alternatives to sentencing, there is so little collaboration between the parts of the system that few alternatives are available either for the young person or for the magistrate. Moreover, twenty two percent of the “adult” prison population is made up of youth from 16 to 25 years-old, with 16-17 year olds whose behavior is considered by the court to be too difficult for assignment to the NOC, or whose offenses were more serious in adult terms, generally involving violence and/or weapons. There is a great need for the youngest at-risk youth, who have committed only minor offenses, to be offered options other than detention in the NOC.

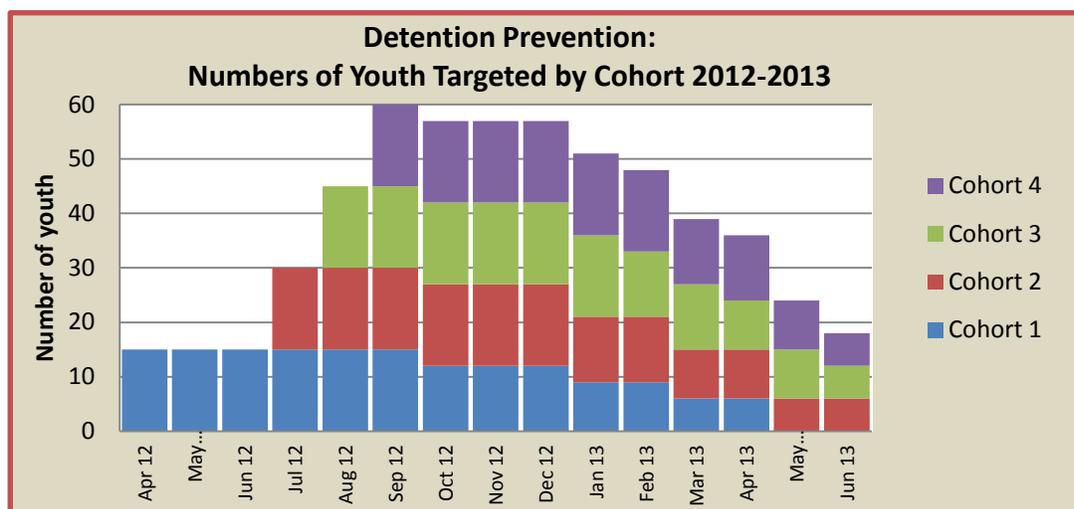
The juvenile detention prevention plan seeks to work with juveniles who get entangled with the law and are placed within the Sophia juvenile holding facility, awaiting trial to possibly be sent to the NOC. This

plan will see SKYE personnel working with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, and the Ministry of Education to provide a second chance opportunity in the form of either a “diversion” or an “alternative sentence”<sup>2</sup> to juveniles who have been arrested for minor crimes to help reintegrate them into school, training, or even be referred into the SKYE project where they will work along with a SKYE coach to have that second chance and therefore prevent further detention.

In this component, participating youth in the Sophia holding facility would receive individual coaching to develop an individual plan for his or her own future, including employment.<sup>3</sup>The plan would lay out a three- to six-month plan for youth to obtain the necessary skills to find a job, start a small business or return to school. Because many youth may need greater psychological support than the project can provide, SKYE will make referrals to reputable counseling organizations, which will be identified during the community youth mapping activity in early 2012. Youth will also participate in one-month work readiness training offered at the Sophia holding facility. These plans, as well as the successful completion of the training, can be used by youth and their coaches, as well as other court advocates, to make a case for diverting or alternatively sentencing the young people, so that they do not end up in the NOC. If successful, when released from the holding facility, the young person will be supported by their SKYE Coach to implement the rest of their employability plan. Then the SKYE Coach will support the youth during a “following through” period of 3-6 months during which the young person will transition to employment, self-employment, or further schooling.

The chart below shows an implementation schedule for this component of SKYE. It shows the number of youth served per month, with each color denoting a different cohort of youth. Cohorts begin with 15 youth each. Because participants will take 6-12 months to complete the SKYE program, with the exact length depending on their individual needs, the number of youth per cohort will begin decreasing after six months, as youth complete the program. However, the total number of youth in the program per month will increase for the first five months of implementation, as new cohorts join, then begin decreasing as initial cohorts start finishing the program. This component will work with a total of 60 youth.

Graph 2: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Detention Prevention Component



<sup>2</sup> *Diversion* involves a pre-trial referral to services or experiences, while *alternative sentencing* involves a judicial decision – during or after a full trial – to commit a young person to a placement other than in a correctional institution.

<sup>3</sup> EDC is examining the experience in the U.S. of “life mapping” – a planning process with young people that adds the element of behavior and decision making to the more straightforward career planning process. This approach may be particularly relevant to young offenders.

## *Strategy Two: Welcome Home*

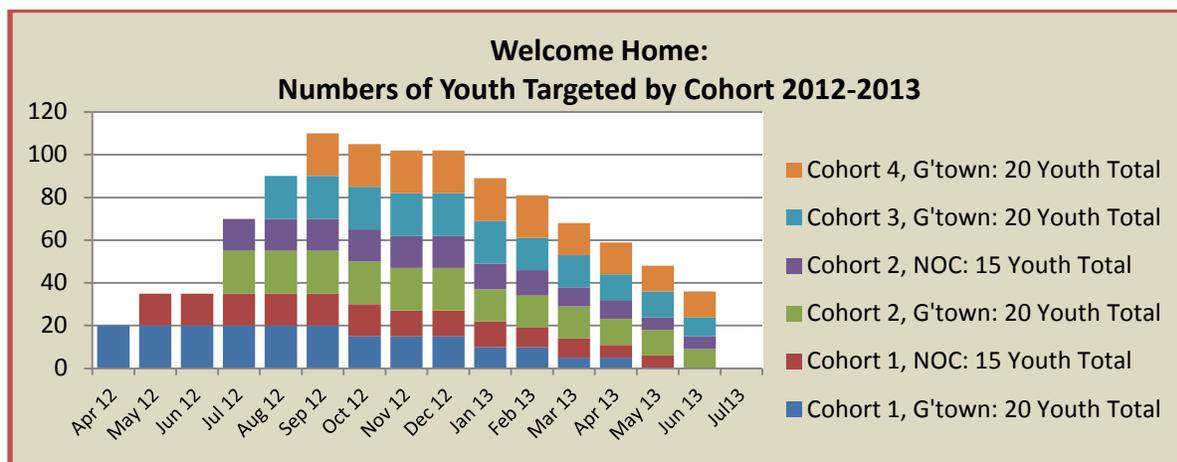
---

The Welcome Home approach creates a different alternative pathway for young people aged 15-17 exiting the New Opportunity Corps. Currently many youths exiting the NOC are faced with dire circumstances. These young people have served between one and three years in the NOC, and they are expected to leave and embark on a constructive activity. However, little pre-release planning occurs while they are “inside”, and eighty percent or more of the parents of these students do not have a plan for their lives post-release. Even though some work is being done through the MCYS, to date only 40% of the youth who are eligible to return to school actually do. For those students who are looking for jobs, there is little preparation and almost no assistance offered to their search for employment. Though there are limited offerings of vocational training within the NOC, there is no certification available and very little link to employment. And although the institution is supposed to track the students after one year of release, it has proven to be a very difficult task.

EDC proposes to work with *all* students of “transition to work” age (typically 15-17) exiting the NOC to provide them opportunities for a better transition back to their communities and to a productive life. Beginning at least a month before planned release, EDC SKYE coaches will visit each youth to begin working with them on their welcome home plan. Upon release, each NOC youth will be enrolled in the SKYE program, guided by their SKYE Coach, participate in work readiness training, and as a full SKYE member, will select a destination for their future (i.e., return to school, enroll in further training, seek employment, or start a business), working on a path toward that destination. Although many of the youth leaving the NOC go to Georgetown and can access services there, for those youth who are returning to other areas, a limited number of work readiness trainings will be offered within the NOC. This plan is geared towards giving to the NOC graduate necessary life skills that would allow them to be much more marketable. The SKYE coaches would work closely with the young people to make better choices, manage their lives better and move beyond the issues that keep them bound to a life of crime. Youth will participate in the program for a period of six to twelve months, depending on their individual needs. As within the Detention Prevention component, youth leaving the NOC may need greater psychological support than the project can provide. For these youth, as part of their employability plan, SKYE will refer them to external counseling services. As noted above, these services will be identified as part of the youth mapping activity, planned for early 2012.

The following chart shows an implementation schedule for this component of SKYE. It shows the number of youth served per month, with each cohort of youth depicted as a different color. Cohorts that offer training within the NOC begin with 15 youth each; cohorts that offer training in Georgetown begin with 20 youth. Because participants will take 6-12 months to complete the SKYE program, with the exact length depending on their individual needs, the number of youth per cohort will begin decreasing after six months, as youth complete the program. However, the total number of youth in the program per month will increase for the first five months of implementation, as new cohorts join, then begin decreasing as the initial cohorts start finishing the program. This component will work with a total of 110 youth.

Graph 3: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Welcome Home Component



***Strategy Three: Get Ready to Work***

This component of the SKYE program is the core activity addressing youth employability and employment. Nearly all SKYE members will participate in a series of training activities designed to help them become work ready and to transition to responsible adulthood. As indicated in the graphic presentation in the following pages, we see active membership in SKYE as a *journey via selected pathways to a positive destination*. Except for a few individuals who may be ready for work placement or for starting their own business when we meet them, all youth will select and travel an employability pathway. For example a 16 year old youth “diverting” from a juvenile justice assignment version through the prevention detention element of the program will result in enrollment in SKYE, assignment of a SKYE coach, selection of a destination, and mapping out a pathway that will lead them there. Similarly, the young person leaving the NOC will enroll in SKYE, be matched with an SKYE Coach, select a destination, and pursue that goal. Other youth, often senior students in technical institutes or other training programs, will be enrolled directly in SKYE and pursue similar goals by similar means.

Key to the SKYE strategy is the assignment to an individual SKYE Coach, development of individual employability plans, and the outline of experiences that constitute a pathway each youth may follow to an employment, education, or training destination. A Ready to Work curriculum, developed by EDC in the last several years in work under EQUIP3, will be adapted for use in Guyana.

The SKYE Get Ready to Work curriculum will be developed to provide youth with the foundational skills and knowledge necessary to become healthy, productive workers and participants in civic and community affairs. Within the SKYE Program, this curriculum serves as a foundation for all youth participating in SKYE.

The Get Ready to Work course is being designed in a way that is participatory, active and hands-on so that youth participants are actively engaged in the learning process, have the opportunity to practice and enhance new skills, and gain the self-confidence necessary to find and keep work. Every participant who completes the course will have completed an Individual Employability Plan with their SKYE coach and be ready to take the next steps in a chosen career pathway.

Because the Get Ready to Work program will be delivered in partnership with other organizations, SKYE will develop “train the trainer” protocols for delivery to every work readiness trainer and to staff of partner organizations.

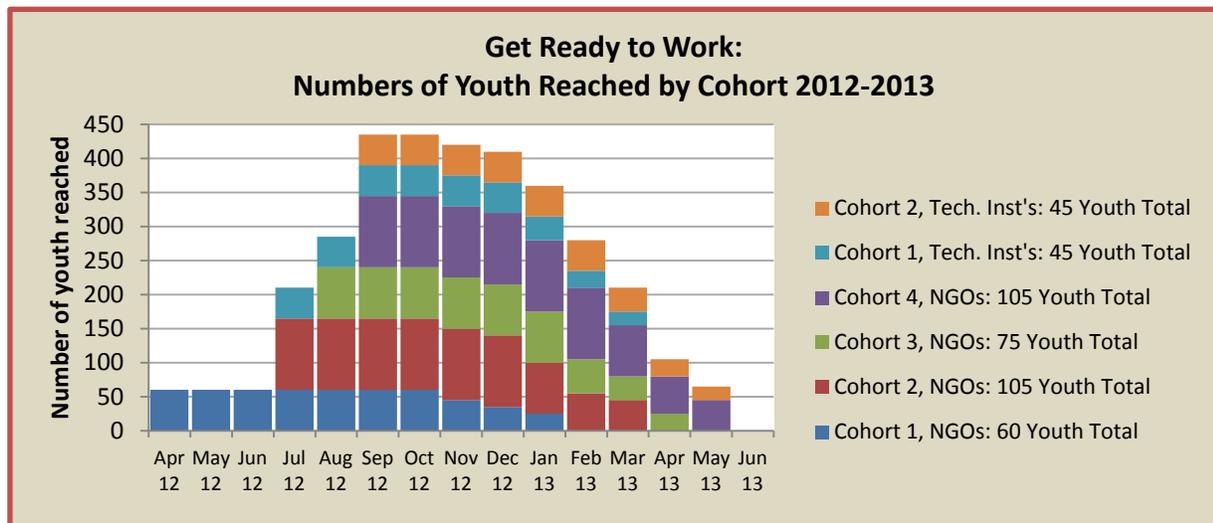
The main topics of the work readiness curriculum include:

- **Personal Development:** identifying values and interests; assessing attributes and skills; identifying learning styles and learning strategies; goal setting, planning and tracking progress.
- **Appropriate Workplace Behaviors:** identifying and practicing workplace behaviors most often sought after by local employers.
- **Communication Skills:** communicating in a work environment including: listening and speaking effectively; leading and working in teams; and customer care.
- **Teamwork and Leadership:** working in team; leading others; giving and receiving feedback.
- **Job Seeking Skills:** learning about the local labor market; how to write an effective CV; preparing a clear letter of application; interviewing skills; and other job search basics.
- **Decent Work-Decent Life:** staying safe and healthy at work and in daily life; knowing and understanding rights and responsibilities of workers and employers.
- **Financial Fitness:** developing the budgeting, savings and planning skills that help youth manage their income and expenses.

A more detailed curriculum overview is available in Annex 4.

The following chart shows an implementation schedule for this core component of SKYE. It shows the number of youth served per month, with each cohort of youth depicted as a different color. All cohorts will begin with 15 youth each. Because participants will take 6-9 months to complete the SKYE program, the number of youth per cohort will begin decreasing after six months, as youth complete the program. However, the total number of youth in the program per month will increase in the first five months of implementation, as new cohorts begin, then begin decreasing as initial cohorts start finishing the program. This component will work with a total of 435 youth.

Graph 4: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Get Ready to Work Component



### ***Strategy Four: Be Your Own Boss***

Some youth will opt for, and have aptitude for, self-employment or for starting their own business. EDC's experience is that between 15 and 20% of young people in the category likely to enroll in SKYE will have both interest and aptitude for entrepreneurship. A careful screening of likely applicants will result in a limited number of young people selecting this pathway. EDC has entered into agreements in principle with the Institute for Private Enterprise Development (IPED) and its associated program Guyana Youth Business Trust (GYBT). IPED and GYBT will not only make resources available for small loans, but will also work with SKYE in order to reorganize and restructure GYBT's organization, curriculum, and training processes. This will consist of joint work to redevelop an entrepreneurship training curriculum, to train and mentor GYBT instructors through a "pairing and fading" procedure with which EDC has considerable experience. The revised entrepreneurship curriculum will most likely have two tiers, the first level will introduce youth to the basics of starting and running a small business, and the second level will go more in-depth on small business planning and operations, and will be provided for youth who successfully complete the first level and show an aptitude for entrepreneurship. Upon completion of the entire entrepreneurship training, youth will be eligible to apply for a loan from GYBT, and to start a small business. Initially, SKYE Coaches will work with GYBT mentors to support youth, but over time the SKYE Coach will transition responsibilities for supporting the young entrepreneur to the GYBT mentor.

Elements of this curriculum will be drawn from GYBT's current curriculum, EDC's curriculum from the Young Entrepreneurs Program in Kosovo, from the HP-LIFE curriculum developed with the Hewlett Packard Corporation and delivered in Asia and North America by EDC, and elements of curriculum and training developed by EQUIP3 partner Making Cents. Short-term technical assistance will be provided by EDC entrepreneurship experts and outside experts if needed. Illustratively, below are modular outlines from the EQUIP3 program in Kosovo.

<p><b>Module 1: The Nature and Characteristics of a Small Business</b>  <i>Objective: Apply the fundamental concepts of Micro-enterprise and their importance to the economy of the country.</i></p>	<p><b>Module 5.1: Prepare a Marketing Plan</b>  <i>Objective: Write the marketing plan for your firm.</i></p>
<p><b>Module 2: Determine your potential as a businessperson</b>  <i>Objective: Identify the advantages and disadvantages of being employed as well as the qualities that one should have in order to be a successful business person.</i></p>	<p><b>Module 6: Basic Accounting for Micro-enterprise</b>  <i>Objective: Apply the fundamental concepts of accounting for a Micro-enterprise.</i></p>
<p><b>Module 3: Organization of a (very) Small Business</b>  <i>Objective: Discover the basic principles of organization and legal requirements necessary for establishing your business.</i></p>	<p><b>Module 7: Management of a Micro-enterprise</b>  <i>Objective: Apply the fundamental concepts of management for Micro-enterprises.</i></p>
<p><b>Module 4: Planning a Market Strategy</b>  <i>Objective: Apply the basic concepts of marketing to determine the needs and interests of the end market of the business.</i></p>	<p><b>Module 8: Management of Sales and Customer Service</b>  <i>Objective: Tending to the needs of the customer in order to sustain and grow their business</i></p>
<p><b>Module 4.1: Marketing research</b>  <i>Objective: Apply basic techniques for conducting marketing research</i></p>	<p><b>Module 9: Control of Production and Quality in a Small Business</b>  <i>Objective: Identify the fundamental concepts of Control of Production and Quality of products and services of a small business.</i></p>

**Module 5: Promotion of the Micro-enterprise**  
*Objective: Describe the essential elements of a promotion plan for the business.*

**Module 10: Making a Business Plan**  
*Objective: Develop a business plan that describes the opportunities of the business and the advantages/disadvantages for making an investment.*

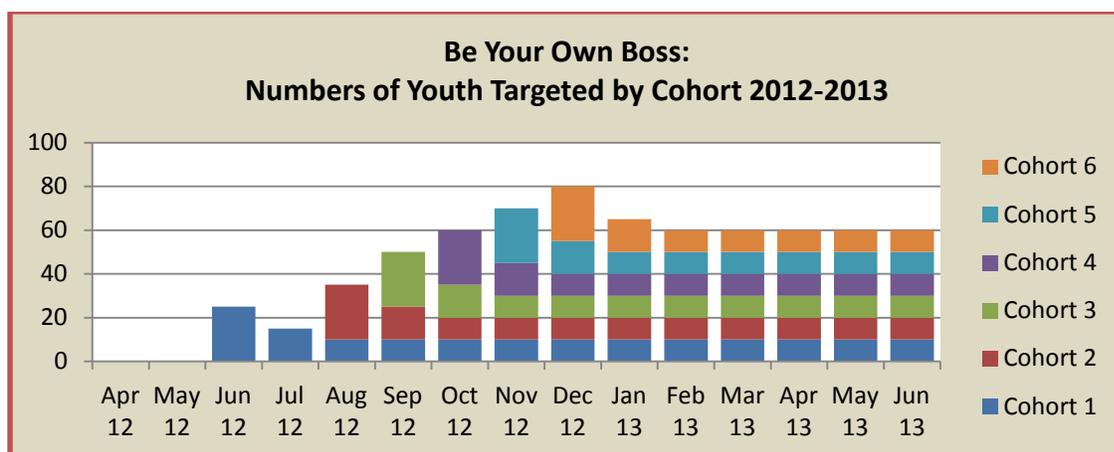
The Hewlett-Packard HP-LIFE curriculum, managed in Asia and North America by EDC, takes a somewhat simpler outline, though it is more technologically-driven and aimed at youth with a higher education level:

HP-LIFE Entrepreneurship Curriculum Overview	
Module 1: IMAGINE: The Basics	Module 2: The PLAN
<p><b>Basics of Marketing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Findings</li> <li>The SWOT Analysis</li> <li>Defining strategies</li> </ul> <p><b>Basics of Operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization</li> <li>The Supply Chain</li> </ul> <p><b>Basics of Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication basics</li> <li>Naming a business</li> </ul> <p><b>Basics of Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forecasting costs and revenue</li> </ul>	<p><b>Marketing Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining the Marketing Mix</li> <li>Drafting a Positioning Statement</li> </ul> <p><b>Operations Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flowcharts</li> </ul> <p><b>Communications Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Components of a Communications Plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Financial Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning using Income Statements</li> </ul> <p><b>What-if scenarios</b></p>

EDC will review GYBT’s curriculum in detail, and determine which modifications to introduce, in partnership with delivery partner IPED.

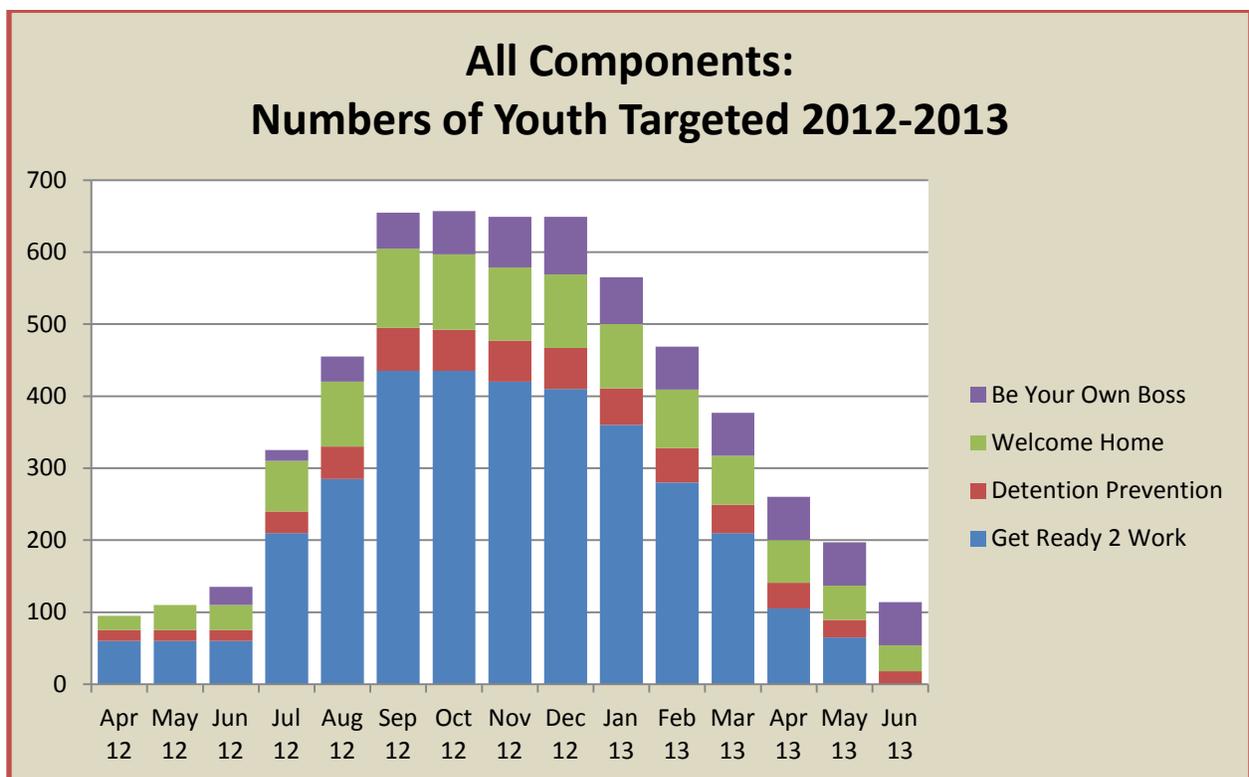
The following chart shows an implementation schedule for this component of SKYE. It shows the number of youth served per month, with different colors denoting each cohort of youth. The cohorts will begin with 25 youth each. Participants will take 1-2 months to complete the entrepreneurship training, and then a subset of approximately 10 youth (or 40% of the original number) will continue to access a loan and start or grow a small business. This component will work with an estimated total of 150 youth.

Graph 5: Youth Targeted by Cohort 2012-2013 for Be Your Own Boss Component

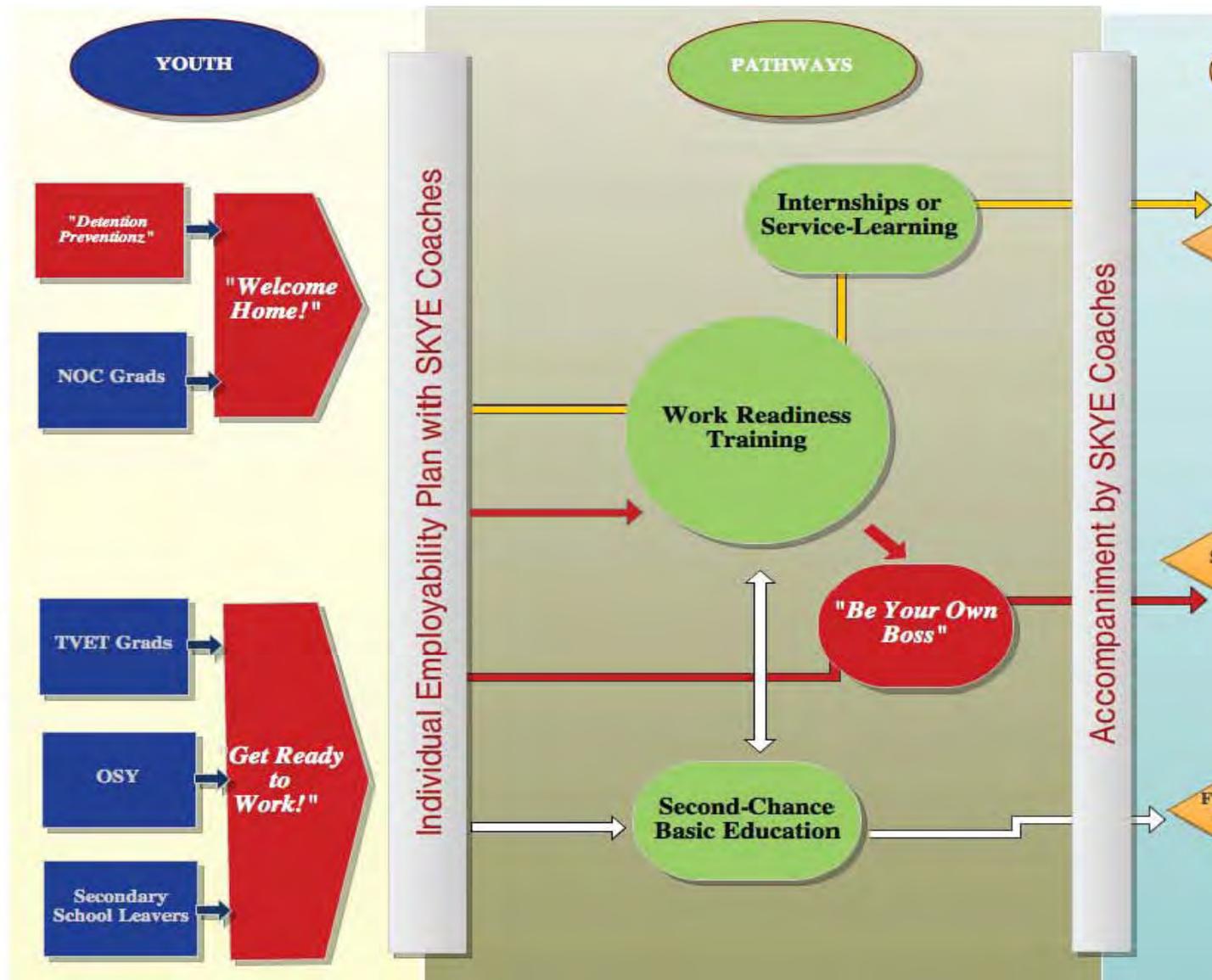


All four components inter-relate via the SKYE Coaching and work readiness training. Youth enter the SKYE program through Detention Prevention, Welcome Home, or Get Ready to Work. After working with a SKYE Coach to develop an Individual Employability Plan, the youth begin the employability preparation phase, during which they may take any number of pathways to gain the necessary skills for success in employment, starting a small business, or returning to school. Also during this phase, select youth with an idea for a business, particularly in a growing economic sector, will be referred to GYBT for entrepreneurship training and the possibility of receiving a loan to start or expand their businesses. When the youth finish the 3-6 months of the employability preparation phase, the SKYE Coach works with them during the accompaniment phase to find and maintain a job, begin a small-business, or return and remain in school. The accompaniment phase is 3 months for Get Ready to Work and 3-6 months for Detention Prevention and Welcome Home.

Graph 6: All Components – Youth Targeted 2012-2013



## SKYE Program Model for Youth Participants



## C. Cross-Cutting Activities

- ***Develop labor market survey in first quarter of project implementation***

---

In addition to the youth assessment, the labor market survey will serve as the second major data source to guide the SKYE program implementation. It will be conducted within the first two months of the program start-up, to occur simultaneously while other program start-up activities are underway. EDC anticipates that this will be a relatively small sample survey, aimed at the construction, light manufacturing, agro-processing, and ICT sectors, and targeted for medium (above 50) and large (above 200) employee firms. Specific types of jobs and apprenticeships that are currently available and anticipated to emerge will be detailed and disaggregated by region. The labor market assessment will also identify sectors in which new enterprise development may be viable. EDC anticipates contracting a local firm or partner organization to conduct the survey, which will be overseen by a labor market specialist.

- ***Develop tracking and monitoring system for SKYE that could be made available for adoption by other organizations***

---

Based on its M&E work in more than twenty countries under EQUIP3, EDC will develop a tracking system, based on individual identifiers for each enrolled youth, to follow young people through the program, and for at least six months to a year following completion to establish and monitor employment and education status, job retention, and reduction in re-offense and recidivism rates. This system will be developed with implementation by other entities in mind, and will be accompanied by protocols for management and training of government-supported entities and NGO's. Beginning with the NGO's with whom SKYE will partner for delivery, the tracking system – piloted with them – will be made available to government technical institutes, educational institutions, and other donors as designated by USAID.

- ***Create private sector processes and structures to ensure employer perspective is reflected in program strategies and components***

---

A SKYE Business Leaders' Council will be developed, which will likely include both participants in the Business Roundtable convened as part of the assessment and design phase, as well as business people from other medium and large businesses that have shown interest in and dedication to youth issues.. This group will advise as to content of training and guidance, help recruit mentors and employer placements for internships, and guide development of both the tracking system and the communications strategies for SKYE. As suggested earlier in this design document, mere consultation will not suffice; SKYE will model an approach to private sector involvement, which goes beyond advice to active participation and engagement. The structure of this process will have three levels: 1) the project level Business Leaders' Council; 2) designated industry sector representatives, who will provide liaison linkages between the SKYE project and employers in key sectors; and 3) individual employers, who will be sought out to serve as mentors, business advisors, and as sources and locations for work-based learning and internship placement.

- ***Create a youth advisory council to incorporate young people's perspectives in ongoing program activities***

---

A SKYE Youth Advisory Council composed of five young women and men, will be created to provide ongoing input into the overall direction and activities of the project. Specifically, they will be involved in the rapid youth mapping activity, developing SKYE Coach protocols, adapting the work readiness curriculum, and thinking through mechanisms for supporting youth throughout the program.

- ***Develop a communications strategy for high visibility of SKYE, including consideration of thematic “Get Ready to Work” PSA and public education campaign***

---

From the inception of the program, beginning with a public “launch,” the SKYE program will endeavor to create a high profile. Business and government leaders will be engaged throughout, and a purposeful communications strategy will be developed to get the underlying *ideas* behind the SKYE program to be well understood, then for its performance – the results – to be celebrated.

- ***Build an environment and culture of sustainability and scalability with SKYE stakeholders***

---

SKYE will work with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Education, USAID and other donor projects, and other community and local bodies to improve governance, management and advocacy capacities for key stakeholder groups to support youth development initiatives. Specifically, project leadership and staff will conduct regular consultations to ensure stakeholders participate, inquire and provide insights on project activities, objectives and goals. SKYE will disseminate assessment and approach tools, results and other key project information openly and widely to allow learning, adaptation and/or replication. Finally, monitoring and evaluation tools and activities will follow a participatory approach, incorporating stakeholders in the measuring process, allowing direct exposure to beneficiaries and an added layer of transparency to accomplishments and learning.

## V. Program Implementation

### A. Start-up procedures and schedule for project roll-out

EDC has put in place systems for project start up so that project implementation can begin in early November. We have identified candidates for long term key personnel (see Management Plan below), four partner organizations, and the start-up team, including the Chief of Party, can be in Guyana by November 10, 2011. The first two months of the project will be dedicated to securing office space, purchasing equipment, hiring staff for the remaining positions, and initial meetings with partners, including the Government of Guyana, depending on the status of the elections. In addition, the labor market survey will be conducted in November and December. Further details on activities for the first six months of the project are in the activity timelines section below.

### B. Selection and Role of Partners

Based on the findings of the assessment, EDC has selected four partners for implementation of SKYE: Catholic Relief Services, Youth Challenge Guyana, Volunteer Youth Corps, and Guyana Youth Business Trust. These partners were chosen because of their history of working with youth, particular at-risk or vulnerable youth; commitment to the objectives of the SKYE project; demonstrated technical and organizational capacity; geographic presence in target SKYE regions; and, in some cases, their expressed desire to receive organizational capacity building support.

*Catholic Relief Services* (CRS) has worked in Guyana since 2002, and implements programs in youth development, HIV care and treatment, drug rehabilitation, disaster relief, gender awareness, trafficking in persons awareness and mitigation, and involuntary remigration. CRS has also been working with the Jesuits to help at-risk youth in hinterland communities through the Aishalton Youth Professional Skills Training Program, located in Region 9. Some of the courses taught within these programs are basic computer literacy, accounting, Portuguese, job interviewing, human rights, and vocational skills. The Aishalton project has graduated 36 youths in the past year.

CRS will provide the Juvenile Justice and Gender Specialist, Magda Fiona Wills, and will manage work readiness training of the Get Ready to Work component in Region 9. The Juvenile Justice and Gender Specialist will oversee all aspects of the Detention Prevention and Welcome Home components, and will provide technical guidance regarding gender throughout all components of the project. In Region 9, CRS will recruit and manage one work readiness trainer, who will train approximately 45 youth via a total of three trainings. CRS will also provide input into the following: the selection criteria for youth participants, the development of SKYE Coach protocols and SKYE coach training, the adaptation of EDC's existing work readiness curriculum, and the development of a monitoring system for SKYE participants.

CRS will also assist with capacity building for two of the local partners, Volunteer Youth Corps (VYC) and Youth Challenge Guyana (YCG). Both organizations have solid organizational capacity, but may need small reinforcements as the project unfolds. CRS will work with them to identify their needs and provide limited support as needed in identified areas.

*Youth Challenge Guyana* (YCG) was established to offer young people from Guyana and across the world an opportunity to make significant contributions to community development projects while

gaining valuable leadership and problem solving skills. YCG works in peer education, teacher development, parent support and mentorship, and HIV/AIDS.

YCG will implement parts of the Welcome Home component, as well as the Get Ready to Work component in Regions 4 and 6. For Welcome Home, YCG will recruit and manage four work readiness trainers, who will train approximately 30 youth inside the NOC, and approximately 80 youth at a central location in Georgetown. Each work readiness skills training will last for one month, and a total of 6 trainings will be offered. The training in central Georgetown will include young people who have recently left the NOC (and did not participate in one of the work readiness trainings inside the NOC) as well as out-of-school, unemployed young people from the nearby community. For Get Ready to Work, YCG will recruit and manage 6 work readiness trainers, who will train a total approximately 300 youth in 10 communities (5 communities in Region 4, 5 in Region 6) using a phased implementation approach, beginning in April 2012. Each work readiness skills training will last for one month, and a total of 23 trainings will be offered.

For both components, YCG will provide input into the following: the selection criteria for youth participants, the development of SKYE Coach protocols and SKYE coach training, the adaptation of EDC's existing work readiness curriculum, and the development of a monitoring system for SKYE participants.

*Volunteer Youth Corps* (VYC), begun in 1996 by high school students, is an NGO dedicated to the development of children and youth through access to health, social and economic support necessary for improved quality of life. VYC offers programming for youth in job training and placement, entrepreneurship training, dropout prevention, IT training, basic literacy and numeracy, sports and recreation, and community service.

VYC will implement the work readiness training within the Detention Prevention component. They will recruit and manage two work readiness trainers, who will train approximately 60 youth in the Sophia Holding Center in work readiness skills in a total of four trainings. VYC will also provide input into the following: the selection criteria for youth participants, the development of SKYE Coach protocols and SKYE coach training, the adaptation of EDC's existing work readiness curriculum, and the development of a monitoring system for SKYE participants.

*Guyana Youth Business Trust* (GYBT) is a youth business stimulation and microfinance institution that serves youth across Guyana.

GYBT will implement the Be Your Own Boss component of the project. GYBT is currently going through a major restructuring of its training, mentoring, and loan programs. EDC will provide technical assistance to GYBT by:

- Reviewing the current business development training, and working with GYBT to revise it based on international best practices. A tiered approach to training potential young entrepreneurs will be considered.
- Reviewing and revising the current practices around recruiting, training, and retaining business mentors for the youth.
- Assisting with the development of a monitoring system for youth who start businesses.

GYBT will provide entrepreneurship training for approximately 150 selected SKYE program participants. It will also provide micro financing (through small new business loans) and mentoring

support to approximately 40% of youth who complete entrepreneurship training, based on the quality of their business plans and other criteria to be determined.

In addition to the four partner organizations, SKYE will work with several government ministries and groups within those ministries. These include:

- Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport –especially in New Opportunity Corps
- Ministry of Education - Curriculum Department and the Technical Institutes
- Ministry of Home Affairs – especially in Sophia Holding Center and with local Police
- Ministry of Labor, Human Services, and Social Services – especially the BIT, Probation Department and Child Protection Agency

Finally, SKYE will also work with magistrates and the court system on the Detention Prevention component, to encourage them to divert or refer minor youth offenders to the SKYE program as an alternative sentence.

## C. Target Beneficiaries

SKYE will target a total of approximately 600 youth beneficiaries who are :i) school dropouts; ii) youth who have completed formal education, but did not achieve minimum academic requirements to gain a certificate to access higher education or employment; and iii) those with education, skills and behaviors that are insufficient for integration into the workforce, including youth in the juvenile justice system. Participants will also be selected so that there is equal enrollment of young men and young women. Within the various components, target beneficiaries will be selected according to the following guidelines:

*Detention Prevention and Welcome Home:* youth ages 15-18, currently detained in the Sophia Holding Center or the NOC for minor offenses. We anticipate working with 60 youth for Detention Prevention, and 110 youth for Welcome Home.

*Get Ready to Work:* youth ages 15-24. We anticipate working with 435 youth for this component.

Region 4: graduates of the IDB’s youth vocational and life skills training program, out-of-school youth from Georgetown , and recent unemployed TVET graduates

Region 6: graduates of the IDB’s youth vocational and life skills training program, and recent unemployed TVET graduates

Region 9: unemployed or underemployed current participants in or graduates of the Aishalton Youth Professional Skills Training Program

Region 10: recent unemployed TVET graduates

*Be Your Own Boss:* SKYE participants, ages 15-24, who have an idea for a business, particularly in a growing economic sector. We anticipate working with up to 150 youth for this component.

Further refinement of the selection criteria for youth participants will occur in the beginning of the implementation phase, in conjunction with the local partners and government. Other factors that will be

considered as possible criteria include interest in and commitment to the program, ethnic balance, existing skills, number of dependents, and demonstrated readiness to commit to and undertake the program.

SKYE will also provide capacity building support to benefit the three local partner organizations mentioned above, as well as the four government ministries and the court system, as noted in the partners section above.

## D. Geographic Reach

The implementation of the SKYE project will focus on four regions, two along the more densely-populated coast (Regions 4 and 6), one farther inland in a mining area (Region 10), and one in the south, in the isolated interior of the country (Region 9). These regions were selected during the assessment phase for their high populations of vulnerable youth, high crime areas and high rates of unemployment.

Within Region 4, SKYE will work in Georgetown with the Georgetown Technical Institute (GTI), in a community within central Georgetown, and in five high-risk communities where the IDB's Citizen Security Program has held vocational and life skills training programs for unemployed, vulnerable youth. These communities are: Agricola/McDoom, Sophia, Plaisance, Annandale/Lusignan, and Buxton/Friendship. The IDB selected these communities based on their crime levels, ethnic makeup, and willingness of the community to actively participate in a community development process.

Within Region 6, SKYE will work again work in five high-risk communities where the IDB's Citizen Security Program has held vocational and life skills training programs for unemployed, vulnerable youth. These communities are: Port Mourant, Rose Hall Town, Kilcoy/Chesney/Fyrish, Angoy's Avenue, and Overwinning-Edinburgh. SKYE will also work in New Amsterdam, with the New Amsterdam Technical Institute.

Within Region 10, the project will work with the Linden Technical Institute. Finally, SKYE will work in Aishalton in Region 9, with current or recent participants of the Aishalton Youth Professional Skills Training Program.



## E. Strategies for Coordinating with the Government of Guyana

As noted in Section B, the Government of Guyana will be an important partner in implementing SKYE. While the principal day-to-day relationships will be with institutions and organizations under the jurisdictions of related Ministries, we will seek to develop high-level working relationships with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (MCYS) and the Ministry of Education. SKYE will work most closely with the MCYS, in part because this ministry oversees the NOC – and thus is crucial to the successful implementation of the Welcome Home component – but also because the MCYS is the most appropriate government agency to work with on addressing youth issues at a policy level. While we may propose a formal “key liaison relationship” with the MCYS, SKYE will also require working agreements with others, as succeeding with SKYE will require their support and participation. Notably, the Ministry of Education will be key to providing introductions and access to training facilities from whom SKYE will recruit both young people and professional staff to offer training. The Ministry of Home Affairs, with responsibility for both the Sophia Holding Center and the Police, will be key to accessing young

people for many of the justice-related aspects of SKYE. The Ministry of Labor, Human Services, and Social Security will be needed to approve and backstop an important working relationship with both the Board of Industrial Training and the probation and child protection departments. Of course, SKYE will also work with magistrates and the court system on the Detention Prevention component, to encourage them to divert or refer minor youth offenders to the SKYE program as an alternative sentence.

We will work directly with these four ministries both during the implementation of SKYE to provide institutional links, but also to actively consider the policy and regulatory changes that a successful SKYE project will both require and suggest.

- Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (MCYS): The New Opportunity Corps is the main institution under the MCYS targeted for collaboration with SKYE. We propose to support the reintegration unit within the NOC to improve the pre-release planning process for youth leaving the NOC. SKYE will work to promote new policies and practices around pre-release planning for the general population of the NOC, not just for SKYE members.
- Ministry of Education: We propose working through several of the technical institutes, namely GTI, New Amsterdam TI, and Linden TI, to implement part of the Get Ready to Work component. We propose using instructors from each institute as the work readiness trainers, thereby building capacity within these institutes to continue delivering work readiness training in the future. In addition, we will likely need to coordinate with and seek input from the curriculum department within the Ministry of Education during the adaptation of the work readiness curriculum. SKYE will be explicit about the ambition that all technical institutes will adopt and improve a work readiness approach to their graduates – including adoption of the tracking system developed for SKYE.
- Ministry of Home Affairs: With this Ministry, we will work with two separate but related groups: the Sophia Holding Center, and the Police. This relates specifically to the Detention Prevention component, in which we will work with youth in the Sophia Holding Center who have committed minor offenses and are awaiting sentencing. We will also work with the police so that they can divert youth to the SKYE program before they are officially sentenced by a magistrate.
- Ministry of Labor, Human Services, and Social Security: Within this two-pronged Ministry, we will work with the Board of Industrial Training (BIT) under the Ministry of Labor, and the Probation Department and Child Protection Agency under the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security. We will likely consult with the BIT on the work readiness curriculum adaptation. Probation officers make pre- and post- commitment reports on youth, and often influence the sentencing process in the courts. We propose working with them as part of the Detention Prevention component, to have them advocate for youth to be alternatively sentenced by the court to the SKYE program. We also want to coordinate with them under the Welcome Home component, since they are tasked with following up with the youth who leave the NOC. Although we will not work directly with the Child Protection Agency on project implementation, we expect that there may be referrals to this agency for some of the participating youth.

## F. Strategies for linking to and Complementing Other Donor-Funded Programs

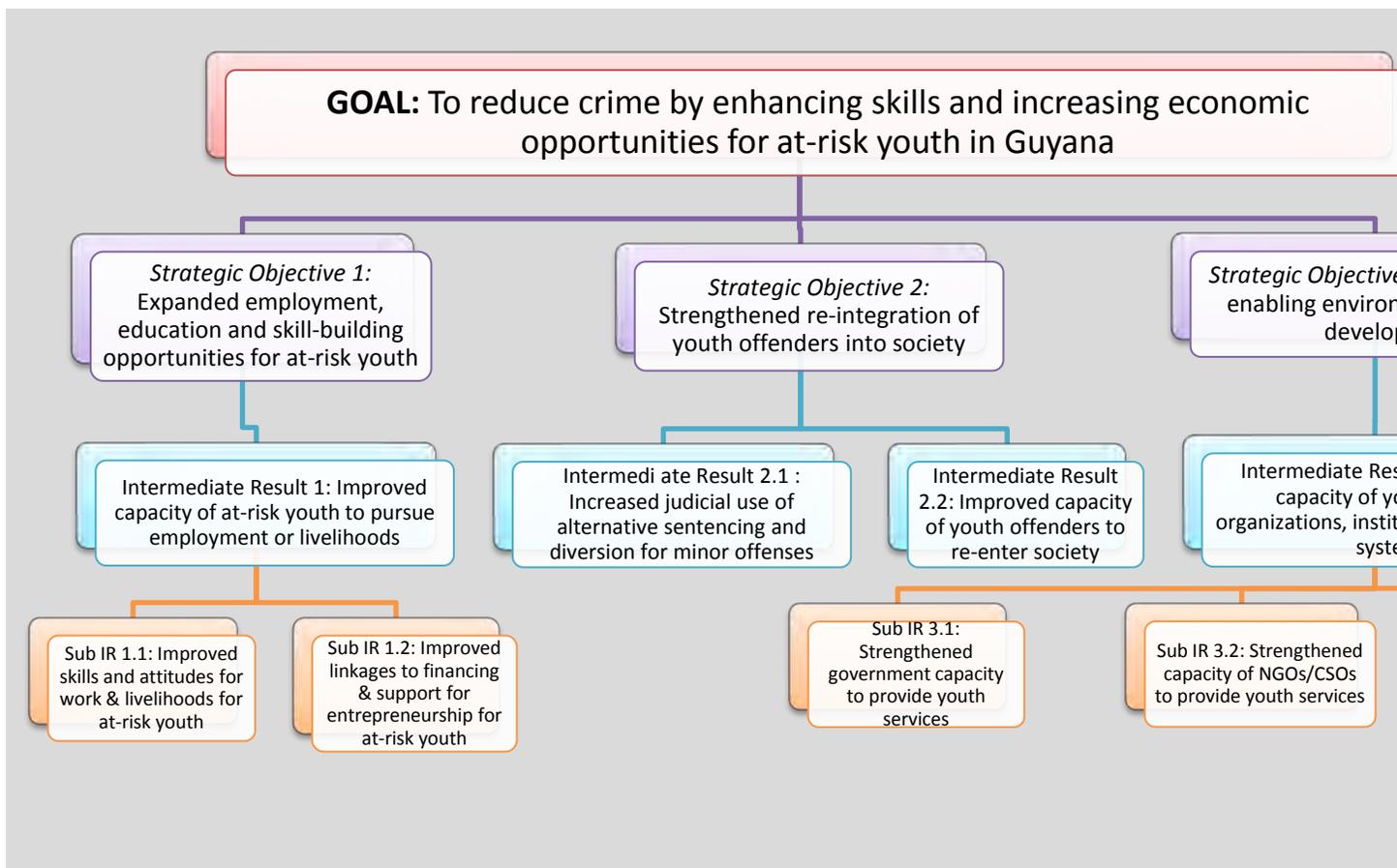
In keeping with the program design principle to add value to existing organizations and programs, SKYE will link with and build off of existing USAID and other donor programs. Perhaps the strongest link with other USAID programs is with the Guyana Trade and Investment Support (GTIS) project under Economic Growth. During the labor market survey, SKYE will further explore the viability for youth employment

or self-employment in at least three industries that GTIS has supported: eco-tourism, agriculture, and aquaculture. Although SKYE will not directly focus on health issues, three of the local partners have a strong and lengthy history of HIV/AIDS programming with youth, and will be able to provide youth with referrals for health care treatment if necessary.

The work of the IDB-funded Citizen Security Program (CSP) will be directly continued with SKYE. By working in the ten high crime or high risk communities in Regions 4 and 6 where CSP has trained youth and built community capacity, SKYE will build on the work begun with CSP in the Get Ready to Work component. Given the relatively short length of the SKYE project, working with youth with existing vocational and life skills training experience will both complement their existing skills and shorten the training timeframe needed. Furthermore, because CSP was not able to offer much support to youth around finding employment or starting small businesses, and it will end in early 2012, SKYE will build off that work to assist CSP participants in their transition to the world of work

## VI. Principal Project Results

We anticipate results of SKYE to consist of accomplishments in three areas: Service to Youth, Institutional and Sustainability. At the heart of both the program and the anticipated results is SKYE’s accomplishment of its primary goal: to reduce crime by enhancing skills and increasing economic opportunities for at-risk youth in Guyana.



Within 60 days of the approval this plan for SKYE’s implementation we will provide a full Performance Monitoring Plan that will include detailed indicators and outcome targets in all three areas.

## VII. Activity Timeline –November 2011 to August 2012

The following table shows key activities of the SKYE Project implementation between November 2011 and August 2012. A detailed workplan will be developed within 30 days of the approval of this report.

Activity	Period
Startup (office, equipment, staff)	Nov 2011- Jan 2012
Labor Market Assessment	
Assemble private sector and youth advisory groups	
Develop detailed workplan for Year 1	
Develop PMP	
Begin government outreach with partner Ministries	
First meeting of private sector advisory group	
First meeting of youth advisory group	
Develop SKYE Coach protocols and training curricula	Jan/Feb 2012
Rapid youth mapping activity to determine services available for youth	
Work Readiness curriculum adaptation	
Revise entrepreneurship curriculum	
Finalize M&E system	Mar 2012
SKYE Coach training #1	
M&E system training for local partners	
Review and revise entrepreneurship mentoring component	Apr 2012
First work readiness TOT	
SKYE Coaches start with first cohorts of youth	May 2012
First work readiness training, for first youth cohorts	
Review and revise Work Readiness curriculum based on first training	June 2012
Ongoing work with cohort 1 youth	
Second SKYE Coach training	
First entrepreneurship training under Be Your Own Boss	
Second work readiness TOT	July 2012
SKYE Coaches start with 2 <sup>nd</sup> cohort	
Ongoing work with cohort 1 youth	
Work readiness training with second cohort	Aug 2012
Ongoing work with cohort 1 youth	

## VIII. Management Plan

EDC's experience through EQUIP3 and other programs suggests that programmatic success on such an aggressive timetable is possible only with the best possible management and support structures. Moreover, success will depend upon careful selection of both staff and local delivery partners. Our management plan reflects this understanding. We have proposed a first rate team of SKYE staff and partners, and are prepared to "hit the ground running" pending USAID approval.

### Key Positions and International Staff:

We propose Kevin Corbin as **Chief of Party**. Mr. Corbin is prepared to be posted to Guyana in late November, arriving prior to the national elections. Mr. Corbin is one of EDC's outstanding program leaders and managers, coming to Guyana after three years as Deputy Chief of Party for EDC's largest youth program, EQuALLS2, based in the Philippines.

Magda Fiona Wills, a key member of the Assessment and Project Design Team, will serve as the **Juvenile Justice and Gender Specialist**, and will manage the Detention Prevention and Welcome Home activities of the project, through a sub award to her employer, Catholic Relief Services. In addition to providing Ms. Wills' services, CRS will manage service delivery in Region 9, and work with EDC to provide capacity building services to selected NGOs.

The position of **Workforce Development and Private Sector Specialist** will be filled by the time implementation of the program begins. At this writing, EDC has identified two final candidates for this position, and final interviews and reference checks are expected to lead to a decision in the next few days. EDC will then propose this position as a *key personnel* recommendation.

EQUIP3 Director Erik Butler, who led the assessment and program design phase of SKYE, will serve as **Home Office Project Director**, and as the **youth violence and juvenile justice technical specialist**. Dr. Butler is highly experienced in youth workforce development, as well as in strategies for juvenile justice diversion, alternative sentencing, and re-entry, and the short anticipated term for the SKYE program argues for the most experienced available specialists in these areas.

The positions of **Livelihoods Specialist** and **Program Associate** will be filled by Ann Hershkowitz, who also served as the Livelihood Specialist on the Assessment and Project Design Team. Other technical home office support will be provided by the core EQUIP3 team. Nancy Meaker will serve as **Curriculum Specialist**, and assist with the adaptation of the work readiness curriculum and with training the work readiness trainers. Ms. Meaker designed the work readiness curriculum on the EQUIP3 project in Kenya, helped develop the EQUIP3 Work Readiness Curriculum Framework, and has led trainings on how to adapt work readiness curricula in different countries. Ms. Alejandra Bonifaz will serve as the **Work Readiness Specialist**. She has performed that role on several EQUIP3 projects, including the EQuALLS2 program in the Philippines.

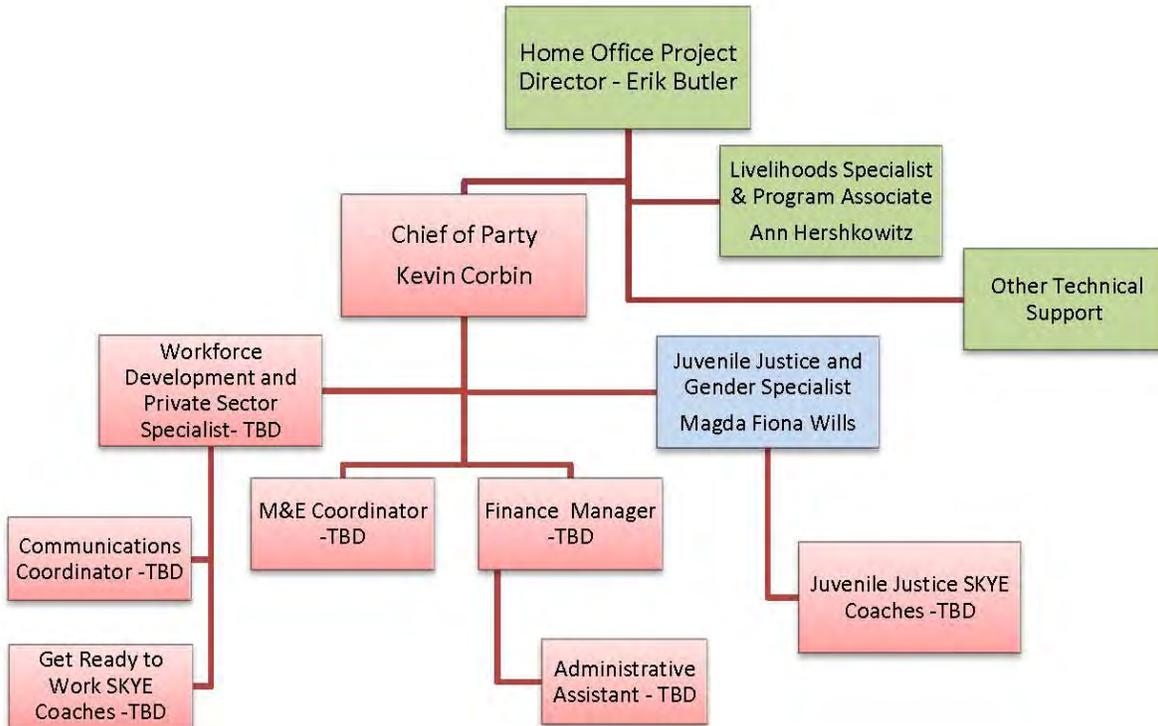
EQUIP3 Financial Analyst Urvashi Vyas will serve as SKYE's home office **Financial Analyst**, and will train the SKYE Financial Manager in Guyana. EDC has several technical experts who can fill the roles of M&E Specialist and Youth Small Business Development Specialist, and will make a selection based on the availability and appropriateness of the specialists.

## Local Staff

EDC will also hire a **Finance Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator**, and Administrative Assistant. Work has begun on identifying potential candidates, and interviews will be conducted soon after the Chief of Party arrives in Georgetown. Final decisions on these positions will be made shortly after project start-up begins.

The SKYE Coaches are the lynchpin of the project, and will be recruited and trained with the assistance of local partners. Coaches will have at least 3 years of previous experience working directly with vulnerable youth in a mentoring, teaching, supervising or counseling capacity, as well as knowledge about different youth-serving organizations in the regions in which they work. Preference will be given to those with a social work background, and to those with job training experience for young people. The SKYE Coaches who will work with youth in the Detention Prevention component will also have experience working with youth in the juvenile justice system, and should have a working knowledge of the laws, regulations, and procedures affecting youth in Guyana. The Detention Prevention component will have 15 youth per coach; the Welcome Home and Get Ready to Work components will have 15-30 youth per coach.

## SKYE Project Organization Chart



Red: EDC SKYE project employee

Blue: CRS SKYE project employee

Green: EDC Home office employee