

**USAID Cooperative Agreement No. 523-A-12-00004**

**Youth Pathways – Mexico**

**YouthBuild International  
Quarterly Report  
October 1, – December 31, 2012**



□ JCC students in Tijuana



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## **1. Executive Summary (Results, Issues, and Next Steps)**

The top priority of the Youth Pathways - Mexico team (YPM) over the past quarter has been to finalize roles and responsibilities with our Global Development Alliance (GDA) partners and to establish the field infrastructure and staffing necessary to support the implementation of youth programs in Tijuana and Monterrey. After launching YPM in October, YouthBuild International is pleased to report the following accomplishments for the reporting period:

- Hired a YPM Program Director and opened an office in Mexico City;
- Established a YPM Project Team;
- Met with USAID/Mexico Mission staff to launch the project and establish all protocols related to communication, reporting, branding, and financial management;
- Established a new private sector partnership with Casas Geo, the largest builder of affordable housing in Mexico, which has agreed to offer practical work experiences and internship/employment opportunities to YPM participants;
- Consolidated existing private sector partnerships with the Intel Corporation and PREI by defining the scope of work and respective tasks for each partner company;
- Established new public sector partnerships with the municipal governments of Tijuana and Monterrey and with Ashoka that will leverage significant in-kind support for YPM; and
- Identified, and successfully negotiated the use of, three community spaces in which to establish the Youth Encounter Centers (YECs) and implement field activities: the Community Centers of Camino Verde and of Granjas Familiares in Tijuana as well as in the Youth Center of Independencia in Monterrey.

Given the above progress, YPM is now well positioned to facilitate the implementation of youth training, employment, and leadership programs in both target cities. In the next quarter (January - March 2013), we will focus on advancing the first four goals of the Year 1 Annual Plan. Our key objectives for next quarter are to:

- Establish two YECs with functioning teams and to have both centers operational by March 31<sup>st</sup>;
- Begin to design the technology and construction training programs in collaboration with our GDA partners (the Intel Corporation, Casas Geo, and PREI);
- Develop a model dropout prevention program and to select schools for this program in the target cities; and
- Develop the Leadership Program.

Please see Section 4 below for more detail and a timeline regarding next steps.



## **2. Project Summary**

**Youth Pathways—Mexico (YPM)** responds to the USAID/Mexico strategic objective to diminish the impact of violence in the lives of young people and in local communities located near the U.S./Mexican border. YPM will provide a comprehensive array of programming and partnerships that will support the efforts of Mexican young people to build resilient communities and pathways to leadership, lifelong learning, and productive livelihoods in Tijuana and Monterrey. Within these two cities, the YPM GDA will concentrate resources in six target communities: Independencia, La Alianza, and Nuevo Almaguer in Monterrey, and Camino Verde, Granjas Familiares, and Mariano Matamoros in Tijuana. The YPM will address objectives 2 and 3 in the USAID/Mexico Call for Proposals:

- Improve the availability, relevance and quality of youth leadership and workforce development programs in target communities; and
- Create economic, educational and social opportunities for youth, women and other vulnerable groups in target communities.

YPM will mobilize the experience, resources and expertise of two highly successful national Mexican youth serving NGOs, JCC and SERAJ, who between them have implemented a full range of education, training, employability and leadership programs for in-school, out-of-school, and unemployed Mexican young people. Two global corporations with major operations in Mexico, the Intel Corporation and PREI, will join this Global Development Alliance (GDA) and provide training, mentoring, job and internship placement opportunities to participating youth. The Prudential Foundation will be a private foundation lead partner to the GDA. YouthBuild International (YBI), the US-based partner to this Alliance, has been in operation for 34 years, with program sites in 272 locations in 45 States and 56 program sites in 13 countries. YPM aims to significantly diminish the barriers that impede a young person's ability to gather the necessary social, economic, educational and leadership capital to secure viable livelihoods. YPM will address education deficits, link young people to relevant, demand-driven training activities, and call youth to meaningful leadership roles in their communities.

Over the 36-month period of the YPM implementation, a two-city network of six YPM safe spaces, providing a full range of education, job readiness, training and leadership resources will reach and productively engage 5,000 young people. Working with private sector resource partners such as PREI and Intel, this GDA will organize and implement two technical training programs, focused on the construction and technology sectors, that will train and place 600 young people in jobs, internships, self-employment, and continuing education.

## **3. Technical Activities**

YPM's main focus over the past quarter has been to finalize roles and responsibilities with YBI's Alliance partners and to establish the field infrastructure and staffing



necessary to support the implementation of youth programs in Tijuana and Monterrey. We are pleased to report that we have made significant progress in strengthening our partnerships with the Intel Corporation and PREI and have established a new partnership with Casas Geo, which is a leading construction company and builder of affordable housing in Mexico. We have also formed new government and public sector partnerships that will be essential to implement the YPM programs in Tijuana and Monterrey.

Through relationships with the GDA partners, YPM has achieved the following results during the reporting period:

- Hired a YPM Program Director and opened an office in Mexico City;
- Established a YPM Project Team;
- Met with USAID/Mexico Mission staff to launch the project and establish all protocols related to communication, reporting, branding, and financial management
- Established a new private sector partnership with Casas Geo, the largest builder of affordable housing in Mexico, which has agreed to offer practical work experiences and internship/employment opportunities to YPM participants;
- Consolidated existing private sector partnerships with the Intel Corporation and PREI by defining the scope of work and respective tasks for each partner company;
- Established new public sector partnerships with the municipal governments of Tijuana and Monterrey and with Ashoka that will leverage significant in-kind support for YPM; and
- Identified, and successfully negotiated the use of, three community spaces in which to establish the YECs and implement field activities: the Community Centers of Camino Verde and of Granjas Familiares in Tijuana as well as in the Youth Center of Independencia in Monterrey.

### ***Planning and Team Formation.***

In November, a three-day planning meet was held at YouthBuild International headquarters that convened the Directors of Jovenes Constructores de la Comunidad, A.C. (JCC) and Servicios a Juventud, A.C. (SERAJ) and core YPM implementing staff at YBI, to develop a detailed plan for implementation and to establish all protocols for smooth project communication and management. This meeting's deliberations laid the groundwork for the development of the first year annual plan.

To facilitate the future implementation of field activities in the two target cities of Tijuana and Monterrey, YBI and the YPM Program Director met with JCC and SERAJ to discuss and finalize the allocation of responsibilities among the partner organizations. The YPM Team also 1) defined the positions and responsibilities of the field teams in Tijuana and Monterrey, 2) outlined an overall work plan with a three-year time line, and 3) developed a more comprehensive and detailed Annual Plan for Year 1 that includes a distribution of responsibilities and the lead staff member for each task.



The partner organizations agreed that JCC will lead operations in Tijuana and the development of the construction training and employment with the support of Casas Geo and PREI. SERAJ will lead operations in Monterrey, the development of the technology training and employment with the support of Intel, and the design and implementation of the dropout prevention model. Finally, YBI will coordinate the social leadership component and the social reintegration of youth in conflict with the law. YBI will continue to be responsible for the overall coordination of the program as well as for administration and technical assistance.

**Consolidation of Existing and New Partnerships.** During the reporting period, the YPM held successful meetings with GDA partner companies Intel Corporation and PREI. YPM, Intel, and PREI defined the scope of work and respective tasks for each partner company.

SERAJ and Intel have agreed to collaborate on the design of the curriculum and the technical training for specific professions in the technology sector. Building on Intel's successful methodology, YPM will design three more training plans according to local needs and the youth's interests in the target *poligonos*.

YPM also cultivated partnerships with four new potential YPM Alliance partners:

- **Casas Geo, a leading construction firm and builder of affordable housing in Mexico.** YPM organized two meetings between construction technicians of Casas Geo and YBI's Construction Specialist and Leadership Development Specialist. Following these successful meetings, Casas Geo Directors and the President of its Fundación Comunidades, Luis de la Torre, met with YPM to discuss an overall framework for the partnership as follows: YPM and Casas Geo will collaborate in the design of training courses for construction; Casas Geo will participate in the training and tutoring of youth and will offer workplace-based learning experiences and internship opportunities on its construction sites; and Casas Geo will employ youth participating in YPM programs in their housing developments. Casas Geo has also invited YPM to visit one of the company's construction sites and is in negotiations with YPM to define its scope of work and associated responsibilities for the GDA.
- **The municipal government of Tijuana, through its Youth Ministry and Youth Institute.** The municipal government has become a key partner for the implementation of the program in Tijuana. This partnership will enable YPM programs to enhance and supplement activities offered by the Ministry and the Institute, and YPM programs will benefit through access to municipal spaces that will host the YECs. Additionally, YPM will support the local government in strengthening its capacity for the development of public policies relating to youth. The municipal government has agreed to pay for security guards for the YPM programs and has also offered to provide computers for the YECs and transportation stipends to the YPM students.

- **The municipal government of Monterrey, through its Instituto de la Juventud Regia (Regia Youth Institute).** The municipal government has committed to supporting YPM programs and activities and is interested in strengthening its own capacity for developing youth-centered public policies and offering relevant and effective youth programs. The municipal government has agreed to pay for security guards for the YPM programs and is also in discussion with the Program Director about providing other in-kind resources to support the programs.
- **Ashoka**, an international non-profit organization dedicated to shaping a global, entrepreneurial, and competitive citizen sector and to supporting social entrepreneurs. Ashoka will support the YPM's leadership program objectives, particularly in regards to financing the development of youth community service projects.

YBI understands that all new Alliance partners must be first vetted by USAID/Mexico. We will seek guidance from USAID on this matter as we move to the MOU stage with these new potential partners.

**Identification of spaces for YECs.** Through negotiations with the Regia Youth Institute (IJR) of the municipal government of Monterrey, YPM secured an agreement to use a facility found in the *poligono* of *La Independencia* to establish the first YEC. YPM presented IJR with a renovation and equipment plan for this space to address YEC specification needs and successfully negotiated a donation of 35 computers by the Intel Corporation.

YPM also established an agreement with the municipal government's Youth Ministry and the Institute for Youth in Tijuana to use facilities inside the Community Centres of Camino Verde and Granjas Familiares for the first two YEC programs in the city.

The YPM partners, following the guidance of the YPM Annual Plan, have defined the menu of services that will be offered to young people at each YEC location. These services include: personal support and counseling, academic support, technology capacity building, life and employment skills, academic remediation, work guidance, and social leadership trainings. Intel Corporation also agreed to offer its Intel Aprender (Intel Learn) programs in the YECs to improve program participants' math skills.

### **Inputs and Outputs by Components**

#### ***Goal 1: Establish safe spaces for youth.***

During this period, YPM conducted three field visits (two to Monterrey and one to Tijuana). On December 3rd and 4th, we visited the three target *polígonos* in Monterrey and met with the Director of the Regia Youth Institute to present the YPM program and to invite the Institute to be a partner to the GDA. On December 20th, we met again with Institute staff and discussed and agreed on the terms of our collaboration and defined

the first steps to be able to utilize the Youth Center in Independencia. On December 10th and 11th, we held a meeting with Fabián Matamoros of the Youth Ministry of Tijuana and with Rafael Sanabria of the Social Development Ministry in Baja California. We also met with Juan Carlos Chaires, the Youth Minister and with the Youth Institute's Director. We visited the three target *polígonos* with these officials and the Youth Ministry and Youth Institute agreed to join the GDA as a partners and to allow YPM to use their Community Center facilities for the YECs.

***Goal 2: Implement two technical skills training programs focused on the technology and construction sectors.***

During this reporting period, we held three meetings with Intel Corporation (on November 12th, November 30th, and on December 13th) to jointly plan activities in which the company will participate.

YPM also made a presentation to representatives of Casas Geo on November 15th and continued partnership discussions with the firm on December 6th. During this latter meeting, YPM also visited a Casas Geo housing development in Zumpango, Estado de México, to see the firm's construction process and to define the key components of a market-driven construction training program for YPM youth.

***Goal 3: Analyze school retention and dropout rate and design and implement a model dropout prevention program in six schools.***

YPM will advance this goal in the second quarter.

***Goal 4: Develop the Leadership Training Program and define leadership competencies.***

We held one meeting with Ashoka staff on December 20th to present the YPM initiative. Ashoka has agreed to become a GDA program partner and will collaborate with YPM to support the development of a leadership program for YPM youth in the target cities. One of Ashoka's strategic priorities is promoting youth entrepreneurship, so YPM will explore further opportunities to leverage Ashoka's core expertise in support of YPM programs.

***Goal 5: Design and implement a model re-entry program for youth in conflict with the law who are existing locked juvenile facilities in the target states.***

YPM will advance this goal in the second quarter.

During the reporting period, YPM also met with Save the Children to negotiate an agreement for the rental of office space at one of the organization's facilities.

In this quarter, we have focused our work on preparing to establish YPM programs in the field. The direct work with youth will start in January 2013, and for this reason the outputs reported are related to our period's key goals: planning and team formation, consolidation of new partnerships and securing safe spaces for the YECs.



## **Problems encountered and solutions proposed**

**Long distances between the *poligonos*.** In the site visits, we found significant distances between the *poligonos*. Due to the lack of public transportation services available to youth, the idea of a “multi-service” center accessible to youth in all three *poligonos* in one city is not possible. For this reason, we decided to revise the original plan that envisioned the opening of an “anchor” center in each city as well as two satellite centers. Instead, YPM will open two large “anchor” centers in each city and only one Youth Link Point (YLP) in the nearer *poligonos*. In addition, the concentration of illegal groups who control the territory within Nuevo Almaguer makes it difficult to host any YPM activities there. To address this issue, YPM will offer activities for youth from Nuevo Almaguer in the Independencia center. The Program Director is still working to resolve the challenge of transporting youth from Nuevo Almaguer to Independencia.

**Employer companies.** We had anticipated that the Intel Corporation would be able to employ YPM youth; however the company’s production plant is in the city of Guadalajara and so cannot employ youth from Tijuana and Monterrey. Instead, Intel has committed to making alliances with other companies in the two target cities that are able to employ YPM youth and to bringing these companies into the GDA. In addition, YBI, JCC, and SERAJ have closer contacts with potential employer companies in Monterrey than in Tijuana. In response to this challenge, YPM will focus on building our contacts and networks in Tijuana in the next quarter, with a particular focus on developing strong relationships with the private sector there.

**Coordination with Tetrattech-ARD Program *Convivencia Ciudadana* (PCC).** PCC includes a youth component in its design, and during 2012, this project supported the expansion and consolidation of JCC’s program model. Given its existing partnership with the PCC, YBI facilitated a dialogue between the respective institutions to determine how to achieve the relevant USAID objectives, optimize the resources available, and to avoid any duplication of actions and program beneficiaries. The outcome of this discussion was that these two initiatives should complement each other, as PCC’s strategic priority is community development while YPM is focusing on the integral development of youth. PCC will support the expansion of the JCC model during the first stage. During the second stage, YPM will offer these youth specialized training in either construction or technology and will provide them with follow up support until program participants secure sustained employment. The YPM GDA aims to develop partnerships with private sector firms in order to generate training, internships and jobs opportunities for Mexican youth; whereas the PCC private sector partnership activity aims to enlist firms in a broad agenda of crime prevention in the three PCC target communities, which includes Ciudad Juarez. Both programs can maintain collaboration agreements with the same companies, knowing that the specific goals of each program is different.

## ***Management Information***

### **Management Activities**

- ***Project Staffing and Start-up:*** YBI formed the YPM team with the hiring of the following staff in Mexico: Teresita Lanzagorta as Program Director and Emilia Ramírez Valenzuela as Communications Manager in Mexico. The Program Director subsequently established an office for YPM in Mexico City. In addition, YBI formed a YPM Management Team consisting of the Program Director; Timothy D. Cross, President of YBI; Laurie Bennett, Director of International Field Operations for YBI; Miguel Rodriguez, Project Director, Latin America, for YBI; Francisco Almanza, Director of JCC; and Gustavo Hernández, Director of SERAJ. The Directors and senior management teams of JCC and SERAJ are recruiting YPM personnel to staff the field programs in Tijuana and Monterrey.

In November, YBI also facilitated a YPM project launch for the Program Director and the Directors of JCC and SERAJ in Boston. The goals of these planning sessions were to discuss and confirm the roles and responsibilities of each partner, discuss the strategic priorities of the YPM initiative and agree on initial program priorities, and provide technical assistance and training to JCC and SERAJ on USAID and YBI requirements and procedures.

During the reporting period, the YPM Management Team also completed the first draft of the Year 1 Annual Plan for USAID approval and developed a timeline of activities (see Section 4 below). The USAID team in Mexico also provided YPM with the communications and branding strategy.

- ***Procurement:*** YPM has been focused on finalizing roles and responsibilities with the GDA private sector partners and establishing the field infrastructure and staffing necessary to support the implementation of youth programs in Tijuana and Monterrey. We anticipate further procurement activity in the second quarter as we move forward with program development and implementation in the target cities.
- ***Management visits:*** As noted above, JCC, SERAJ, and the Program Director conducted site visits to the six target *poligonos* where the program will operate and held meetings with government authorities and civil society organizations (CSOs) to discuss the context that youth face and to prioritize the needs of youth. YPM met with Alejandro Armendariz, the Director of the Regia Youth Institute, in Monterrey. In Tijuana, meetings were held with Juan Carlos Chairez Díaz, Director of the Youth and Sports Ministry of the municipality of Tijuana, and with the Director of the Municipal Youth Institute, Joel Velázquez Acosta.
- ***Timeline of Activities:*** Please see Section 4 below.

- **Progress on Alliance Formation:**

**Casas Geo.** This leading construction company in Mexico will support the development of YPM's construction curriculum and will help provide internships and employment opportunities for youth participants in YPM programs. YPM is in the process of finalizing Year 1 activities with Casas Geo and developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the firm.

**Regia Youth Institute, Municipal Government of Monterrey.** An agreement was made with the Institute to use the facilities in the Colonia Independencia and to collaborate in the development and management of the Youth Encounter Center there. YPM is in the process of negotiating a *carta de colaboración* (a letter of collaboration that is similar to an MOU) with the Institute.

**Youth Ministry and Youth Institute, Municipal Government of Tijuana.** YPM is in the process of negotiating *carta de colaboración* with these agencies, who have agreed to partner with the YPM.

**Ashoka.** Ashoka's program *Avancemos* has agreed to be a YPM partner and will support the development of youth leadership within the YPM initiative. YPM is in the process of finalizing Year 1 activities with Ashoka and developing a *carta de colaboración* with the organization.

**Save the Children.** Save the Children in Mexico City has agreed to rent space to YPM at a subsidized rate and is interested in exploring further opportunities for program collaboration with YPM. Save has programs for children in both Tijuana and Monterrey and would like to establish a pathway for these children to enter into YPM programs at age 18. YPM looks forward to advancing discussions with Save in the next quarter.

#### 4. Timeline and Next steps

Key goal	Main Activities	Sub activities	Jan.	February	March	April
<b>Objective 1: Increase the number of Safe Spaces for youth</b>	1.1 Establish the Youth Encounter Center (YEC) in Camino Verde	1.1.1 Signing of agreement with Municipal Government	X			
		1.1.2 Proposal approval				
		1.1.3 Call to youth from the community to				

		participate  1.1.4 Rehabilitation of spaces (paint, electricity, services, etc.)				
	1.2 Establish the YEC in La Independencia	1.2.1 Signing of agreement with municipal government  1.2.2 Approval of rehabilitation proposal  1.2.3 Call to youth from the community to participate  1.2.4 Rehabilitation of spaces (paint, electricity, services, etc.)	X			
	1.3 Equipment of spaces	1.3.1 Equip the two YECs		X		
	1.4 Recruit operational team for the two centers	1.4.1 Selection of coordinators  1.4.2 Selection of staff for each center: coordinator, psycho-social support coordinator, technology center coordinator, and trainers	X	X		
	1.5 Training for	1.5.1 Training				

	operational teams	sessions		X		
	1.6 Design of the digital registry system for youth		X	X		
	1.7 Material preparation for YEC's services				X	X
	1.8 Launch event for both centers				X	
	1.9 Begin activities in the centers				X	X
<b>Key Goal</b>	<b>Main Activities</b>	<b>Sub activities</b>	<b>Jan.</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>
<b>Objective 2: Organize and implement two technical programs focused on the technology/construction sectors</b>	2.1 Training for the construction profession	2.1.1 Design plan for the construction training  2.1.2 Training of the first group of 30 youth in Tijuana	X	X	X	X
	2.2 Training for technological professions	2.2.1 Adaptation of Intel's technology and entrepreneurship program  2.2.2 Training of the first two groups of 30 youth (one in Monterrey and one in Tijuana)	X	X	X	X
<b>Key Goal</b>	<b>Main Activities</b>	<b>Sub activities</b>	<b>Jan.</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>
<b>Objective 3: Design</b>	3.1 Agreement with six middle	3.1.1 Select a middle school		X		

<p><b>program model to decrease school dropout rates in selected schools in six target communities</b></p>	<p>schools</p>	<p>in each <i>polígono</i>, with the highest dropout index</p> <p>3.1.2 Present the program to school directors</p> <p>3.1.3 Sign six agreements with schools</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	
	<p>3.2 Design a model dropout prevention program</p>	<p>3.2.1 Analyze SERAJ's experience and those of partner organizations</p> <p>3.2.2 Design the YPM dropout prevention program model</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>	
	<p>3.3 Survey and analysis of the root causes of dropout rates in the 6 schools</p>					<p>X</p>
<p><b>Key Goal</b></p>	<p><b>Main Activities</b></p>	<p><b>Sub activities</b></p>	<p><b>Jan.</b></p>	<p><b>February</b></p>	<p><b>March</b></p>	<p><b>April</b></p>
<p><b>Objective 4</b> Implement a program that provides youth with the necessary abilities to exercise leadership as citizens with the commitment</p>	<p>4.1 Define the Leadership Program and learning competences</p>	<p>4.1.1 Analyze YBI, SERAJ, and JCC's models of leadership</p> <p>4.1.2 Integrate elements that support the kind of leadership relevant to the context of the</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>X</p>		

to reduce deep causes of violence		target communities		X		
		4.1.3 Identify and assess other leadership programs and experiences developed in the frontier		X		
		4.1.4 Collect information from employers on soft skills requirements		X		
		4.1.5 Determine how the leadership competencies will be integrated into YPM programs				
4.2 Recruitment and registration of 400 young people into the leadership program	4.2.1 Design YPM leadership program communication and outreach strategy 4.2.2 Implement the outreach strategy				X  X	
4.3 400 young people trained	4.3.1 Develop the training activities				X	
4.5 Creation	4.5.1 Training for					X

of 20 social projects	<p>the creation of community projects (20)</p> <p>4.5.2 Approving the projects</p> <p>4.5.3 Follow up during the development of the projects</p>					<p>X</p> <p>X</p>
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### 5. Lessons learned and recommendations

In YPM's work with the private sector, we have found a genuine interest among private sector firms in providing training and employment options for youth. Despite the challenges presented by the violent conditions in the border cities of the country, YPM is well positioned to partner with private sector and public sector stakeholders to offer employment and leadership training opportunities to in-school, out-of-school, and unemployed youth. The companies value the CSOs' knowledge of the situation facing youth and their experience running successful training programs that strengthen the youth's soft skills that are so critical for their success in the workplace.

We recommend strengthening the coordination between CSOs and private sector companies in order to generate employment models so as to optimize the complementary contributions of each sector.

The launch of the YPM program confirms the importance of working in alliance between CSOs, the private sector, and governments to engage the most marginalized youth. In addition, youth are participating in all aspects of the YPM initiative, from design to planning to execution, and this will result in more successful programs over the long-term.