

Interim Performance Evaluation: Youth Pathways to Leadership, Learning and Livelihoods in Costa Rica

United States Department of Labor
Bureau of International Labor Affairs
Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking



Date: March 19, 2019
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This report was prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) under Contract Number 1605DC-18-F-00414. The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to DOL, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of the same by the U.S. Government.

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Acronyms

AED	Business Alliance for Development
CCITUL	Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Limón
CMEP	Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
CUNLIMON	University College of Limón
FENTRAG	National Federation of Agroindustry Workers and Related
GOCR	Government of Costa Rica
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs (DOL)
ILO	International Labour Organization
INA	National Training Institute (Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje, in Spanish)
KII	Key Informant Interview
LOI	Letter of Intent
LOP	Life of Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEP	Ministry of Public Education (Ministerio de Educación Pública, in Spanish)
MSI	Management Systems International
MTSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security (Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, in Spanish)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NiNi	Youth not in employment or education (Ni estudia, ni trabaja, in Spanish)
OATIA	Office of Attention and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Dangerous Adolescent Work
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
OTC	Outcome
OTP	Output
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPR	Technical Progress Report
UCCAEP	Costa Rican Union of Chambers and Association of the Private Sector
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor
WBT	Workplace-Based Training
YBI	YouthBuild International
YPCR	Youth Pathways Costa Rica

Executive Summary

Background

The national unemployment rate in Costa Rica is 9.3 percent, while youth unemployment is almost twice the national average (16.4 percent).¹ Unemployment disproportionately impacts women, with 12.3 percent of women unemployed compared to 7.5 percent of men. Youth unemployment (ages 15–24) also disproportionately affects women, with female youth unemployment at 32 percent and male youth unemployment at 20 percent.

Costa Rican youth currently lack access to effective training programs due to the practical and operational limitations of national institutions overseeing technical education programs. For instance, youth may enroll in current no-cost apprenticeship programs directed by the National Training Institute (INA, for its initials in Spanish), but these types of initiatives are not adequately preparing students for the workforce.² Existing services fail to connect market demands with youth labor skills and are not designed to respond to characteristics of vulnerable youth.

Unemployed youth without the qualifications demanded by the labor market turn to the informal sector for livelihoods, where they find fewer protections and work under harmful and exploitative conditions. In Costa Rica, 30 percent of employed youth are part of the informal sector.³ Also, 87 percent of working minors are below the legal age established to enter the labor market.⁴ Consequently, young people are exposed to increasing conditions of vulnerability, and in the case of young women, these conditions are intensified, raising the risk of sexual exploitation and exposure to dangerous work.

Analysts in the public and private sectors agree that several factors have contributed to the difficulty of accessing quality employment for those seeking to enter the workforce. These include insufficient education, low-level qualifications,⁵ lack of experience and a gap between the training offered and the skill sets needed by the private sector in the rapidly changing Costa Rican labor market.⁶

The USDOL Youth Pathways to Leadership, Learning and Livelihoods (“Youth Pathways Costa Rica”) is a four-year, \$3,000,000 cooperative agreement grant awarded to YouthBuild International (YBI) to improve the country’s capacity to implement quality workplace-based training (WBT) alternatives addressing vulnerable youth excluded from the labor market.

YBI and its sub-grantee, Paniamor Foundation, work closely with pertinent Government of Costa Rica (GOCR) ministries, especially the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MTSS), and national institutions such as the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) and the INA. A broad range of nongovernmental stakeholders include employers, business associations, labor union associations, local and international organizations, and local youth organizations.

¹ Data provided by Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC), 2018.

² AM Prensa.Com, “Carlos Alvarado reducirá el desempleo con una mejor gestión del INA,” December 17, 2017, <https://amprensa.com/2017/12/carlos-alvarado-reducira-desempleo-una-mejor-gestion-del-ina/>

³ International Labor Organization, “Formalizando la Informalidad Juvenil: Experiencias innovadoras en América Latina y el Caribe”, 2015, 8.

⁴ ILO and Ministry of Labor and Social Services. “Magnitude and Characteristics of Child and Adolescent Labor in Costa Rica”. 2011, 60.

⁵ Programa Estado de la Nación, “Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible,” 2018, 75.

⁶ AM Prensa.Com, “Carlos Alvarado reducirá el desempleo con una mejor gestión del INA,” December 17, 2017, <https://amprensa.com/2017/12/carlos-alvarado-reducira-desempleo-una-mejor-gestion-del-ina/>

The activities proposed to achieve the Project's purpose, long term outcomes and expected results have been organized around three components, as follows:

- Component A: Alignment and promotion of public policies and legislation (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome A);
- Component B: Commitment of private sector and workers' organizations to quality WBT alternatives (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome B); and
- Component C: Institutional coordination for existing training programs for youth (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome C).

Evaluation Approach

On October 1, 2018, USDOL issued a contract to Management Systems International (MSI) to undertake an interim performance evaluation of the USDOL Youth Pathways Costa Rica (YPCR) project. The main purposes of the interim evaluation are to:

- Assess the relevance of the project in the cultural, economic and political context in the country, as well as the validity of the project design and the extent to which it is suited to the priorities and policies of the host government and other national stakeholders;
- Determine whether the project is on track toward meeting its objectives, identifying the challenges and opportunities encountered in doing so, and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges and opportunities;
- Assess the effectiveness of the project's strategies, as well as identify its strengths and weaknesses in implementation and areas for improvement;
- Provide conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations; and
- Assess the project's plans for sustainability at the local and national levels and among implementing organizations and identify steps to enhance its sustainability.

This evaluation covers the project's implementation from its start in FY 2016 through the fourth quarter of FY 2018, which accounts for half of the total project implementation period. The evaluation was designed to engage key sources in a productive way. The evaluator conducted a stakeholder meeting in Costa Rica at the end of fieldwork to present preliminary results and then held a debriefing and discussion call with USDOL on December 17, 2018.

Overall, the evaluation process covered three differentiated stages: (1) a review of secondary sources (document review) and initial preparations for the conduct of on-site observation visits and field interviews; (2) in-country data collection and data analysis activities; and (3) production of the current evaluation report. The lead evaluator spent two weeks conducting field activities in Costa Rica.

Main Findings and Conclusions

Relevance

Several stakeholders, including the MTSS and a stakeholder from an international organization, affirmed that there are many models in Costa Rica that aim to insert young people into the labor market, and some are inclusive of vulnerable youth. However, interviewed stakeholders from the private sector, as well as several studies, such as the "Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Sostenible" for 2018,⁷ concur that they

⁷ Programa Estado de la Nación, "Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible," 2018. <https://www.estadonacion.or.cr/2018/assets/en2018.pdf>

have not been very successful. Most of the evaluation findings support the relevance of the project's development hypothesis regarding the need to develop the country's capacity to provide quality training alternatives, especially for vulnerable youth.

Effectiveness

The recent change in the executive branch of the GOCR and turnover in key positions have contributed to delays in the implementation of project activities, especially in San José. However, delays in the implementation of the pilot in Limón appear not to be related to this turnover; instead, they are associated with YPCR's procedures. In Limón, the project's procedures have led to delays in contracting personnel for the pilot's implementation, for example, to support building alliances with companies that could participate in the WBT placement process. Basing decision-making in San José has also led to delays in Limón. In addition, existing levels of human and financial resources assigned to the implementation of the pilot are insufficient to amplify the pilot's experience and maximize the development of the WBT model.

The WBT pilot, which is currently being implemented by the YPCR project team, should provide initial data, once all phases of the model have been implemented, on its effectiveness and potential to support vulnerable youth in achieving productive livelihoods.

Sustainability

The project aims to expand Costa Rica's institutional capacity to integrate WBT into its policies and programs to insert young, vulnerable people into the labor market. To succeed, the project can strengthen its collaboration with FENTRAG and build its alliance with INA. However, the project also needs to show results of the WBT model and reinforce the recognition of a model based on social co-responsibility inclusive of vulnerable youth to increase the likelihood for sustainability of the pilot experience. This cannot be done until all four phases of the model have been tested and verified, and youth beneficiaries have developed competencies and relations to compete in the labor market and are ready to work.⁸ When YPCR develops the methodology for the transfer of knowledge at the local level and systematizes its model, it can then be presented to decision-makers. It is only then that the results can indicate whether or not the model will be integrated and replicated in Costa Rica.

Lessons Learned and Promising Practices

Legal and regulatory reforms are usually a protracted process lasting several political cycles. According to several stakeholders interviewed, the Bill of Law for the Regulation of Dual Mode Vocational-Technical Education in Costa Rica has been under discussion for more than ten years. A four-year project needs to be designed and implemented under existing laws and regulations.

The dialogue process and the building of trust between stakeholders and decision-makers to support and implement WBT, a new concept in Costa Rica, is a slow process. It will probably require more than four years, the life of the Project, to consolidate these alliances.

In Limón and San José, there have been complications which are inherent to the nature of establishing alliances and a functional link between the YPCR and its partners. For example, according to stakeholders from the business sector and labor unions, establishing alliances between the private sector and labor to facilitate the WBT placement of vulnerable youth is a new experience in Costa Rica and has not been an

⁸ The WBT model contemplates four possible outcomes for youth: employment, self-employment, continuing education, and social action (e.g., referred by the firm, where youth are undergoing/have finished training in the workplace but there are no openings, to another firm for employment).

easy task. Union members believe businesses are only looking out for their own interests, while businesses state that worker demands for higher wages and other benefits might make their business less competitive. The two parties usually see each other as adversaries, not partners. It is a protracted dialogue and there is resistance on both sides.

Changes to a more inclusive model of youth insertion into the labor market also requires results and evidence that the WBT model is successful in incorporating vulnerable youth into employment.

Recommendations

- 1. YPCR should continue its activities in San José but focus efforts of the three project components in Limón province.** Several stakeholders believe job creation in Puerto Limón, where YPCR has its office and is developing the pilot, is not very promising in the short-run due to the opening of a new port facility. YPCR could expand the intervention to other counties in the province of Limón to ensure WBT placement. YPCR has already established relationships with enterprises in Siquirres and, according to a private sector stakeholder in Siquirres, new investment is coming into this area. It would make sense, then, to extend YPCR activities to Siquirres, should budgetary conditions allow it.⁹
- 2. To expedite implementation in Limón, YPCR should assign a more experienced person to lead the actions there and decentralize decision-making to the pilot area.** Local staff in Limón are very enthusiastic and committed to their work. Moreover, beneficiaries are very happy with the training and results. However, the staff members are young and need more experience. Leading the pilot program requires comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the YPCR project and proven experience in leading workforce development projects. While local staff is supported by more experienced staff based in San José and international YBI staff, the project would benefit from a qualified person with streamlined decision-making power to lead the efforts in Limón.
- 3. To amplify the pilot's experience and maximize impact and sustainability, YPCR should allocate more financial and human resources to Limón.** This would require hiring additional personnel to monitor progress of beneficiaries in the WBT phases and tutor and mentor the post-WBT hosting process.
- 4. YPCR should induce more active participation from the Limon mayor, INA and MTSS at the local level.** Thus far, discussions about the program have been carried out with these stakeholders, but they do not participate in the implementation of YPCR. They are important stakeholders to support the WBT implementation efforts and sustainability of the model.
- 5. To allow the project enough time to implement all the phases and cohorts required to test the pilot approach and its effectiveness, USDOL should extend the project's period of performance with a one-year no cost extension.** To implement the evaluation recommendations and to promote sustainability, YPCR will need more time. As of September 2018, YPCR had expended one-third of the funds available for the project. They have enough available funding for a one-year no cost extension.
- 6. YPCR should create organizational tools, such as minutes from meetings, to follow-up on agreements with partners.** Thorough documentation is important because it tracks all important outcomes and resolutions reached, which can be reviewed afterwards by any stakeholder and be used, for example, as an agenda to follow-up in the next meeting.

⁹ A private sector stakeholder interviewed in Siquirres mentioned that they are expanding operations and will hire more people, and that several other businesses are also increasing investment in the area.

7. **YPCR should invest further in knowledge management and dissemination.** The Project has accrued and will continue to acquire a wealth of unstructured knowledge on the different topics and populations addressed through its interventions. Because WBT has the potential to serve as a model for other provinces in Costa Rica, as well as in other countries in the region, it is crucial for YPCR to further systematize Project experiences across all phases of the model.¹⁰
8. **Future projects funded by USDOL to support vulnerable youth's readiness to work must also offer child care to level the playing field for young mothers interested in participating in the program.**

¹⁰ YPCR is already gathering and systematizing evidence from the first phase; however, to develop a blueprint for replication, all phases of the model need to be systematized.

Introduction

In September 2016, the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) awarded YouthBuild International (YBI) a four-year \$3,000,000 Cooperative Agreement grant to implement the Youth Pathways to Leadership, Learning and Livelihoods project in Costa Rica (YPCR). YPCR aims to improve the country-capacity to implement quality workplace-based training (WBT) alternatives for vulnerable youth excluded from the labor market. While most activities are implemented out of San José, a demonstrative initiative is being implemented in Limón as a pilot in achieving WBT opportunities for at-risk youth aged 15 to 21.

This is an interim performance evaluation of YPCR to assess the relevance, effectiveness and plans for sustainability of the project as well as provide lessons and recommendations for the remainder of this and future projects.

Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

The main purposes of the interim evaluation are to:

- Assess the relevance of the project in the cultural, economic and political context in the country, as well as the validity of the project design and extent to which it is suited to the priorities and policies of the host government and other national stakeholders;
- Determine whether the project is on track to meeting its objectives, identifying challenges and opportunities encountered in doing so, and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges and opportunities;
- Assess the effectiveness of the project's strategies, as well as identify its strengths and weaknesses in implementation and areas for improvement;
- Provide conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations; and
- Assess the project's plans for sustainability at the local and national levels and among implementing organizations and identify steps to enhance its sustainability.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions focus on three areas: relevance, effectiveness and sustainability.

Relevance

1. How relevant is the project's design and theory of change considering the present context in which it operates? Does the available qualitative and quantitative information confirm the theory of change to be valid and accurate?

Effectiveness

2. To what extent has the project made progress towards achieving its targets and results in the following areas? What are the factors driving and hindering results thus far?
 - a. Public policy advocacy
 - b. Communicational/outreach campaigns
 - c. Targeting youth engaged in or at risk of child labor in the Limón area
3. What is the level of participation of the various stakeholders (via agreements or other arrangements), their degree of commitment to project execution, and their contribution towards the project's objectives?

4. To what extent have the activities in Limón contributed to the public policies and programs the project is promoting at the national/regional level? How?
5. How have the monitoring and evaluation systems (Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), pre-situational analysis, etc.) been implemented and are they being used to identify trends and patterns, adapt strategies, and make informed decisions?
 - a. How effective is the project's monitoring of direct beneficiaries (youth in Limón)?

Sustainability

6. How is the project promoting sustainability of its key activities?
 - a. Are there opportunities to leverage public or private resources to provide sustainability to the youth training systems the project is promoting?
 - b. Are there agreements in place, or in process, with various stakeholders which can ensure sustainability?
 - c. What efforts are being made to maximize the impact and sustainability from the pilot experience in Limón?
7. What specific actions should USDOL, YBI, and other project stakeholders take to promote the sustainability of the project?

Methodology

This evaluation used a mixed-methods approach using primary qualitative data supplemented with existing project documents and data, including CMEP data. Qualitative information was obtained through field visits, individual interviews and group discussions in San José, Limón and Siquirres over a two-week period from November 26 to December 7, 2018. The team conducted a stakeholder meeting on December 6, 2018 to review preliminary findings at the end of field work in Costa Rica as well as a debrief and discussion with ILAB staff on December 17, 2018.

This evaluation covers the project's implementation from the start of YPCR in FY 2016 through the fourth quarter of FY 2018, accounting for one half of total project implementation. The evaluation was designed to engage key sources in an effective way during the evaluation. Specific questions for stakeholders were used to guide the interviews and discussion regarding the project's accomplishments and the working relationship between the project's staff and stakeholders.

Document Review

The evaluator reviewed project documents and data prior to fieldwork. These documents included:

- CMEP documents
- Project document and revisions
- Cooperative Agreement
- Technical Progress and Status Reports
- Project Results Frameworks and Monitoring Plans
- Work plans
- Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports
- Management Procedures and Guidelines
- Research or other reports undertaken Project files (including school records) as appropriate

In addition, external secondary sources were referenced as sources of context and useful background to other data collection efforts in the field. Moreover, to assist with future project planning and implementation, the evaluation also examined the validity and relevance of current performance indicators, targets and outcomes as included in the Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP) and Technical Progress reports through September 2018. A complete listing of all sources is included in Annex B.

Fieldwork

The evaluator spent two weeks in Costa Rica (November 26-December 7, 2018). Prior to data collection, the evaluator worked with the grantee to confirm the schedule, evaluation approach and expectations, and reviewed the project's activities with key YBI and YPCR staff. The evaluator conducted interviews in San José, then traveled to Limón and Siquirres to conduct key informant and group interviews (see itinerary in Annex A).

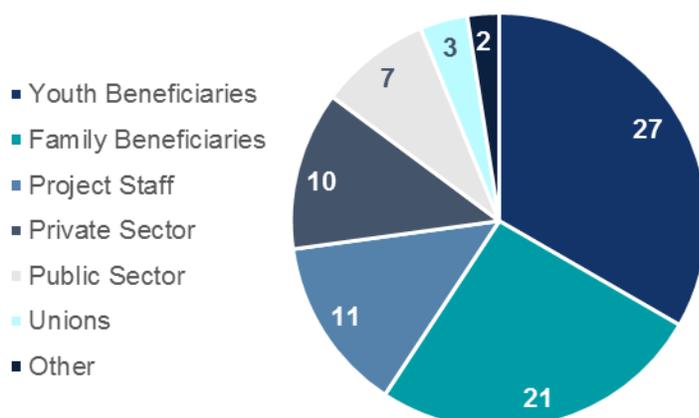
The first day of in-country activities involved initial consultations with YBI team members and the project's US Embassy Focal Point to identify additional sources of information and complete a review of a final set of secondary sources. Subsequently, field interviews were conducted throughout the remainder of the two-week field period. The fieldwork concentrated on collecting data and beneficiary/stakeholder feedback from semi-structured individual or group interviews. This more flexible approach was helpful in addressing time and logistic constraints that would otherwise require significant adjustments to samples and locations as the field activities progress. During fieldwork, documentation was verified and additional documents, such as letters of intent with FENTRAG and CCITUL and two agreements with the MTSS, were collected. On the last day in-country, a stakeholder meeting was carried out to discuss preliminary findings.

Stakeholder Interviews

The evaluation team conducted interviews in Limón, San José and Siquirres. To maximize the efficiency of interviews with project stakeholders (defined as youth and their families, academic, governmental, civil society and private sector institutions), the selection of the visits and interviews was made using information and records provided by YBI. Sampling methods were chosen to address the specific scope and nature of the activities undertaken by the Project. In those cases where activities involved large numbers of participants, such as youth and family beneficiaries, the evaluation sought to attain a balance between individual and group interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were held with 81 project stakeholders (Figure 1). The evaluator solicited the opinions of youth and families, workers' union representatives, government ministry officials, U.S. Embassy staff members, private sector and business chamber of commerce representatives, academic representatives, companies that could facilitate WBT and project staff. These stakeholders were asked about the project's relevance, accomplishments, sustainability and the working relationship between project staff and their partners, where appropriate. These meetings were one-on-one or group interviews. Fifty-nine percent of the persons interviewed were female and 41 percent were male. A complete list of people interviewed is found in Annex C.

Figure 1: Interviews Conducted, by Stakeholder Group (n=81)



Data Collection Tools

Data collection tools were designed to establish linkages between stakeholder responses or observed activities and the main evaluation questions. The tools used to gather and analyze beneficiary information included:

1. **Individual interview protocols:** Semi-structured individual interview protocols contain questions and guidelines that solicit feedback in a one-on-one setting. These were used primarily with public officials, trainers, community leaders and private sector.
2. **Group interview protocols:** Semi-structured group interview protocols contain questions and guidelines that solicit feedback in a group setting. These were used with vulnerable youth and youth excluded from the formal labor market benefitting from the project.
3. **Questionnaires:** In addition to interviews, youth beneficiaries were asked to complete short questionnaires. These were intended to assist with triangulation of feedback and provide a useful contrast to verbal responses.

The compilation of internal interview notes formed the basis for cross-site analysis and discussion of preliminary findings. A summary presentation of these findings was used to encourage additional feedback from stakeholders and project staff.

Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality

The evaluator observed utmost confidentiality related to sensitive information and feedback elicited during the individual and group interviews. All interviews and discussions included an informed consent form which was read, discussed and signed before the evaluator began interviews. Interviewee responses were kept anonymous. The evaluation team applied youth-sensitive and gender-sensitive interviewing approaches suggested per standard guidelines, such as the ILO- International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour and UNICEF guidance.

To mitigate bias during the data collection process and ensure maximum freedom of expression of the implementing partners, stakeholders, communities and beneficiaries, implementing partner staff were not present during interviews. However, implementing partner staff accompanied the evaluator to make introductions, facilitate the evaluation process, make respondents feel comfortable, and allow the evaluator to observe the interaction between implementing partner staff and interviewees.

Limitations

The selection of interviews and beneficiaries constitutes a purposive sample. A purposive sample, also referred to as a judgmental or expert sample, is a type of non-probability sample that is selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study. This sampling approach enables the evaluation to apply the project's learning curve to select a sample that could best reflect the key issues of the evaluation. It is also an approach commensurate with the time, resource and source availability constraints present in this evaluation process. Hence, not all beneficiaries have an equal probability of being included in the sample. All efforts were made to ensure that the evaluator visited a representative sample of sites and beneficiaries, including some that have performed well and others that have experienced challenges.

Interviewees were selected to cover the broadest possible range in terms of age, gender and activity focus, as well as applicable demographics, geographic distribution and special interests. However, formal stratification or clustering was not feasible within the evaluation time-frame.

This is not a formal impact assessment. Findings for the evaluation are based on information collected from background documents and in interviews with stakeholders, project staff and beneficiaries. The accuracy of the evaluation findings will be determined by the integrity of information provided to the evaluator from these sources. Furthermore, the ability of the evaluator to determine efficiency will be limited by the amount of financial data available. A cost-efficiency analysis is not included because it would require impact data which is not available.

Project Context and Description

Project Context

The national unemployment rate in Costa Rica is 9.3 percent,¹¹ while youth unemployment is almost twice the national average (16.4 percent). Unemployment disproportionately impacts women as evidenced by a 12.3 percent unemployment rate for women, compared to 7.5 percent for men. Youth unemployment (ages 15-24) also affects more women; while male youth unemployment is 20 percent, female youth unemployment is 32 percent.¹² Further exacerbating unemployment concerns in the country are the growing number of young people who neither study nor work (NiNis, in Spanish).¹³ In Costa Rica, there are 147,959 NiNis between the ages of 15 and 24 (17 percent of the total youth population),¹⁴ with large clusters of NiNis located in rural areas and marginalized urban communities. Female NiNis represent two-thirds of this group, with early marriage and teenage pregnancy being two of the main contributing factors to their situation. About 40 percent of Costa Rican NiNis face a scarcity of resources, and limited access to quality jobs, which contributes to the generational cycle of poverty and exclusion.

Furthermore, Costa Rican youth currently lack access to effective WBTs due to the practical and operational limitations of national institutions overseeing technical education programs. For instance, youth may enroll in current no-cost apprenticeship programs directed by the National Training Institute (INA in Spanish),¹⁵

¹¹ Data provided by Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC), 2018.

¹² Programa Estado de la Nación, "Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible," 2018, 61.

¹³ Rafael de Hoyos, Halsey Rogers and Miguel Székely, "Out of School and Out of Work: Risk and Opportunities for Latin America's NiNis," World Bank Group, 2016, 1.

¹⁴ La Nación, "150.000 jóvenes ni estudian ni trabajan en Costa Rica," April 26, 2016:

http://www.nacion.com/nacional/educacion/Numero-jovenes-nini-pais-baja_0_1556444369.html

¹⁵ Contraloría General de la República, "Informe de Auditoría del Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje," November 3, 2017: https://cgrfiles.cgr.go.cr/publico/jaguar/Documentos/informes_rec/DFOE-EC-IF-19-2017.pdf

but these types of initiatives¹⁶ are not adequately preparing students for the workforce.¹⁷ Existing services fail to connect market demands with youth labor skills and are not designed to respond to characteristics of vulnerable youth.

Unemployed youth without the qualifications demanded by the labor market turn to the informal sector for livelihoods, where they find fewer protections and work under harmful and exploitative conditions. In Costa Rica, 30 percent of employed youth are part of the informal sector.¹⁸ Also, 87 percent of working minors are below the legal age established to enter the labor market.¹⁹ Consequently, young people are exposed to increasing conditions of vulnerability, and in the case of young women, these conditions are intensified, raising the risk of sexual exploitation and exposure to dangerous work.

Analysts in the public and private sector and several stakeholders interviewed agree that several factors have contributed to the difficulty of accessing quality employment, especially for youth seeking to enter the workforce for the first time. These factors include insufficient education, low-level qualifications, lack of experience and a gap between the trainings offered and the skill sets needed by the private sector in the rapidly changing Costa Rican labor market.

Project Description

In September 2016, YBI was awarded a four-year \$3 million USD Cooperative Agreement grant from the OCFT within the USDOL to implement the YPCR project. The Project aims to improve the country-capacity to implement quality WBT alternatives addressing vulnerable youth excluded from the labor market.

YBI and its sub-grantee, Paniamor Foundation, work closely with pertinent Government of Costa Rica (GOCR) ministries, especially the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) and Ministry of Labor and Social Services (MTSS), and national institutions such as the INA. A broad range of nongovernmental stakeholders include employers, business associations, local and international organizations and local youth organizations.

The activities proposed to achieve the project's purpose, long-term outcomes and expected results have been organized around three components, as follows:

- Component A: Alignment and promotion of public policies and legislation (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome A);
- Component B: Commitment of Private sector and workers' organizations to quality WBT alternatives (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome B);
- Component C: Institutional coordination for existing training programs for youth (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome C).

While most activities are implemented out of San José, a demonstrative initiative is being implemented in Limón as part of Component B. This is a small intervention meant to be a pilot in achieving WBT opportunities for at-risk youth aged 15 to 21.

¹⁶ Diario Extra, "Oferta formativa del INA no genera empleos," September 27, 2017:

<http://www.diarioextra.com/Noticia/detalle/343368/oferta-formativa-del-ina-no-genera-empleos>

¹⁷ AM Prensa.Com, "Carlos Alvarado reducirá el desempleo con una mejor gestión del INA," December 17, 2017:

<https://amprensa.com/2017/12/carlos-alvarado-reducira-desempleo-una-mejor-gestion-del-ina/>

¹⁸ International Labor Organization, "Formalizando la Informalidad Juvenil: Experiencias innovadoras en América Latina y el Caribe", 2015, 8.

¹⁹ ILO and Ministry of Labor and Social Services. "Magnitude and Characteristics of Child and Adolescent Labor in Costa Rica". 2011, 60.

The project's results framework is provided below:

Project Goal: To improve the country-capacity to implement quality WBT alternatives addressing vulnerable youth excluded from the labor market

OTC 1 Laws and/or policies supporting quality WBT initiatives for vulnerable youth are developed and/or implemented by key stakeholders.

MTO 1.1 Key stakeholders advised by the project, formally agree on public policy proposals enhancing the implementation of quality WBT alternatives for vulnerable youth.

OTP 1.1.1 A quality WBT related communication strategy is designed and launched.

MTO 1.2 Key legislative commissions incorporate quality WBT related evidence-based information provided by the project.

OTP 1.2.1 Leaders and authorities with mandates related to youth employment policies and or programs, educated on WBT value.

OTC 2: Employers, workers' organizations and other stakeholders implemented good practices related to quality WBT for youth, including vulnerable and marginalized youth.

MTO 2.1 Attitudes about WBT for vulnerable youth amongst key stakeholders and society have been improved.

OTP 2.1.1 Key stakeholders adopt knowledge and attitudes on the implementation of WBT.

OTP 2.1.2 Vulnerable youth and their families informed about quality WBT opportunities.

MTO 2.2: Knowledge about good practices related to WBT for youth, including vulnerable and marginalized youth, is enhanced.

OTP 2.2.1 One demonstrative quality WBT initiative addressing youth, including adolescents in context of conflict with the law and young parents up to 21, carried out.

MTO 2.3 Companies and Stakeholders trained on good practices, create and/or pilot quality WBT, including vulnerable and marginalized youth.

OTP 2.3.1 Knowledge Bank of domestic and international good practices focused on WBT has been designed and developed.

OTP 2.3.2 A National Employment System capacity building strategy on design and implementation of quality WBT, delivered.

OTC 3: The quality of existing public and private programs that provide vulnerable and marginalized youth with necessary skills to enter WBTs training programs is improved.

MTO 3.1 Coordination training programs is strengthened.

OTP 3.1.1 Mapping and assessment of key contributing factors for a WBT strategy is developed.

OTP 3.1.2 A blueprint for a national WBT strategy has been created

OTP 3.1.3 Inter-institutional agreements for coordination at the local level have been defined

MTO 3.2 Relevance of skills training programs available to vulnerable and marginalized youth is improved.

OTP 3.2.1 MTSS, INA and/or MEP, and private sector partners integrate quality WBT skills as a component of their training programs.

MTO 3.3 Training of institutional staff in charge of the provision of services for vulnerable youth, has been institutionalized.

OTP 3.3.1 A training program for key staff of EMPLEATE, INA and/or MEP, developed and delivered to authorities.

Findings

Relevance

Question 1: How relevant is the project's design and theory of change considering the present context in which it operates? Does the available qualitative and quantitative information confirm the theory of change to be valid and accurate?

YPCR's development hypothesis states that: *If a project is designed, implemented and is specifically designed to engage vulnerable and disconnected youth; addressing the issues of children and adolescents engaged in hazardous work; and if the private sector, labor unions, NGOs and Government, through strategic alliances, become partners, are engaged in these efforts and contribute directly to build pathways for out of school and unemployed youth to productive workplace-based training programs, then a virtuous cycle will begin, and vulnerable youth insertion into the formal labor market will be enhanced.*

Most of the evaluation findings support the relevance of the development hypothesis in the present context. There is a need to develop the country's capacity to provide quality training alternatives and insert vulnerable youth into the labor market. In that frame of reference, a stakeholder from CCITUL expressed that with low qualifications and education, lack of experience, and mismatch between trainings and skill sets needed by the private sector, it is difficult for youth entering the labor force to access quality employment. A similar conclusion is also stated in the 2018 "Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Sostenible" Report, implying that existing services fail to connect market demands with youth's skills. This is reflected in higher rates of unemployment.

Quantitative information shows the disadvantages youth encounter when entering the labor force. For instance, from the first quarter of 2014 through the second quarter of 2018, Costa Rica's unemployment rate fluctuated at around 12 percent. For female youth (ages 15-24), it fluctuated between 35 percent (first quarter 2014) and 32 percent (second quarter 2018). For male youth, it fluctuated between 20 percent and 18 percent.²⁰ In Costa Rica, 30 percent of employed youth are part of the informal sector. The 2018 "Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Sostenible" Report shows that average schooling in the province of Limón is 7.7 years (the second lowest in the country) and is low even among youth (9.3 years in the segment of 18 to 24 years). Only 35 percent of the population between 25 and 39 years old completed high school. If the population up to 65 years old is included, the indicator shows that only 27 percent finished high school in Limón, compared to 45 percent in the central region. In 2017, only 17.9 percent of employed persons in Limón had completed high school and 13.7 percent had education beyond high school. The combination of these indicators shows severe problems of permanence in school learning and low educational achievement. Furthermore, the education profile of Limón's population has not changed very much in the last decade. Thus, it is not surprising that almost one in two men and one in three women work in unskilled jobs.²¹

Interviewed stakeholders in Limón, including private sector associations and labor sector representatives, perceive that a new port terminal in Limón, APM Terminals, with enhanced automation will be a threat to existing jobs. They believe that up to 3,000 jobs could be lost. In the short run, it is likely to increase unemployment in Limón. If many skilled workers are laid off, it will be more difficult for inexperienced youth to find employment. When asked about the potential benefits associated with the new terminal, these stakeholders from Limón were pessimistic and thought that outsiders would probably get the new jobs.

²⁰ Programa Estado de la Nación, 61.

²¹ Ibid., 64.

On the other hand, the long-term outlook is more promising. Cluster developments and agglomeration economies associated with a projected \$1.3 billion investment in the new port facility will increase labor demand.

Local stakeholders believe that low levels of education and skills makes it harder for new investments in the province to yield more job opportunities for the local population.

Low levels of education and lack of skills to match market needs (e.g., shipping terminal maintenance mechanics for the new port) reflect a limited institutional response to the persistent structural disadvantages.

These collectively work in a circular process to obstruct income class mobility for poor families with limited resources. This makes it virtually impossible for individuals to break the cycle. Moreover, growing up in a poor community is also characterized by a high, sometimes increasing, level of exclusion from the formal labor market for unqualified and under educated young people, especially young women.

Intended project outcomes do relate to a change in youth attitudes and skills, as well as the labor market environment that could eventually enhance the human capital of vulnerable youth. This would enable them to be more competitive and address existing or emerging workforce demands. However, the project's implementation to date does not provide enough evidence of the accuracy or even validity of WBT as a major factor in inserting vulnerable youth into the formal labor market.

Effectiveness

Question 2: To what extent has the project made progress towards achieving its targets and results in the following areas? What are the factors driving and hindering results thus far?

- a. Public policy advocacy**
- b. Communicational/outreach campaigns**
- c. Targeting youth engaged in or at risk of child labor in the Limón area**

A. Public Policy Advocacy

In Costa Rica, apprenticeships and dual education programs are regulated by the Apprenticeship Act of 1971, which gives the National Training Institute (INA) exclusivity in the creation of apprenticeships and dual education initiatives with private sector employers. According to the project's document "Promote Workplace-Based Training for Vulnerable Youth in Costa Rica," the Second Chamber of Costa Rica's Supreme Court of Justice ruled that apprenticeships must abide by common labor laws. This could be interpreted that minimum wages, bonuses and social security contributions must be offered to all apprentices, making it more expensive for the business sector to implement a WBT. Component A aimed to support the enactment of a regulatory framework friendlier to WBT that distributes the responsibilities, rights and obligations among the most relevant parties. This regulatory framework would allow the apprentice, training institute and employer the ability to specify the status of the learner, payment arrangements, and additional benefits. In that context, as part of the project's activities, YPCR made efforts to support a bill of law for the Regulation of Dual Mode Vocational-Technical Education in Costa Rica (Nº 19.019). This bill attempts to resolve the issue of legal uncertainty created by the decision of the Second Chamber. It converts apprenticeship contracts from a labor law issue to a civil matter. Table 1 shows that no legal proposals have been approved. Moreover, as explained below, Costa Rica's new correlation of forces and priorities makes it ineffective that YPCR continue to support the above-mentioned bill.

Table 1: Project Progress of Key CMEP Indicators (as of October 2018)

OTC 1: Laws and/or policies supporting quality WBT opportunities for youth, including vulnerable and marginalized youth, are improved and/or implemented by key stakeholders				
Indicator	2 Year Target	Achieved	Target LOP	% of Target Achieved
OTC 1.1 Number of policies and other regulations approved and/or enforced by key stakeholders.	1	0	2	0%
MTO 1.1 Number of agreements by key stakeholders, addressed to public policy proposals on WBT alternatives.	1	4	3	133%
OTP 1.1.1.1. Number of campaign strategies and supporting pieces designed and launched.	1	0	1	0%
OTP 1.2.1.1 Number of leaders and authorities trained on WBT	80	0	160	0%

Source: Youth Pathways/USDOL CMEP

In May 2018, President Alvarado Quesada's administration came to power with new top echelon political figures, technocrats and decision-makers. Several interviewed stakeholders mentioned that Costa Rica also elected a new Assembly, and the Quesada party only won 10 of 57 positions. Sharing the Assembly with six other political parties, the government was forced to form a multi-party system. The Quesada party will need the support of at least two other parties to pass any new initiatives in the Assembly. On the other hand, according to several interviewed stakeholders in the public and private sectors, one of the government's top priorities is fiscal reform that aims, among other things, to reduce the fiscal deficit. According to private sector stakeholders interviewed, the macroeconomic situation of the country is considered "the worst economic scenario in the last 30 years," with a projected fiscal deficit of 7.1 percent of GDP and debt estimated to reach 3.4 times government revenues. That initiative has been met with strong opposition from most public-sector unions and other interest groups, leading to a national strike that halted essential public services for more than a month. Most teachers' unions, up to the time of the field visit, continued the national strike.

According to private sector stakeholders interviewed, since early 2018, the assembly commission that oversaw the draft bill has not convened. Furthermore, according to a stakeholder from an international organization, several political parties seemed more willing to support an initiative to open opportunities of dual education for the general population, the teachers' unions and Ministry of Education perspective which focus on schooled youth, rather than support WBT opportunities that are inclusive of vulnerable youth. According to the same source, such an initiative would not facilitate the implementation of WBT, among others, because the responsibilities assigned to employers are minimum. For YPCR, the commitment of the firms is fundamental for the implementation of WBT.

With the new correlation of power in the Assembly and reduced political interest in supporting a bill of law for the Regulation of Dual Mode Vocational-Technical Education in Costa Rica friendly to WBT, it is not likely that a Bill that supports WBT implementation could be approved in the remaining time of the project. According to YPCR, the way the Bill is drafted excludes the project's target population, and the project believes WBT can be implemented through policy innovation under current legislation. Based on the findings, it can be inferred that it is not efficient to continue public policy advocacy in support of the enactment of a new law.

On the other hand, private sector stakeholders interviewed have differing opinions about the country's legal framework and the WBT model, such as the requirements to incorporate youth aged 15 to 18 years into the labor force (e.g., do they need authorization from the Ministry of Labor?) and benefits stipulated by labor laws (e.g., meals, bonuses and insurance) that must be offered to all participants. Interviews evidenced that, to be cautious, several companies abstain from recruiting underage youth.

Stakeholders have different views regarding required benefits and legal requirements for apprentices under the age of 18.

To fill that void, in August 2018, the project subcontracted a law firm to analyze and present conclusions on the lawfulness of implementing the WBT model under the country's existing legal framework. It also aims to systematize and compile the legal framework regulating youth participation in the labor force, the right to work of youth aged 15 to 18, and the conditions under which their employment is legally permitted. The study also included advocacy and coordination activities designed to position these guidelines in the public agenda. A draft of the study is already available.

A. Communication/Outreach Campaigns

Table 1 shows that the target of launching a campaign strategy has not been met. YPCR's April-September 2018 Technical Progress Report (TPR) states that external factors, including the change in government, public protest the Fiscal Reform Plan and teacher's strike do not provide favorable conditions for the launch of a WBT campaign.

The April-September TPR includes activities and supporting pieces related to the presentation of the YPCR project to decision makers and stakeholders. For example, the launch of the demonstrative pilot in Limón and expert technical assistance events were designed to position the WBT subject among stakeholders (FENTRAG and CCITUL) in Limón and (Labor Ministry, Ministry of Education and UCCAEP) San José. Also, the GOCR (Labor Minister, Mr. Steven Nunez R, and Vice Minister of Labor and Social Security, Natalia Alvarez), private sector and unions (Maikol Hernandez, General Secretary of FENTRAG, and Ruben Acon, Executive President of CCITUL) and educational sector (Rosita Shum, Director CUNLIMON) have made public statements supporting WBT.

In November 2018, Buzz and Savorio Consultores, firms contracted by YPCR, began to develop important supporting pieces of the communication strategy in Limón and have been carrying out interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries, private sector stakeholders and vulnerable youth between 15-21 years, including adolescent mothers and families with offspring between 15-21 years.

One of the key aspects of the communication strategy is the construction of a brand as a promotional strategy for WBT (branding). Disseminating the effects of WBT on the well-being of beneficiaries and their families is crucial to showing what WBT offers, its value-added, and how it differs from existing programs. However, all phases of WBT have not been completed as yet, so it is uncertain how successful the placement process will be or how committed the firms participating in the hosting process will be. The first cohort, 27 youth participants, will finish the first phase of the pilot program in Limón (i.e., soft skills and attitudes) in January 2019 and, shortly thereafter, will enter the second phase (WBT placement process).

The project strategy considers as a second-year target the implementation of a national communication campaign. With the election of a new president in Costa Rica, which brought changes in key positions, advances in the dialogue process to support WBT have had to be re-initiated in most instances. In other cases, it has been difficult for YPCR to push forward. In that context, it makes more sense to continue implementing the communication strategy in Limón and including it in other phases of WBT, such as youth cohorts work base employment, mentoring and final outcomes (i.e., employment, self-employment, further

training), rather than initiate a national campaign. After the WBT model completes all phases in Limón for the first cohort around mid-2019 and can show WBT concrete results, including experiences to draw from and lessons from Limón's communication/outreach campaign, the national campaign can begin its implementation.

B. Targeting Youth Engaged in or At Risk of Child Labor in the Limón Area

One of the most important and tangible results of the project has been YPCR's efforts and success in engaging youth living in conditions of vulnerability and outside the formal labor market. The first cohort, a group of 27 young people, ages 15-21, made up of 15 girls and 12 boys from socially vulnerable backgrounds, have seen their personal and social skills and competences strengthened. Thirteen participants (48 percent) have never worked and 14 participants (52 percent) have worked from three days to seven months in jobs with high turnover and low pay. Some participants are teenage mothers and have one or more toddlers. They have undergone a three-month selection process, interviews and tests and a basic training and competences development process that included vocational training (oriented toward competencies to improve motivation, self-esteem, self-confidence), soft skills training to help individuals develop social competencies regarding attitudes, behaviors and personality traits, work environment simulations, math, reading, and writing classes as well as English classes and computer training. Youth interviewed by the evaluator are extremely happy with the program. They agree it has not been easy and have had to work hard and make sacrifices. They mention having to get up early in the morning, work hard in their daily activities, be punctual, pay attention in class and participate. When asked in the questionnaire: *What is it like participating in YPCR? For example, do you feel safe and welcome, optimistic or pessimistic?*

In their words:

YPCR helped me to: Interact, lose the fear of participating, improve self-esteem, improve presentation, work as a team.

They responded:²²

"If I was born again and had an opportunity I would join the program."

"I felt safe and accepted."

"It has been the best experience of my life."

"I do not have any complaints."

"They inspire us."

"They taught me how to be a better person."

To the question: *What do you like / liked most about the program?* They answered:

"They treat us all the same, there is no discrimination."

"The learning sessions, you learn something new every day."

"The facilitators [have an] interest in us."

"They trust me."

²² Responses presented in this section come from different youth beneficiaries and different family members. The same person is only considered one single time.

“It gives me hope to get ahead.”

“They taught me to improve myself as a person and learn more of my own skills.”

“I was not doing anything.”

“I think it's a good opportunity for young people to be someone and be better in life.”

“Respect our differences, opinions and accept us as we are.”

To the question: *Could some aspects of the program be improved?* They responded:

“Everything about the program is excellent.”

“Just ask them not to change.”

“They should continue to help more vulnerable youth.”

“Youth Pathways can bring change.”

The beneficiaries were also asked: *Would you like to add anything?* They answered:

“Youth Pathways helped me to have more confidence in myself and made me realize that I could do things that I never thought possible.”

“Something happen inside me, instead of been so negative about my future, I began to value myself, and to say: I can do it.”

“It helped me heal scars.”

To get more feedback about the program's impact on youth participants, the evaluator also examined the families' points of view. Twenty-one interviewees representing 18 youth participants (67 percent of the families) attended the group interviews. For some youth participants, both parents attended, but for most only the mother or father attended. For a couple of youth participants, their grandmothers and a sister attended.

Across the board, all family members noticed a significant positive change in the youth participants. To the question: *How have you or your family benefited from the Youth Pathways project?* They responded:

“It improved our family relationship.”

“It improved communication with its brothers.”

“I liked that she dresses differently, more serious.”

“His self-esteem has been improved.”

“She is more responsible.”

“I like that he is not rude with us anymore.”

The families were also asked: *Tell me a story about a positive experience in working with the program?*

How has your family benefited from the Youth Pathways project?

- Profound changes
- They are more responsible
- More respectful
- It has motivated them
- They have matured

“In Limón, there is a lack of opportunities for employment and opportunities for youth training. Also, youth are attracted by “easy money” to become part of drug trafficking. Before the program, my son and a neighbor were beginning to hang out with the wrong crowd. After he enrolled in the program he stopped going to their hangouts. Apparently, the neighbor continued his involvement in the murky side of business.”

“My daughter was very depressed. She did not want to do anything, her self-esteem was very low, and she did not want to get out of bed. I heard through a neighbor about the program. It was very hard to get her motivated to attend. Finally, she accepted to give it a try. I thought she would not stay very long. After a few weeks I began to see changes in her attitude, she would get out of bed, and she looked happy to go to the course. We also began to talk much more than before. The program gave her hope and built up her character.”

Moreover, families’ attendance at the group interview, at the end of their daily activities, shows a strong family commitment to the program and, together with their responses, shows gratitude to the program and elation with participants’ positive changes.

Another key element in the WBT experience in Limón is the role of the trainers. The comments provided in the group interview with youth and families, youth responses on their questionnaires, observations of the trainers carrying-out their daily activities and interacting with youth provide strong evidence of the degree of mutual respect and rapport between the trainers and youth. The trainers are not only dedicated and prepared for the activities, they also treat youth with affection.

According to the trainers, the curriculum for WBT was designed by a team that included YPCR staff based in San José, international technical staff from YBI providing support to the pilot, and themselves. To the question: *How well prepared are the students at the beginning of the course? Are the students selected for training appropriate for the type of training offered?* trainers responded that databases for youth in Limón are outdated and not very accurate. It was difficult to target and select potential participants without accurate information on their whereabouts, years of schooling and other characteristics.

At the beginning of the process about 100 youth participated. However, after finding out that the program required attendance four days per week, about half the participants dropped out. There were several reasons for the drop-out. Some told the trainers they are also attending school and their schedule would not allow them to take WBT, others had to take care of their child, and others had to work. A teenager who was unable to continue in the program mentioned that she liked the program and wished she could have stayed through the whole process. However, she had difficulties attending regularly because she has a two-and-half-year-old son and her mother was not willing to look after him while she attended the program. According to the trainers, several young mothers had to give up WBT because they had a toddler and they did not have or no longer had someone to take care of the child while attending the training. While child care is not currently offered by the project and this evaluation did not assess what it would cost to offer it, improved accessibility to the program could reduce drop-outs.

For the next cohort, the strategy for recruitment, according to YPCR, will consider recommendations from the first cohort and local stakeholders. For example, FENTRAG is already communicating with the members and families of potential applicants to WBT. FENTRAG’s collaboration shows a commitment to the program. During the evaluation fieldwork, a member of FENTRAG approached the training site in Limón to inquire about the opening of the new WBT process.

Question 3: What is the level of participation of the various stakeholders (via agreements or other arrangements), their degree of commitment to project execution and their contribution toward the project's objectives?

Alliance with stakeholders, embedded in social co-responsibility and solidarity toward vulnerable youth is a key pillar in implementing the WBT model. A Letter of Intent (LOI) has been signed with FENTRAG and CCITUL and two Technical Cooperation Agreements have been signed with the MTSS. For example, the Head Office of Care and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Adolescent Work (OATIA), a department within the Ministry of Labor, is working closely with YPCR in the design and development of an online course. According to a stakeholder from the MTSS, the course considers prevention and response to child labor as well as practices regarding the protection of adolescent workers. The course is oriented, in its first stage, to businesses and labor organizations. At the time of the evaluation fieldwork they were very close to finishing the modules and, shortly thereafter, will begin testing it. It is anticipated to be fully operational by March 2019.

YPCR has been carrying out joint actions with FENTRAG and CCITUL, among others. These partner stakeholders have supported the program's dissemination process and encouraged member participation in WBT training-related events. In the interviews and in the stakeholder presentation, they stated they will support WBT and help in the recruitment process for the next youth cohort who will enter the program to strengthen their personal and social skills and competencies.

The project is in talks with FENTRAG to incorporate, in YPCR's new cohort, youth undergoing training in FENTRAG's program and to adapt the YPCR training model to the FENTRAG training program.²³ The project has also established a key alliance with CUNLIMON, a college in Limón, to complement the training model. For example, CUNLIMON is providing English and computer training for youth beneficiaries.

Notwithstanding their support for the model, stakeholders from the private sector and labor sector in Limón indicated, in interviews and in the stakeholder meeting, their concerns that it will be difficult to find jobs for the WBT participants because Limón does not generate many new jobs and that the new APM Terminals may increase unemployment. Furthermore, some stakeholders expressed that their company employment policy is to hire people 18 years or older. They believe there are many complications associated with hiring underaged youth, including the need to have permission from the Ministry of Labor and the benefits firms will have to pay associated with youth participating in WBT.

Several stakeholders from the private sector and businesses association in Limón mentioned that the WBT model does not include specific training that the beneficiaries would need to fill a position. It was mentioned in an interview, for example, that to work at a food processing plant requires a certificate that a person has undergone the specific training to work in food processing. To fill this gap, the alliance with the MTSS should be enhanced. YPCR has two technical cooperation agreements signed with the MTSS and has made progress regarding the design and development of an online course for OATIA. However, it has not made significant advances in other areas of cooperation. The project should engage MTSS partnership more fully and seek the support of MTSS flagships programs, *Empleate* and the National Employment Program, to provide additional training.²⁴ Stakeholders also believe that INA, an autonomous institution with 54 training centers nationwide, including one in Limón, is a strategic ally to support training. INA is also a potential key

²³ More detail will be provided below on question six related to sustainability.

²⁴ For example, *Empleate* is a program aimed at individuals between 17 to 24 years who do not study or work and who are also in an unfavorable socioeconomic condition. *Empleate* has resources to provide conditional cash transfers to finance technical-occupational training.

actor in the sustainability of YPCR. In that framework, the relationship with INA should be strengthened by initially seeking to sign an alliance agreement to include support for additional training needed to employ project beneficiaries.

In Limón and San José, there have been complications which are inherent to the nature of establishing alliances and a functional link between the project and partners. According to stakeholders, establishing alliances between the private sector and labor to facilitate WBT placement of vulnerable youth is a new experience in Costa Rica and has not been an easy task. It was a protracted dialogue, as firms and labor unions perceive each other as adversaries and, according to stakeholders from both sectors, there are doubts and resistance from the private sector firms and union members to working together. At the time of the fieldwork, three union members of FENTRAG and two private firms (Dole and Del Monte) have agreed to participate in the WBT placement process.

In addition, in May 2018, Costa Rica elected a new president who initiated changes in key positions. Advances in the dialogue process to support WBT in most instances had to be re-initiated and, in others, it has been difficult for YPCR to push forward. For example, the Ministry of Education has been on strike since September 2018. It is strategic that the Limón municipal government participate actively in the program. The municipal government leads the MTSS interventions in Limón and coordinates activities between local stakeholders. However, the mayor has been accused of embezzlement and has been in and out of jail; and the communication between the vice-mayor and YPCR has been sporadic, hence, she could not be interviewed.

YPCR has not made substantial progress in the alliance with the National Directorate of Employment, a key department in the MTSS. It seemed, from the comments made in the MTSS interview, that it is not fully understood how the WBT model differs from existing programs in Costa Rica that offer training in the workplace. There have also been delays in establishing a working relationship between the program and INA, an autonomous government institution that receives funds from the private sector for training and a potential key actor in the sustainability of the WBT model. The director of INA could not be interviewed.

Notwithstanding progress on building alliances with stakeholders, Table 2 shows the project is lagging in the achievement of important goals. For example, the September 2018 target was 19 employers, worker's organizations and other stakeholders using WBT good practices. However, in that month, none reported using those best practices. The target achievement for CMEP indicators shown in Table 2 depends on the implementation of WBT in Limón. The first cohort is expected to finish the first phase of WBT (competencies development process) in January 2019. The use of WBT good practices by stakeholders will begin in the phase of training in the workplace, expected to start in February or March 2019 and lasting three months.

Table 2: Project Progress of Key CMEP Indicators (as of October 2018)

OTC 2: Employers, workers' organizations and other stakeholders implement good practices related to WBT for youth, including vulnerable and marginalized youth				
Indicator	2 Year Target	Achieved	Target LOP	% of Target Achieved
OTC 2.1 Number of employers, worker's organizations and other stakeholders reporting to be using WBT good practices	19	0	43	0%
OTP 2.1.1.1 Number of key stakeholders trained on the implementation of WBT	50	0	200	0%
MTO 2.3.1 Number of new quality WBT initiatives generated by companies and stakeholders	10	0	20	0%
OTP 2.3.2.1 Number of institutions that integrate the N.E.S., incorporating WBT in their programs, projects and / or services	1	0	3	0%

Source: Youth Pathways/USDOL CMEP

Question 4: To what extent have the activities in Limón contributed to the public policies and programs the project is promoting at the national/regional level? How?

As mentioned above, YPCR has successfully signed an LOI with Limón stakeholders as well as agreements with MTSS. Different actions have been executed with their support. However, the experience in Limón is very recent; only the first phase of the model is about to finish. Thus, a complete process cycle²⁵ of the first cohort has not yet been completed. Pending aspects include on-the-job training, employment and case documentation. Also, stakeholders' coordination with YPCR in the WBT placement process has not yet been tested.

The driving premise is that the orientation, capacity building, mentoring and mediation approaches hosted by the project, in the context of a relatively small-scaled effort, can be effective in augmenting the stock of competencies, knowledge and social and personality attributes that positively impact the ability of Costa Rica's vulnerable youth to be employed and improve their well-being. Such experience, once proven, can be used as a blueprint for a new WBT Costa Rican model. Nonetheless, the model has not been tested in all its phases in Costa Rica. Table 3 shows no significant private and public sector adoption of the WBT. The attendance for the stakeholder presentation at the end of fieldwork is a good example of commitment to the program. Excluding YPCR and YBI staff or beneficiaries, 15 stakeholders were invited, seven from Limón and eight from San José. Five of the six stakeholders who attended the event came from Limón and only one came from San José. Since a trip from Limón to San José takes more than four hours one-way, stakeholders from Limón dedicated an entire day to the event. This was a clear signal of their strong allegiance to the program.

²⁵ Phases of the model: 1) Selection process and competencies development process; 2) WBT placement process; 3) Support during post - WBT hosting process; 4) Youth ready to work.

Table 3: Project Progress of Key CMEP Indicators (as of October 2018)

OTC 3: The quality of existing public and private programs that provide vulnerable and marginalized youth with necessary skills to enter workplace-based training programs is improved				
Indicator	2 Year Target	Achieved	Target LOP	% of Target Achieved
OTC 3.1 Number of public and private programs that formally adopt educational innovations	4	0	8	0%
MTO 3.1.1 Number of coordination mechanisms addressing WBT alternatives.	1	0	4	0%
MTO 3.3.1 Number of institutions providing services to youth that integrate special training regarding vulnerable youth for their staff	1	0	3	0%
OTP 3.3.1 A training program for staff of EMPLEATE, INA and/or MEP, developed and delivered to authorities. OTP 3.3.1.1 Number of staff trained.	10	0	20	0%

Source: Youth Pathways/USDOL CMEP

Without good WBT practices fully implemented, documented and systematized across all phases, it is unlikely that YPCR can influence public policy at the local or national level. In that context, the necessary conditions are not yet met. For that to happen, the Limón experience with WBT needs to be fully tested.

The delays in program implementation, presented in the report, have also impacted the project's expenditure. According to USDOL's Federal Financial Report as of September 30, 2018, after two years of implementation, only 35 percent of available funds have been used.

Question 5: How have the monitoring and evaluation systems (Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), pre-situational analysis, etc.) been implemented and are they being used to identify trends and patterns, adapt strategies, and make informed decisions?

a. How effective is the project's monitoring of direct beneficiaries (youth in Limón)?

The Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) activity has been carried out under a systematic evaluation process, keeping a detailed and well documented record of the indicators. The CMEP is being implemented with emphasis on the careful collection of information, monitoring of results, evaluation feedback and substantial participation of project staff. Data are organized following a suitable and relevant structure with an adequate verification process as well as detailed and well-documented records on indicators reported to USDOL. Data enable a useful measurement of the extent to which the objectives of the activity are achieved, including measurements of performance based on standardized templates. The documentation behind the indicators was carefully analyzed and the data have been found to be consistent and methodologically valid. Overall, the methodological approach for data production and analysis is sound and appropriate to the project's requirements.

Indicators of the CMEP under Outcomes 1 and 3 showed little progress in activities that seek policy development and/or innovation/social mobilization at the national level. The project used that information and other insights, such as political viability, to propose a reframing and rescaling of project strategy,

conceiving two courses of action: postponing key activities planned for 2018 to the second half of the project's term (2019-2020) and intensifying YPCR's outreach in Limón.

The M&E Plan for Limón beneficiaries is very advanced, and it is expected to be completed by the beginning of 2019. Such information will be used, for example, to document and systematize project experience. At this stage, the efforts are aimed at completing the beneficiary system of electronic files. Since work-based training takes place in the participating firms, monitoring of results will also demand partners' commitment to provide feedback, for example on how youth are performing and how obstacles are overcome.

In addition, the project keeps detailed information on all training events, including the names of beneficiaries, place of the event, type of training, photographs, videos and related publications. All will be very helpful for the communication/outreach campaigns.

Sustainability

Question 6: How is the project promoting sustainability of its key activities?

- a. Are there opportunities to leverage public or private resources to provide sustainability to the youth training systems the project is promoting?
- b. Are there agreements in place, or in process, with various stakeholders which can ensure sustainability?
- c. What efforts are being made to maximize the impact and sustainability from the pilot experience in Limón?

Are there opportunities to leverage public or private resources to provide sustainability to the youth training systems the project is promoting?

According to FENTRAG, they have financial resources to outsource needed training for its members and families. YPCR has determined that there are opportunities to leverage resources in the future from FENTRAG to support the project's training processes. A technical cooperation agreement between YPCR and the MTSS has a clause (third clause) that supports developing training projects aimed at improving vulnerable youth's readiness to work.

Are there agreements in place, or in process, with various stakeholders which can ensure sustainability?

YPCR is in conversations with FENTRAG to incorporate youth that are undergoing training in FENTRAG's program into YPCR's new cohort. The project is also seeking an agreement with FENTRAG to assist them in adopting and adapting the YPCR training model to the FENTRAG training program. The latter is aimed at employees of transnational companies and their families living in the province of Limón. YPCR believes that training could be carried out with their support, and that the program's third cohort concludes its training, that a knowledge transfer activity could be implemented to enable sustainability of the WBT model.

What efforts are being made to maximize the impact and sustainability from the pilot experience in Limón?

The latest TPR (April-September 2018) proposes reframing and rescaling the project strategy by intensifying YPCR's presence, partnering, and outreach in Limón. This change will bring more opportunities to fully develop the WBT model, enhance the communication and outreach campaigns, and promote the project's sustainability. During the evaluation fieldwork, however, that change in emphasis was not yet evident.

To amplify the pilot's experience in Limón and maximize its impact and sustainability would require hiring additional staff to monitor progress of beneficiaries in all WBT phases, and tutor and mentor during the post-WBT hosting process. To do so, it is imperative that more financial and human resources are allocated to Limón.

Constraints and obstacles will also be encountered during implementation. They would require immediate response and a thorough understanding of the pilot's dynamics. Presently, the pilot's operational and administrative decisions are made in San José. As implementation continues with a broader set of activities in Limón, an expert in Limón with proven experience in leading workforce development projects as well as comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the YPCR project and nuances of the pilot's activities, would facilitate achievement of the pilot's targets and results.

Question 7: What specific actions should USDOL, YBI, and other project stakeholders take to promote the sustainability of the project?

Activities in San José are crucial especially for long-term goals, hence, it will be difficult for YPCR to get new stakeholders to buy into the WBT alternative without showing robust results. Limón's pilot activity is an opportunity to prove that the WBT model works in Costa Rica. However, delays in implementation require allocating more resources to the pilot intervention to focus efforts of the three project components in Limón province. YPCR has already made progress in establishing relationships with enterprises in Siquirres and a private sector stakeholder from Siquirres has said new investment is coming into the area. It would make sense, then, to extend YPCR activities to Siquirres, should budgetary conditions allow it.

To implement these actions to promote sustainability, the project will need more time. As of September 2018, YPCR had only expended one-third of its funds, so the Project has available funds and needs to request a one-year no cost extension now.

In addition, several private sector stakeholders have mentioned that the WBT model does not include specific training beneficiaries would need to fill a position. INA is present in all of Costa Rica's seven regions, including Limón. If INA buys into the program, it could finance additional training needed to support WBT placement or the hosting process. Thus, it is crucial that the program builds an alliance with INA.

Conclusions

Relevance

Several stakeholders, including the MTSS and a stakeholder from an international organization, affirmed that there are many models in Costa Rica that aim to insert young people into the labor market, and some are inclusive of vulnerable youth. However, interviewed stakeholders from the private sector, as well as several studies, such as the "Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Sostenible" for 2018,²⁶ concur that they have not been very successful. Most of the evaluation findings support the relevance of the project's development hypothesis regarding the need to develop the country's capacity to provide quality training alternatives, especially for vulnerable youth.

²⁶ Programa Estado de la Nación, "Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible," 2018. <https://www.estadonacion.or.cr/2018/assets/en2018.pdf>

Effectiveness

The recent change in the executive branch of the GOCR and turnover in key positions have contributed to delays in the implementation of project activities, especially in San José. However, delays in the implementation of the pilot in Limón appear not to be related to this turnover; instead, they are associated with YPCR's procedures. In Limón, the project's procedures have led to delays in contracting personnel for the pilot's implementation, for example, to support building alliances with companies that could participate in the WBT placement process. Basing decision-making in San José has also led to delays in Limón. In addition, existing levels of human and financial resources assigned to the implementation of the pilot are insufficient to amplify the pilot's experience and maximize the development of the WBT model.

Sustainability

The project aims to expand Costa Rica's institutional capacity to integrate WBT into its policies and programs to insert young, vulnerable people into the labor market. To succeed, the project can strengthen its collaboration with FENTRAG and build its alliance with INA. However, the project also needs to show results of the WBT model and reinforce the recognition of a model based on social co-responsibility inclusive of vulnerable youth to increase the likelihood for sustainability of the pilot experience. This cannot be done until all four phases of the model have been tested and verified, and youth beneficiaries have developed competencies and relations to compete in the labor market and are ready to work.²⁷

When YPCR develops the methodology for the transfer of knowledge at the local level and systematizes its model, it can then be presented to decision-makers. It is only then that the results can indicate whether or not the model will be replicated in Costa Rica.

Lessons Learned and Promising Practices

Legal and regulatory framework reforms are usually a protracted process lasting several political cycles. According to several stakeholders interviewed, the Bill of Law for the Regulation of Dual Mode Vocational-Technical Education in Costa Rica has been under discussion for more than ten years. A four-year project needs to be designed and implemented under existing laws and regulations.

The dialogue process and the building of trust between stakeholders and decision-makers to support and implement WBT, a new concept in Costa Rica, is a slow process. It will probably require more than four years, the life of the Project, to consolidate these alliances.

In Limón and San José, there have been complications which are inherent to the nature of establishing alliances and a functional link between YPCR and its partners. For example, according to business and labor union stakeholders, establishing alliances between the private sector and labor to facilitate the WBT placement of vulnerable youth is a new experience in Costa Rica and has not been an easy task. Union members believe businesses are only looking out for their own interests, while businesses state that worker demands for higher wages and other benefits might make their business less competitive. The two parties usually see each other as adversaries, not partners. It is a protracted dialogue and there is resistance on both sides.

²⁷ The WBT model contemplates four possible outcomes for youth: employment, self-employment, continuing education, and social action (e.g., referred by the firm, where youth are undergoing/have finished training in the workplace but there are no openings, to another firm for employment).

Changes to a more inclusive model of youth insertion into the labor market also requires results and evidence that the WBT model is successful in incorporating vulnerable youth into employment.

Recommendations

- 1. YPCR should continue its activities in San José but focus efforts of the three project components in Limón province.** Several stakeholders believe job creation in Puerto Limón, where YPCR has its office and is developing the pilot, is not very promising in the short-run due to the opening of a new port facility. YPCR could expand the intervention to other counties in the province of Limón to ensure WBT placement. YPCR has already established relationships with enterprises in Siquirres and, according to a private sector stakeholder in Siquirres, new investment is coming into this area. It would make sense, then, to extend YPCR activities to Siquirres, should budgetary conditions allow it.²⁸
- 2. To expedite implementation in Limón, YPCR should assign a more experienced person to lead the actions there and decentralize decision-making to the pilot area.** Local staff in Limón are very enthusiastic and committed to their work. Moreover, beneficiaries are very happy with the training and results. However, the staff members are young and need more experience. Leading the pilot program requires comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the YPCR project and proven experience in leading workforce development projects. While local staff is supported by more experienced staff based in San José and international YBI staff, the project would benefit from a qualified person with streamlined decision-making power to lead the efforts in Limón.
- 3. To amplify the pilot's experience and maximize impact and sustainability, YPCR should allocate more financial and human resources to Limón.** This would require hiring additional personnel to monitor progress of beneficiaries in the WBT phases and tutor and mentor the post-WBT hosting process.
- 4. YPCR should induce more active participation from the Limon mayor, INA and MTSS at the local level.** Thus far, discussions about the program have been carried out with these stakeholders, but they do not participate in the implementation of YPCR. They are important stakeholders to support WBT implementation efforts and sustainability of the model.
- 5. To allow the project enough time to implement all the phases and cohorts required to test the pilot approach and its effectiveness, USDOL should extend the project's period of performance with a one-year no cost extension.** To implement the evaluation recommendations and promote sustainability, YPCR will need more time. As of September 2018, YPCR had expended one-third of the funds available for the project. They have sufficient available funding for a one-year no cost extension.
- 6. YPCR should create organizational tools, such as minutes from meetings, to follow-up on agreements with partners.** Thorough documentation is important because it tracks all important outtakes and resolutions reached, which can be reviewed afterwards by any stakeholder and be used, for example, as an agenda to follow-up in the next meeting.
- 7. YPCR should invest further in knowledge management and dissemination.** The Project has accrued and will continue to acquire a wealth of unstructured knowledge on the different topics and populations addressed through its interventions. Because WBT has the potential to serve as a model

²⁸ A private sector stakeholder interviewed in Siquirres mentioned that they are expanding operations and will hire more people, and that several other businesses are also increasing investment in the area.

for other provinces in Costa Rica, as well as in other countries in the region, it is crucial for YPCR to further systematize project experiences across all phases of the model.²⁹

- 8. Future projects funded by USDOL to support vulnerable youth's readiness to work must also offer child care to level the playing field for young mothers interested in participating in the program.**

²⁹ YPCR is already gathering and systematizing the evidence of the first phase; to develop a blueprint for replication all phases of the model need to be systematized.

Annex A: Evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR)

Background and Justification

The Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) is an office within the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB), an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). ILAB's mission is to promote a fair global playing field for workers in the United States and around the world by enforcing trade commitments, strengthening labor standards, and combating international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.

OCFT works to combat child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking around the world through international research, policy engagement, technical cooperation, and awareness-raising. Since OCFT's technical cooperation program began in 1995, the U.S. Congress has appropriated over \$900 million to USDOL for efforts to combat exploitive child labor internationally. This funding has been used to support technical cooperation projects in more than 90 countries around the world. Technical cooperation projects funded by USDOL support sustained efforts that address the underlying causes of child labor and forced labor, including poverty and lack of access to education.

Project Context and Information

The national unemployment rate in Costa Rica is 9.6 percent,³⁰ while youth unemployment is almost twice the national average (16.6 percent). Unemployment disproportionately impacts women as evidenced by a 12 percent unemployment rate for women, compared to 8 percent for men.³¹ Further exacerbating unemployment concerns in the country are the growing number of young people who neither study nor work (NiNis, in Spanish).³² In Costa Rica, there are 147,959 NiNis between the ages of 15 and 24 (17 percent of the total youth population),³³ with large clusters of NiNis located in rural areas and marginalized urban communities. Female NiNis represent two-thirds of this group, with early marriage and teenage pregnancy being two of the main contributing factors to their situation. About 40 percent of Costa Rican NiNis face a scarcity of resources, and limited access to quality jobs, which contributes to the generational cycle of poverty and exclusion.

Furthermore, Costa Rican youth access to effective workplace-based training programs (WBTs) is impeded by the practical and operational limitations of national institutions overseeing technical education programs. For instance, youth may enroll in current no-cost apprenticeship programs directed by the National Training Institute (INA, for its initials in Spanish),³⁴ but these types of initiatives³⁵ are not adequately preparing students for the workforce.³⁶ Existing services fail to connect market demands with youth labor, which is reflected in higher rates of inequality, especially among young women.

Unemployed youth without qualifications turn to the informal sector for livelihoods, where they find fewer protections and work under harmful and exploitative conditions. In Costa Rica, 30 percent of employed

³⁰ Data provided by Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC), 2016:

³¹ Programa Estado de la Nación, "Vigésimo primer Informe Estado de la Nación," 2015, 75.

³² Rafael de Hoyos, Halsey Rogers and Miguel Székely, "Out of School and Out of Work: Risk and Opportunities for Latin America's NiNis," World Bank Group, 2016, 1.

³³ La Nación, "150.000 jóvenes ni estudian ni trabajan en Costa Rica," April 26, 2016:

http://www.nacion.com/nacional/educacion/Numero-jovenes-nini-pais-baja_0_1556444369.html

³⁴ Contraloría General de la República, "Informe de Auditoría del Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje," November 3, 2017: https://cgrfiles.cgr.go.cr/publico/jaguar/Documentos/informes_rec/DFOE-EC-IF-19-2017.pdf

³⁵ Diario Extra, "Oferta formativa del INA no genera empleos," September 27, 2017:

<http://www.diarioextra.com/Noticia/detalle/343368/oferta-formativa-del-ina-no-genera-empleos>

³⁶ AM Prensa.Com, "Carlos Alvarado reducirá el desempleo con una mejor gestión del INA," December 17, 2017:

<https://amprensa.com/2017/12/carlos-alvarado-reducira-desempleo-una-mejor-gestion-del-ina/>

youth are part of the informal sector. Also, 87 percent of working minors are below the legal age established to enter the labor market. These circumstances often lead them to the informal sector of the economy, where they often suffer from dangerous conditions and exploitation. Consequently, young people are exposed to increasing conditions of vulnerability, and in the case of young women, these conditions are intensified, raising the risk of sexual exploitation and exposure to dangerous work.

Analysts in the public and private sector agree that several factors have contributed to the difficulty of accessing quality employment for those seeking to enter the workforce, such as insufficient education, low-level qualifications, lack of experience and a gap between the trainings offered, and the skill sets needed by the private sector in the rapidly changing Costa Rican labor market.

Project Background Information

In September 2016, YouthBuild International (YBI) was awarded a four-year \$3 million USD Cooperative Agreement grant from the OCFT within the USDOL to implement the Youth Pathways to Leadership, Learning, and Livelihoods (“Youth Pathways Costa Rica”) project in Costa Rica. Youth Pathways Costa Rica aims to improve the country-capacity to implement quality WBT alternatives addressing vulnerable youth excluded from the labor market.

YBI and its sub-grantee, Paniamor Foundation, work closely with pertinent Government of Costa Rica (GOCR) ministries, especially the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) and Ministry of Labor and Social Services (MTSS), and national institutions such as the INA. A broad range of nongovernmental stakeholders include employers, business associations, local and international organizations, and local youth organizations.

The activities proposed to achieve the Project’s purpose, long term outcomes and expected results have been organized around three components, as follows:

- **Component A:** Alignment and promotion of public policies and legislation (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome A);
- **Component B:** Commitment of Private sector and workers' organizations to quality WBT alternatives (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome B);
- **Component C:** Institutional coordination for existing training programs for youth (in correspondence with Long Term Outcome C).

While most activities are implemented out of San José, a demonstrative initiative is being implemented in Limón as part of Component B. This is a small intervention meant to be a pilot in achieving WBT opportunities for at-risk youth aged 15 to 21.

The Project’s results framework is provided below:

Project Goal: To improve the country-capacity to implement quality WBT alternatives addressing vulnerable youth excluded from the labor market
OTC 1 Laws and/or policies supporting quality WBT initiatives for vulnerable youth are developed and/or implemented by key stakeholders.
MTO 1.1 Key stakeholders advised by the project, formally agree on public policy proposals enhancing the implementation of quality WBT alternatives for vulnerable youth.
OTP 1.1.1 A quality WBT related communication strategy is designed and launched.
MTO 1.2 Key legislative commissions incorporate quality WBT related evidence-based information provided by the project.
OTP 1.2.1 Leaders and authorities with mandates related to youth employment policies and or programs, educated on WBT value.
OTC 2: Employers, workers’ organizations and other stakeholders implemented good practices related to quality WBT for youth, including vulnerable and marginalized youth.

MTO 2.1 Attitudes about WBT for vulnerable youth amongst key stakeholders and society have been improved.
OTP 2.1.1 Key stakeholders adopt knowledge and attitudes on the implementation of WBT.
OTP 2.1.2 Vulnerable youth and their families informed about quality WBT opportunities.
MTO 2.2: Knowledge about good practices related to WBT for youth, including vulnerable and marginalized youth, is enhanced.
OTP 2.2.1 One demonstrative quality WBT initiative addressing youth, including adolescents in context of conflict with the law and young parents up to 21, carried out.
MTO 2.3 Companies and Stakeholders trained on good practices, create and/or pilot quality WBT, including vulnerable and marginalized youth.
OTP 2.3.1 Knowledge Bank of domestic and international good practices focused on WBT has been designed and developed.
OTP 2.3.2 A National Employment System capacity building strategy on design and implementation of quality WBT, delivered.
OTC 3: The quality of existing public and private programs that provide vulnerable and marginalized youth with necessary skills to enter WBTs training programs is improved.
MTO 3.1 Coordination training programs is strengthened.
OTP 3.1.1 Mapping and assessment of key contributing factors for a WBT strategy is developed.
OTP 3.1.2 A blueprint for a national WBT strategy has been created
OTP 3.1.3 Inter-institutional agreements for coordination at the local level have been defined
MTO 3.2 Relevance of skills training programs available to vulnerable and marginalized youth is improved.
OTP 3.2.1 MTSS, INA and/or MEP, and private sector partners integrate quality WBT skills as a component of their training programs.
MTO 3.3 Training of institutional staff in charge of the provision of services for vulnerable youth, has been institutionalized.
OTP 3.3.1 A training program for key staff of EMPLATE, INA and/or MEP, developed and delivered to authorities.

Purpose and Scope of Evaluation

Evaluation Purpose

The main purposes of the interim evaluation are to:

- Assess the relevance of the project in the cultural, economic, and political context in the country, as well as the validity of the project design and the extent to which it is suited to the priorities and policies of the host government and other national stakeholders;
- Determine whether the project is on track toward meeting its objectives, identifying the challenges and opportunities encountered in doing so, and analyzing the driving factors for these challenges and opportunities;
- Assess the effectiveness of the project's strategies and the project's strengths and weaknesses in project implementation and identifying areas in need of improvement;
- Provide conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations; and
- Assess the project's plans for sustainability at local and national levels and among implementing organizations and identify steps to enhance its sustainability.

The interim evaluation will provide key stakeholders with information to assess and revise, as it is needed; work plans, strategies, objectives, partnership arrangements and resources. The scope of the evaluation includes a review and assessment of all activities carried out under the USDOL Cooperative Agreement with YBI. All activities that have been implemented from project launch through the time of evaluation fieldwork will be considered.

Intended Users

The evaluation will provide OCFT, the grantee, other project stakeholders, and stakeholders working to combat child labor more broadly, an assessment of the project's experience in implementation and its effects on project beneficiaries. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will serve to inform any project adjustments that may need to be made, and to inform stakeholders in the design and implementation of subsequent phases or future child labor elimination projects as appropriate. The evaluation report will be published on the USDOL website, so the report should be written as a standalone document, providing the necessary background information for readers who are unfamiliar with the details of the project.

Evaluation Questions

Relevance

1. How relevant is the project's design and theory of change considering the present context in which it operates? Does the available qualitative and quantitative information confirm the theory of change to be valid and accurate?

Effectiveness

2. To what extent has the project made progress towards achieving its targets and results in the following areas? What are the factors driving and hindering results thus far?
 - a. Public policy advocacy
 - b. Communicational/outreach campaigns
 - c. Targeting youth engaged in or at risk of child labor in the Limón area
3. What is the level of participation of the various stakeholders (via agreements or other arrangements), their degree of commitment to project execution, and their contribution towards the project's objectives?
4. To what extent have the activities in Limón contributed to the public policies and programs the project is promoting at the national/regional level? How?
5. How have the monitoring and evaluation systems (Comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (CMEP), pre-situational analysis, etc.) been implemented and are they being used to identify trends and patterns, adapt strategies, and make informed decisions?
 - a. How effective is the project's monitoring of direct beneficiaries (youth in Limón)?

Sustainability

6. How is the project promoting sustainability of its key activities?
 - a. Are there opportunities to leverage public or private resources to provide sustainability to the youth training systems the project is promoting?
 - b. Are there agreements in place, or in process, with various stakeholders which can ensure sustainability?
 - c. What efforts are being made to maximize the impact and sustainability from the pilot experience in Limón?
7. What specific actions should USDOL, YBI, and other project stakeholders take to promote the sustainability of the project?

Evaluation Methodology and Timeframe

The evaluation methodology will consist of the following activities and approaches:

A. Approach

The evaluation approach will be qualitative and participatory in nature and use project documents including CMEP data to provide quantitative information. Qualitative information will be obtained through field visits, interviews and focus groups as appropriate. Opinions coming from beneficiaries (teachers, parents and children) will improve and clarify the use of quantitative analysis. The participatory nature of the evaluation with the involvement of USDOL and YBI during the design of the evaluation and the participation of other key stakeholders during the debriefing workshop will contribute to the sense of ownership among the stakeholders.

To the extent that it is available, quantitative data will be drawn from the CMEP and project reports and incorporated in the analysis. The evaluation approach will be independent in terms of the membership of the evaluation team. Project staff and implementing partners will generally only be present in meetings with stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries to provide introductions. The following additional principles will be applied during the evaluation process:

1. Methods of data collection and stakeholder perspectives will be triangulated for as many as possible of the evaluation questions.
2. Efforts will be made to include parents' and children's voices and beneficiary participation generally, using child-sensitive approaches to interviewing children following the ILO-IPEC guidelines on research with children on the worst forms of child labor (<http://www.ilo.org/ipeinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=3026>) and UNICEF Principles for Ethical Reporting on Children (http://www.unicef.org/media/media_tools_guidelines.html).
3. Gender and cultural sensitivity will be integrated in the evaluation approach.
4. Consultations will incorporate a degree of flexibility to maintain a sense of ownership of the stakeholders and beneficiaries, allowing additional questions to be posed that are not included in the TOR, whilst ensuring that key information requirements are met.
5. As far as possible, a consistent approach will be followed in each project site, with adjustments made for the different actors involved, activities conducted, and the progress of implementation in each locality.

B. Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will consist of:

1. The international evaluator
2. As appropriate, an interpreter fluent in necessary languages will travel with the evaluator

One member of the project staff may travel with the team to make introductions. This person is not involved in the evaluation process.

The international evaluator, with MSI, will be responsible for developing the methodology in consultation with USDOL, and the project staff; assigning the tasks of the national consultant and interpreter for the field work; directly conducting interviews and facilitating other data collection processes; analysis of the evaluation material gathered; presenting feedback on the initial findings of the evaluation to the national stakeholder meeting and preparing the evaluation report.

The responsibility of the interpreter in each provincial locality is to ensure that the evaluation team is understood by the stakeholders as far as possible, and that the information gathered is relayed accurately to the evaluator.

C. Data Collection Methodology

1. **Document Review:** The lead evaluator will review key project documents.
 - Pre-field visit preparation includes extensive review of relevant documents.

- During fieldwork, documentation will be verified, and additional documents may be collected.
- Documents may include:
 - CMEP documents
 - Baseline survey report
 - Project document and revisions,
 - Cooperative Agreement,
 - Technical Progress and Status Reports,
 - Project Results Frameworks and Monitoring Plans,
 - Work plans,
 - Correspondence related to Technical Progress Reports,
 - Management Procedures and Guidelines,
 - Research or other reports undertaken (baseline studies, etc.), and
 - Project files (including school records) as appropriate.

2. Field work

The lead evaluator will spend two weeks in Costa Rica (November 26 – December 7). Upon arrival, the lead evaluator will meet with the grantee to confirm the schedule, evaluation approach and expectations, and review the Project's activities. The evaluator will conduct key informant interviews (KIIs) in San José and travel to Limón to conduct additional KIIs and group interviews, per the agreed itinerary. Each day, the evaluator will write up notes and formulate findings from cumulative data collection efforts.

3. Interviews with stakeholders

Informational interviews will be held with as many project stakeholders as possible. The evaluation team will solicit the opinions of youth and families, workers union representatives, local authorities, private sector, and companies facilitating WBT, and local project staff in Limón, where the demonstrative pilot is taking place. In addition, the evaluation team will gather insights from representatives of national government entities, business associations, and chambers of commerce. These stakeholders will be inquired on the project's relevance, accomplishments, sustainability, and the working relationship between project staff and their partners, where appropriate. Depending on the circumstances, these meetings will be one-on-one or group interviews. It is anticipated that meetings will be held with:

- Beneficiary youth and families
- Key project staff in San José and Limón
- Government Ministry Officials and Local Government Officials who have been involved in or are knowledgeable about the project
- Private sector, workers union, academic representatives
- Companies that will facilitate WBT
- Business chamber of commerce and business associations representatives
- U.S. Embassy staff member

To maximize the efficiency of interviews with project stakeholders (e.g. defined as youth and their families, academic, governmental, civil society and private sector institutions), the selection of the visits and interviews was made using information and records provided by Paniamor. Visits and interviews will be carried out in San José and Limón. A schedule of the anticipated interviews is included in the Annex of this report.

Sampling methods were chosen to address the specific scope and nature of the activities undertaken by the Project. In those cases where activities involved large numbers of participants, the evaluation will seek to attain a balance between individual and group interviews.

Data Collection Tools and Disaggregation

The fieldwork will concentrate on collecting data and user feedback from semi-structured individual or group interviews. This more flexible approach will be helpful in addressing time and logistic constraints that would otherwise require significant adjustments to samples and locations as the field activities progress.

Overall, tools are designed to establish linkages between stakeholder responses or observed activities and the main evaluation questions. The tools that will be used for gathering and analyzing beneficiary's information includes:

1. Individual Interview Protocols: Semi-structured individual interview protocols contain questions and guidelines that solicit feedback in a one-on-one setting. These will be used primarily with public officials, trainers, community leaders and private sector.
2. Group Interview Protocols: Semi-structured group interview protocols contain questions and guidelines that solicit feedback in a group setting. These will be used with vulnerable youth and youth excluded from the formal labor market benefitting from the Project.
3. Questionnaires: In addition to interviews, a limited number of participants (youth, trainers, and curriculum developers) will be asked to complete short questionnaires. Questionnaires are intended to assist with the triangulation of feedback and provide a useful contrast to verbal responses.

The compilation of internal interview notes will provide the basis for cross-site analysis and discussion of preliminary findings. A summary presentation of these findings will be used to encourage additional feedback from stakeholders and Project staff.

4. Question Matrix

The question matrix outlines the source of data from where the evaluator collects information for each TOR question. This helps the evaluator make decisions as to how they are going to allocate their time in the field. It also helps the evaluator to ensure that they are exploring all possible avenues for data triangulation and to clearly note where their evaluation findings are coming from.

Area	Questions	Data Source(s)	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
Relevance	1. How relevant is the project's design and theory of change considering the present context in which it operates? Does the available qualitative and quantitative information confirm the theory of change to be valid and accurate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports provided by GOCCR during interviews • Project documents • Relevant GOCCR Ministries • Project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review • Key informant interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational Analysis • Content analysis of KIIs
Effectiveness	2. To what extent has the project made progress towards achieving its targets and results in the following areas? What are the factors driving and hindering results thus far? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Public policy advocacy b. Communicational/outreach campaigns c. Targeting youth engaged in or at risk of child labor in the Limón area 3. What is the level of participation of the various stakeholders (via agreements or other arrangements), their degree of commitment to project execution, and their contribution towards the project's objectives? 4. To what extent have the activities in Limón contributed to the public policies and programs the project is promoting at the national/regional level? How? 5. How have the monitoring and evaluation systems (CMEP, pre-situational analysis, etc.) been implemented and are they being used to identify trends and patterns, adapt strategies, and make informed decisions? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How effective is the project's monitoring of direct beneficiaries (youth in Limón)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Direct and indirect beneficiaries, including families and youth, local leaders, private sector, companies linked to WBT, government officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review • Key informant interviews • Group interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of KIIs and group interviews
Sustainability	6. How is the project promoting sustainability of its key activities? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are there opportunities to leverage public or private resources to provide sustainability to the youth training systems the project is promoting? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents • Project staff • Sector associations and chambers of commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review • Key informant interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of KIIs

Area	Questions	Data Source(s)	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Are there agreements in place, or in process, with various stakeholders which can ensure sustainability? c. What efforts are being made to maximize the impact and sustainability from the pilot experience in Limón? <p>7. What specific actions should USDOL, YBI, and other project stakeholders take to promote the sustainability of the project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOCR stakeholders 		

D. Ethical Considerations and Confidentiality

The evaluation mission will observe utmost confidentiality related to sensitive information and feedback elicited during the individual and group interviews. All interviews and discussions will include an informed consent form and will not proceed unless consent is given. Interviewees will remain anonymous unless clear permission is granted to the team to include qualitative information that will identify the respondent. The evaluation team will apply youth-sensitive and gender-sensitive interviewing approaches as per standard guidelines, such as the ILO- International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour and the UNICEF guidance.

To mitigate bias during the data collection process and ensure a maximum freedom of expression of the implementing partners, stakeholders, communities, and beneficiaries, implementing partner staff will generally not be present during interviews. However, implementing partner staff may accompany the evaluator to make introductions whenever necessary, to facilitate the evaluation process, make respondents feel comfortable, and to allow the evaluator to observe the interaction between the implementing partner staff and the interviewees.

E. Stakeholder Meeting

Following the field visits, a stakeholders meeting will be conducted by the evaluator that brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including the implementing partners and other interested parties. The list of participants to be invited will be drafted prior to the evaluator's visit and confirmed in consultation with project staff during fieldwork. ILAB staff may participate in the stakeholder meeting virtually.

The meeting will be used to present the major preliminary findings and emerging issues, solicit recommendations, and obtain clarification or additional information from stakeholders, including those not interviewed earlier. The agenda of the meeting will be determined by the evaluator in consultation with project staff. Some specific questions for stakeholders may be prepared to guide the discussion and possibly a brief written feedback form.

The agenda is expected to include some of the following items:

1. Presentation by the evaluator of the preliminary main findings
2. Feedback and questions from stakeholders on the findings
3. Opportunity for implementing partners not met to present their views on progress and challenges in their locality
4. If appropriate, Possible Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise on the project's performance
5. Discussion of recommendations to improve the implementation and ensure sustainability. Consideration will be given to the value of distributing a feedback form for participants to nominate their "action priorities" for the remainder of the project.

A debrief call will be held with the evaluator and USDOL after the stakeholder workshop to provide USDOL with preliminary findings and solicit feedback as needed.

F. Limitations

The selection of interviews and beneficiaries constitutes a purposive sample. A purposive sample, also referred to as a judgmental or expert sample, is a type of non-probability sample that is selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of the study. This sampling approach enables the evaluation to apply the project's learning curve to select a sample that could best reflect the key issues of the evaluation. It is also an approach commensurate with the time, resource and source availability constraints present in this evaluation process. Hence, not all beneficiaries have an equal probability of being included in this sample. Nonetheless, all efforts will be made to ensure that the evaluator is visiting a representative

sample of sites and beneficiaries, including some that have performed well and some that have experienced challenges.

Interviewees were selected to cover the broadest possible range in terms of age, gender and activity focus, as well as applicable demographics, geographic distribution and special interests. However, formal stratification or clustering was not feasible within the evaluation timeframe.

This is not a formal impact assessment. Findings for the evaluation will be based on information collected from background documents and in interviews with stakeholders, project staff, and beneficiaries. The accuracy of the evaluation findings will be determined by the integrity of information provided to the evaluator from these sources. Furthermore, the ability of the evaluator to determine efficiency will be limited by the amount of financial data available. A cost-efficiency analysis is not included because it would require impact data which is not available.

G. Timetable

The timeframe for implementation of this interim evaluation is based on a start date of October 15, 2018 and fieldwork projected for November 26 – December 7, 2018.

Activity	Week	Oct 15	Oct 22	Oct 29	Nov 5	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26	Dec 3	Dec 10	Dec 17	Dec 24	Dec 31	Jan 7	Jan 14	Jan 21	Jan 28	Feb 4	Feb 11
Evaluation Launch		X																	
Document review and fieldwork planning		X	X	X	X	X	X												
TOR drafting and finalization				X	X	X	X												
Fieldwork and out-brief debrief								X	X										
Stakeholder Workshop									X										
ILAB Debrief											X								
Analysis and draft report writing										X	X	X	X						
ILAB review of draft report														X	X	X			
Revisions to draft report															X		X	X	
Final evaluation report																			X

The tentative timetable is as follows. Actual dates may be adjusted as needs arise.

Task	Date
Evaluation launch call	October 17
Background project documents sent to MSI	October 12
Evaluation Questions finalized	October 31
Logistics call-Discuss logistics and field itinerary	November 5
Draft TOR sent to OCFT	November 9
Identify a list of stakeholders	November 8
Finalize field itinerary and stakeholder list for workshop	November 8
Finalize TOR with USDOL and submit to Grantee	November 20
Fieldwork	Nov 26 – Dec 7
Post-fieldwork debrief call	December 17
Draft report to USDOL & Grantee for 48-hour review	January 9
USDOL and Grantee Comments due to MSI	January 11
Revised report to USDOL, Grantee, and stakeholders for 2-week review	January 16
USDOL, Grantee, and stakeholder comments due to MSI after full 2-week review	January 30
Final report to USDOL	February 13
Final approval of report	February 27

Expected Outputs/Deliverables

Ten working days following the evaluator's return from fieldwork, a first draft evaluation report will be submitted to the Contractor. The report should have the following structure and content:

- I. Table of Contents
- II. List of Acronyms
- III. Executive Summary (providing an overview of the evaluation, summary of main findings/lessons learned/good practices, and key recommendations, not to exceed 5 pages)
- IV. Evaluation Objectives and Methodology
- V. Project Context and Description
- VI. Evaluation Questions
 - A. Answers to each of the evaluation questions, with supporting evidence included
- VII. Findings, Recommendations and Conclusions
 - A. Findings – the facts, with supporting evidence
 - B. Conclusions – interpretation of the facts, including criteria for judgments
 - C. Key Recommendations - critical for successfully meeting project objectives – judgments on what changes need to be made for future programming; Only a few actionable recommendations requested

D. Lessons Learned and Best/Promising Practices

- VIII. Annexes - including list of documents reviewed; interviews/meetings/site visits; stakeholder workshop agenda and participants; TOR; etc.

The total length of the report should be approximately 30 pages for the main report, excluding the executive summary and annexes.

The first draft of the report will be circulated to OCFT and key stakeholders individually for their review. Comments from stakeholders will be consolidated and incorporated into the final reports as appropriate, and the evaluator will provide a response to OCFT, in the form of a comment matrix, as to why any comments might not have been incorporated.

While the substantive content of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the report shall be determined by the evaluator, the report is subject to final approval by ILAB/OCFT in terms of whether the report meets the conditions of the TOR.

Evaluation Management and Support

The lead evaluator with support from the MSI team will organize logistics calls with ILAB COR and project manager(s), and Grantee to discuss the evaluation purpose, proposed data collection timeline, and roles and responsibilities. During the initial stages, the lead evaluator will work with ILAB and other team members to develop the TOR, the work plan and data collection instruments. The team will also coordinate with the Grantee to develop the list of stakeholders and interview schedule.

MSI will support the evaluator in the field, as well as with the development and review of all technical products. MSI will finalize and submit all required travel documents and estimated costs for evaluation, including for the lead evaluator, to ILAB no later than two weeks prior to the desired departure date (schedule permitting). This will help ensure that country clearance from the DOS is obtained in a timely fashion.

Consent Forms

Informed Consent Form for the Evaluation of Youth Pathways Costa Rica Project

General Information

Good morning (or afternoon), my name is Francisco Molina and I work for MSI, a company that has its headquarters in Washington D.C. We are in Costa Rica, evaluating the Youth Pathways to Leadership, Learning, and Livelihoods Project in Costa Rica, which is being implemented by YouthBuild International and Paniamor Foundation, with the support of the U.S. Department of Labor. The program is designed to help vulnerable girls / boys and youth in Costa Rica to stay in the educational system and train them to find, maintain or improve their employment. This evaluation of the project is being carried out to provide inputs to support the development and implementation of the project.

I will ask you a series of questions on topics related to the Project. Through the interview we are interested in hearing your opinion and experience of your involvement in the project to help us learn, evaluate and improve the project. At the end of the interview, you will have the opportunity to share anything you consider relevant to the topic that was not discussed in the interview or ask questions. The interview should take between 45 minutes to one hour. You have been selected to provide your opinion because you have been involved in the activities of the project, however participation is voluntary. All the information you provide is strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of the evaluation team. We are not going to report any of your answers individually. If you have any additional questions/concerns after the interview, please contact Irene Velez at ivelez@msi-inc.com.

FOR YOUTH - We have discussed and received agreement from your parent(s)/guardian for you to be interviewed for this study. However, your participation is voluntary, and you can decide not to be interviewed, even if your parents have agreed. You may discuss anything in this form with your parents or anyone else you feel comfortable talking to before you decide to be interviewed.

Certificate of Consent

I understand this interview is part of the evaluation for Youth Pathways Costa Rica and that participation in this interview is voluntary. I also understand that all my personal information will be kept confidential and I can stop the interview at any time or skip any questions I am asked. I agree that all my questions and concerns have been answered or addressed by the researcher and I would like to participate in the interview.

I also agree to recording this interview to ensure that my answers are copied correctly. I understand that the recording will not be shared with anyone outside the evaluation team and will be deleted immediately after analysis of the data is completed.

I have read this information (or had the information read to me) and I agree to take part in the evaluation. *(If you do not consent to the interview and do not wish to participate, you do not need to sign the consent form).*

Print name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

Consentimiento Informado para la Evaluación del Programa Trayectorias Juveniles en Costa Rica

Información General

Buenos días (o tarde), mi nombre es Francisco Molina y trabajo para MSI, una empresa que tiene su sede en Washington D.C. Estamos en Costa Rica, evaluando el Programa Trayectorias Juveniles, que está siendo ejecutado por YouthBuild International y la Fundación Paniamor, con el apoyo del Departamento de Trabajo de los Estados Unidos. El programa está diseñado para ayudar a niñas/niños y jóvenes vulnerables de Costa Rica a mantenerse en el sistema educativo y capacitarlos a encontrar, mantener o mejorar su empleo. Esta evaluación del proyecto se está realizando con el fin de proporcionar insumos para apoyar el desarrollo e implementación del proyecto.

Le haré una serie de preguntas sobre temas relacionados con el Proyecto. A través de la entrevista, nos interesa conocer su opinión y experiencia participando en el proyecto para ayudarnos a aprender, evaluar y mejorar el proyecto. Al final de la entrevista, tendrá la oportunidad de compartir cualquier cosa que considere relevante para el tema que no se trató en la entrevista o hacer preguntas. La entrevista debería de tomar entre 45 minutos a una hora. Ha sido seleccionado para dar su opinión porque ha participado en las actividades del proyecto, sin embargo, su participación es voluntaria. Toda la información que nos proporcione es estrictamente confidencial y no se compartirá con nadie fuera del equipo de la evaluación. No vamos a reportar ninguna de sus respuestas individualmente. Si tiene preguntas o inquietudes adicionales después de la entrevista, por favor comunicarse con Irene Velez (ivelez@msi-inc.com).

PARA LOS JÓVENES: Hemos recibido el acuerdo de sus padres / tutores para entrevistarle para esta evaluación. Sin embargo, su participación es voluntaria y usted puede decidir no ser entrevistado, incluso si sus padres han aceptado la entrevista. Puede discutir cualquier cosa en este formulario con sus padres o cualquier otra persona con quien se sienta cómodo hablando antes de decidir ser entrevistado.

Certificado de Consentimiento

Entiendo que esta entrevista es parte de la evaluación para el Programa Trayectorias Juveniles y que la participación en esta entrevista es voluntaria. También entiendo que toda mi información personal se mantendrá confidencial y que puedo detener la entrevista en cualquier momento u omitir cualquier pregunta que no quiera responder. Confirmando que todas mis preguntas e inquietudes han sido respondidas por el investigador y me gustaría participar en la entrevista.

También permito la grabación de esta entrevista para facilitar que mis respuestas se copien correctamente. Entiendo que la grabación no se compartirá con nadie fuera del equipo de evaluación y que se borrará inmediatamente después de que se complete el análisis de los datos.

He leído esta información (o me han leído la información) y acepto participar en la evaluación. (Si no acepta la entrevista y no desea participar, no necesita firmar el formulario de consentimiento).

Nombre _____ **Firma** _____

Fecha _____

Data Collection Instruments

Interview Guide - Ministry of Labor

1. In your words, what has been your role in relation to Youth Pathways CR? In what years did you play that role?
2. How would you describe the process of implementing Youth Pathways CR? Specially related to WBT?
 - a. What factors helped this?
 - b. What factors hindered it?
 - c. Are any of those factors unique to Costa Rica?
3. What does the program offer related to WBT? What differentiates it from the existing options of workforce development?
4. What do you see as the major achievements or successes of Youth Pathways?
 - a. What factors assisted or made those achievements possible?
 - b. What factors impeded those achievements?
5. What have been the major bottlenecks/challenges/problems for Youth Pathways CR?
 - a. What factors contributed to those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
 - b. What factors alleviated or countered those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
6. Does the prevalent legal/regulatory framework hinder the implementation of quality WBT alternatives?
7. Based on your experience, which interventions and/or approaches of Youth Pathways CR have been more effective when it comes to promoting WBT? Why?
8. Which of these interventions and approaches mentioned above are more likely to sustain without additional support? Why?
9. What, if any, measures are you taking or anticipating to ensure sustainability?
10. If Youth Pathways CR could be redesigned and/or re-implemented, what changes would you recommend the project undertake (if any) during the final two years of implementation? Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make for the project strategy?
11. Would you like to add anything?

Interview Guide - Head Office of Care and Eradication of Child Labor and Protection of Adolescent Work (OATIA) of the Ministry of Labor

1. In your words, what has been your role in relation to Youth Pathways CR? In what years did you play that role?
2. How would you describe the process of implementing Youth Pathways CR? Specially related to strengthening OATIA's mandate?
 - a. What factors helped this?
 - b. What factors hindered it?
 - c. Are any of those factors unique to Costa Rica?
3. What does the program offer related to prevention and response to child labor and protection of adolescent workers? What differentiates it from the existing options?
4. What do you see as the major achievements or successes of Youth Pathways?
 - a. What factors assisted or made those achievements possible?
 - b. What factors impeded those achievements?
5. What have been the major bottlenecks/challenges/problems for Youth Pathways CR?
 - a. What factors contributed to those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
 - b. What factors alleviated or countered those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
6. Based on your experience, which interventions and/or approaches of Youth Pathways CR have been more effective when it comes to promoting eradication of child labor and protection of the adolescent workers? Why?
7. What other types of technical or financial assistance do you anticipate needing in the future to further develop the program?
8. Which of these interventions and approaches mentioned above are more likely to sustain without additional support? Why?
9. What, if any, measures are you taking or anticipating to ensure sustainability?

10. If Youth Pathways CR could be redesigned and/or re-implemented, what changes would you recommend the project undertake (if any) during the final two years of implementation? Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make for the project strategy?
11. Would you like to add anything?

Interview Guide - Private sector/WBT in San José

1. Briefly what is Costa Rica macroeconomic outlook?
2. What is the general labor market like? Unemployment (general; among youth 15-21)?
3. In your words, what has been your role in relation to Youth Pathways CR? In what years did you play that role?
4. How would you describe the process of implementing Youth Pathways CR? Specially related to WBT?
 - a. What factors helped this?
 - b. What factors hindered it?
 - c. Are any of those factors unique to Costa Rica?
5. What does the program offer related to WBT? What differentiates it from the existing options of workforce development?
6. What do you see as the major achievements or successes of Youth Pathways?
 - a. What factors assisted or made those achievements possible?
 - b. What factors impeded those achievements?
7. What have been the major bottlenecks/challenges/problems for Youth Pathways CR?
 - a. What factors contributed to those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
 - b. What factors alleviated or countered those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
8. Does the prevalent legal/regulatory framework hinder the implementation of quality WBT alternatives?
9. Based on your experience, which interventions and/or approaches of Youth Pathways CR have been more effective when it comes to promoting WBT? Why?
10. Which of these interventions and approaches mentioned above are more likely to sustain after the program ends? Why?
11. If Youth Pathways CR could be redesigned and/or re-implemented, what changes would you recommend the project undertake (if any) during the final two years of implementation? Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make for the project strategy?
12. Would you like to add anything?

Interview Guide - Ministry of Education and National Institute of Learning

1. In your words, what has been your role in relation to Youth Pathways CR? In what years did you play that role?
2. How would you describe the process of implementing Youth Pathways CR? Specially related to WBT?
 - a. What factors helped this?
 - b. What factors hindered it?
 - c. Are any of those factors unique to Costa Rica?
3. What does the program offer related to WBT? What differentiates it from the existing options of workforce development?
4. What do you see as the major achievements or successes of Youth Pathways?
 - a. What factors assisted or made those achievements possible?
 - b. What factors impeded those achievements?
5. What have been the major bottlenecks/challenges/problems for Youth Pathways CR?
 - a. What factors contributed to those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
 - b. What factors alleviated or countered those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
6. Does the prevalent legal/regulatory framework hinder the implementation of quality WBT alternatives?
7. Based on your experience, which interventions and/or approaches of Youth Pathways CR have been more effective when it comes to promoting WBT? Why?
8. Which of these interventions and approaches mentioned above are more likely to sustain when the program ends? Why?
9. What, if any, measures are you taking or anticipating to ensure sustainability?

10. If Youth Pathways CR could be redesigned and/or re-implemented, what changes would you recommend the project undertake (if any) during the final two years of implementation? Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make for the project strategy?
11. Would you like to add anything?

Interview Guide - Limón Municipality

1. In your words, what has been your role in relation to Youth Pathways CR? In what years did you play that role?
2. How would you describe the process of implementing Youth Pathways CR? Specially related to addressing the needs of vulnerable youth?
 - a. What factors helped this?
 - b. What factors hindered it?
 - c. Are any of those factors unique to Costa Rica?
3. What does the program offer related to WBT? What differentiates it from the existing options of workforce development?
4. What do you see as the major achievements or successes of Youth Pathways?
 - a. What factors assisted or made those achievements possible?
 - b. What factors impeded those achievements?
5. What have been the major bottlenecks/challenges/problems for Youth Pathways CR?
 - a. What factors contributed to those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
 - b. What factors alleviated or countered those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
6. Based on your experience, which interventions and/or approaches of Youth Pathways CR have been more effective when it comes to promoting WBT? Why?
7. Which of these interventions and approaches mentioned above are more likely to sustain once the program ends? Why?
8. What, if any, measures are you taking or anticipating to ensure sustainability?
9. If Youth Pathways CR could be redesigned and/or re-implemented, what changes would you recommend the project undertake (if any) during the final two years of implementation? Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make for the project strategy?
10. What recommendation would you make to other (national, local) organizations concerning building capacity in the area of work force development for vulnerable youth?
11. What lessons have been learned about building capacity with local organizations in the area of work force development for vulnerable youth?
12. Would you like to add anything?

Interview Guide - CUNLIMON

1. In your words, what has been your role in relation to Youth Pathways CR? In what years did you play that role?
2. How would you describe the process of implementing Youth Pathways CR? Specially related to addressing the needs of vulnerable youth?
 - a. What factors helped this?
 - b. What factors hindered it?
 - c. Are any of those factors unique to Costa Rica?
3. What does the program offer related to WBT? What differentiates it from the existing options of workforce development?
4. What do you see as the major achievements or successes of Youth Pathways?
 - a. What factors assisted or made those achievements possible?
 - b. What factors impeded those achievements?
5. What have been the major bottlenecks/challenges/problems for Youth Pathways CR?
 - a. What factors contributed to those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
 - b. What factors alleviated or countered those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
6. What difference has the project made in terms of facilitating CUNLIMON alliances with other academic institutions?
7. Does the prevalent legal/regulatory framework hinder the implementation of quality WBT alternatives?

8. Based on your experience, which interventions and/or approaches of Youth Pathways CR have been more effective when it comes to promoting WBT? Why?
9. Which of these interventions and approaches mentioned above are more likely to sustain after the program ends? Why?
10. What, if any, measures are you taking or anticipating to ensure sustainability?
11. If Youth Pathways CR could be redesigned and/or re-implemented, what changes would you recommend the project undertake (if any) during the final two years of implementation? Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make for the project strategy?
12. What recommendation would you make to other (national, local) organizations concerning building capacity in the area of work force development for vulnerable youth?
13. What lessons have been learned about building capacity with local organizations in the area of work force development for vulnerable youth?
14. Would you like to add anything?

Interview Guide - Private sector in Limón

1. Please describe the surrounding community
2. What is the general labor market like? Unemployment (general; among youth 15 to 21)?
3. Describe your relationship with program (Paniamor, other intermediary) staff and management?
4. What were your major goals in working with the program?
5. How effective has the relationship with the program been in allowing you to advance those goals?
6. What were the factors that influence achievement or non-achievement of your goals for working with the program?
7. How would you describe the process of implementing Youth Pathways CR? Specially related to WBT?
 - a. What factors helped this?
 - b. What factors hindered it?
 - c. Are any of those factors unique to Limón?
8. What does the program offer related to WBT, what differentiates it from the existing options of workforce development?
9. What do you see as the major achievements or successes of Youth Pathways?
 - a. What factors assisted or made those achievements possible?
 - b. What factors impeded those achievements?
10. What have been the major bottlenecks/challenges/problems for Youth Pathways CR?
 - a. What factors contributed to those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
 - b. What factors alleviated or countered those bottlenecks/challenges/problems?
11. Does the prevalent legal/regulatory framework hinder the implementation of quality WBT alternatives?
12. Based on your experience, which interventions and/or approaches of Youth Pathways CR have been more effective when it comes to promoting WBT? Why?
13. Which of these interventions and approaches mentioned above are more likely to sustain without additional support? Why?
14. If Youth Pathways CR could be redesigned and/or re-implemented, what changes would you recommend the project undertake (if any) during the final two years of implementation? Knowing what you know now, what changes would you make for the project strategy?
15. Would you like to add anything?

Questionnaires

As part of the evaluation of the Youth Pathways to Leadership, Learning, and Livelihoods Project Implemented by YouthBuild International and the Paniamor Foundation, we would like you to complete the following questionnaire. Your response will be a very useful input and will allow us to evaluate the resources that the program has provided to its beneficiaries. Thank you for your time and cooperation. The questions are on the front and on the back of the page.

Como parte de la evaluación del Programa Trayectorias Juveniles Costa Rica, ejecutado por YouthBuild International y la Fundación Paniamor, nos gustaría que usted complete el siguiente cuestionario. Su respuesta será un insumo muy útil y nos permitirá evaluar los recursos que el programa ha prestado a sus beneficiarios. Gracias por su tiempo y cooperación. Las preguntas están al frente y al reverso de la hoja.

Short Questionnaire for youth

1. How did you find out about the Youth Pathways CR?
2. Why did you enroll?
3. Have you had a paid job? If so, what kind of work did you do and for how long?
4. Until now, what have been your biggest challenges in finding employment?
5. What is it like participating in Youth Pathways CR? For example, do you feel safe and welcome, optimistic, or pessimistic?
6. Do you feel program staff and instructors care about you and your career success? Can you provide an example? If not, why not?
7. What kinds of things do you most hope to learn while in training?
8. After completing the training, do you think you are likely to get a job?

Short questionnaire for Trainers / Curriculum Developers

1. Describe the curriculum that you use for training program participants.
2. Did you participate in the design of the curriculum? (If so, probe for role; whether curriculum was designed primarily "from scratch," adapted, etc.)
3. What are the key features of the curriculum / teaching strategy?
4. What do you see as the major strengths of the current training program? What improvements would you suggest?
5. How well equipped is the training program to continue after the program ends?
6. How well prepared are the students at the beginning of the course? Are the students selected for training appropriate for the type of training offered?

Group interviews - Families

1. How did you find out about Youth Pathway?
2. What is the general perception of Youth Pathway in your community?
3. Why did you enroll in the program?
4. Describe your relationship with program (Paniamor, other intermediary) staff and management?
5. What is it like participating in the program? For example, do you feel safe and welcome, optimistic, or pessimistic?
6. What were your major goals in working with the program?
7. How effective has the relationship with the program been in allowing you to advance those goals?
8. What does the program offer (e.g. WBT)? What differentiates it from the existing options?
9. Tell me a story about a positive experience in working with the program.
10. How have you or your family benefited from the Youth Pathways project?
11. What have been the biggest challenges in working with the Youth Pathways project?
12. Would you like to add anything?

Schedule

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
11.25.2018		Arrival to San Jose Hotel: Aurola Holiday Inn
	9:00	Pick-up at the hotel Paniamor Foundation / Project Staff Meeting - Attendees Introduction
11.26.18		- General Framework of the project and current situation by Milena Grillo, Director. - Feed-back (questions and answers) from the evaluator Arrangements review
	12:00	Lunch
	15:00	Visit to USA Embassy and meeting with Project Focal Point
	16:30	PEN Jorge Vargas Experto para información de contexto país.
	5:00	Departure to Limon / Park Hotel
11.27.18	9:30	Visit to the project location and meeting with local staff
	12:00	Lunch / meeting with local key stakeholder (Government)
	14:00	Group and personal interviews youth participants
	16:00	Group interviews- families
	18:00	End of the day / Agenda Review for next day
	8:30	Interview with key local stakeholder (Municipality / Mayor Office)
11.28.18	10:00	Group and personal interviews youth participants
	12:00	Lunch
	14:00	Interview with key local stakeholder private sector (CCITUL* board representatives)
	8:00	Interview to Union Worker representatives (FENTRAG** members)
11.29.18	10:00	Visit to corporations linked to FENTRAG (#1)
	12:30	Lunch
	14:00	Visit to corporations linked to FENTRAG (#2)
	8:30	Interview with key local stakeholder academic sector (CUNLIMON*** Director)
11.30.18	10:00	Round of interview with companies that will facilitate WBT
	12:00	Lunch
	13:30	Round of interview with companies that will facilitate WBT (contiuation...)
	16:00	Return to San Jose by road
Weekend free time		
	8:30	Breakfast meeting with bussiness Chamber of Chambers and GAN (UCCAEP****, Vice-President)
12.03.18	10:00	Meeting with Paniamor Administrative Staff
	12:00	Lunch
	14:00	Interview with PEN Jorge Vargas
	8:30	Interview to Vice - Minister of Labor
12.04.18	10:00	Interview with National Employment Director (Labor Ministry)
	12:00	Lunch
	14:00	Interview with Office of Care and Erradication of Child Labor ...(Labor Ministry)
	8:30	Interview with Technical Education Direction (Education Ministry)
12.05.18	10:30	Interviews with National Learning Institute (Assistant Technical Manager)
	12:00	Lunch
		Meeting with national key stakeholder bussiness association (AED)***** Board Vice-President
	14:00	and Executive Director
	8:30	Second round of mettings with Paniamor Staff as needed
12.06.18	13:00- 17:00	Closing event stakeholders workshop delivery of results.
12.07.18		Travel

* Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Limon

** National Federation of Agroindustry Workers and Related

***Universitarian College of Limon

**** Costa Rican Union of Chambers and Associations of the Private Sector

***** Business Alliance for Development

Annex B: List of Documents Reviewed

Project Documents

1. Exploración Del Concepto De Formación En El Puesto De Trabajo (2017)
2. Juventud vulnerable en Costa Rica: Una caracterización general (2017)
3. Contrato Por Servicios De Consultoría Entre Fundación Paniamor Y Sunset Capital S.A. (2017)
4. Propuesta estratégica de comunicación, Foundation Paniamor
5. Términos De Referencia Del Contrato Por Servicios De Consultoría Entre Fundación Paniamor Y Sunset Capital S.A., Foundation Paniamor
6. Guía De Implementación: Formación Basada En El Lugar De Trabajo Para Juventud Vulnerable En Costa Rica
7. Reunión Fundación Paniamor –Municipalidad de Limón/Vicealcaldesa, Foundation Paniamor, 2018
8. Reunión con Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social (IMAS), Foundation Paniamor
9. Un Modelo Sustentado En La Corresponsabilidad Social Para La Formación Basada En El Puesto De Trabajo (FBPT) Inclusiva De Juventud Vulnerable, Youth Pathways and Foundation Paniamor
10. Dirección de Educación Comunitaria y Asistencia Técnica, Limón, 24 de octubre de 2018
11. Project's Demonstrative Experience, Youth Pathways and Foundation Paniamor
12. Sistematización sesiones formativas habilidades: Área personal, 2018
13. Convenio Marco De Cooperación Entre La Fundación Paniamor Y El Programa Estado De La Nación Mediante Funcenat
14. Términos De Referencia Del Convenio Marco De Cooperación Entre La Fundación Paniamor Y El Programa Estado De La Nación Mediante Funcenat
15. Mapeo de empresas en la provincia de Limón para la formación en el puesto de trabajo, Trayectorias Juveniles Youth Pathways y Fundación Paniamor, 2018
16. Implementation Guide Work Based Training for Vulnerable Youth in Costa Rica, September 10, 2018
17. Technical Progress Report (TPR), September 2016-March 2017
18. TPR, April 2017-September 2017
19. TPR, November 2017-April 2018
20. TPR, April-September 2018
21. Presentation Youth Pathways Costa Rica
22. Juventud Vulnerable en Costa Rica: Una caracterización general
23. Cooperative Agreement, Grant Number:IL-29679-16-75, September 30, 2016
24. Technical Proposal: Project to Promote Workplace-Based Training for Vulnerable Youth in Costa Rica, July 18, 2016

25. Situational Analysis, Qualitative, December 2017
26. Federal Financial Report, September 30, 2018
27. Convenio de Cooperación Técnica entre el Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social y la Fundación PANIAMOR, September 6, 2018
28. Convenio de Cooperación Técnica entre el Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social y la Fundación PANIAMOR, June 12, 2018
29. Carta de Intenciones entre la Federación Nacional de Agroindustria y Afines (FENTRAG) y la Fundación PANIAMOR, June 14, 2018
30. Carta de Intenciones entre Cámara de Comercio Industria Y Turismo de Limón (CCITUL) y la Fundación PANIAMOR, June 14, 2018

Other Sources

31. Contraloría General de la República, “Informe de Auditoría del Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje,” November 3, 2017. Retrieved from:
https://cgrfiles.cgr.go.cr/publico/jaguar/Documentos/informes_rec/DFOE-EC-IF-19-2017
32. Diario Extra, “Oferta formativa del INA no genera empleos,” September 27, 2017. Retrieved from:
<http://www.diarioextra.com/Noticia/detalle/343368/oferta-formativa-del-ina-no-genera-empleos>
33. Programa Estado de la Nación, “Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano Sostenible,” 2018.

Annex C: List of People Interviewed

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Annex D: Stakeholder Workshop

Agenda

- Introduction - Director YPCR
- Presentation of Midterm Evaluation Preliminary Results
- Stakeholders comments and discussion
- Closing of the event

Participants

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