INTRODUCTION

Global Communities has worked in education throughout the developing world focusing on issues of access, community engagement, and empowering at-risk youth. Our education work can be organized under five main themes:

1. Vocational education to equip youth to productively participate in the economy;
2. Civic education to increase young people’s capacity to participate in democratic processes;
3. Health education to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and support of WASH to promote safe sanitation;
4. Psycho-social support to treat youth who have been exposed to trauma and violence; and
5. Construction to increase access to education.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

JORDAN, LEBANON, YEMEN: MENA Youth Empowerment Strategy

Through the MENA Youth Empowerment Strategy (MENA-YES), Global Communities, in partnership with the Caterpillar Foundation, has launched a three-year, $4.5 million program to prepare vulnerable youth in Jordan, Lebanon, and Yemen for the labor market and job placement. Youth are receiving demand-driven vocational training, business and entrepreneurship training, as well as internship and apprenticeship opportunities. The partnership emphasizes building solid linkages with the private sector and potential employers to determine the precise nature, scale and timing of needed skills to ensure placement of youth trainees. The program is being implemented in phases, beginning with identifying target industries and sectors with employment opportunities and building relationships with the private sector. It is creating linkages between the private sector and training institutions to ensure that youth are trained in the skills that are needed in each industry, and training and placement will increase throughout each year of the program.
GHANA: Youth Inclusive Entrepreneurial Development Initiative for Employment (YIEDIE)

The Youth Inclusive Entrepreneurial Development Initiative for Employment (YIEDIE - which means “progress” in the Twi language) is designed to create economic opportunities in Ghana’s construction sector for disadvantaged youth. YIEDIE aims to directly reach at least 23,700 of these youth with training in technical, life and/or entrepreneurship skills leading to employment. The project applies an integrated youth-led market-systems model to improve the capacity of youth and service providers across the value chain. Key objectives of the program are: 1) provide employment opportunities in the construction sector, including self-employment, for disadvantaged young people in five of Ghana’s largest cities: Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Ashaiman and Tema; 2) provide increased coordination and support for a better enabling environment by construction sector stakeholder.

Best Practices:

• Demand-driven training to create lasting connections between demand and supply of skills in specific sectors bridges the skills gap and facilitates a systemic change in transitioning youth to jobs.

• Sector Advisory Committees consisting of hiring managers from private sector and training firms. SAC members work together to establish skill gaps, hiring needs and training outline specific for their sector.

Challenges in implementation: Recruitment of youth, drop-outs, engaging the private sector, tracking participants past project completion

CIVIC EDUCATION

WEST BANK, HONDURAS, UKRAINE: Local Youth Councils/Global Youth for Good Governance

The Global Youth for Good Governance (GYGG) initiative provides an opportunity to share the successes of the Palestinian Youth Local Councils (YLC) globally. “Today’s youth are tomorrow’s leaders” is a statement that holds true in any country. By engaging youth in local government, giving them a voice, and exposing them to good governance practices, YLCs in Palestine have provided the foundation for the next generation of leaders to succeed in serving their communities.

The YLC initiative in Palestine began in 2008 in four pilot communities with 700 youth. Today, the initiative has become a movement. In 2015, after only seven years, Global Communities can boast that it has supported the establishment of 20

GHANA, YIEDIE
Global Communities:  
Education Portfolio

YLCs across the West Bank, with more than 17,000 youth involved. The buy-in and support of local government units of the YLC concept has been instrumental in the success of the YLCs. The YLCs have taken the lead on numerous activities geared to respond to the needs of their respective communities, including emergency responses during inclement weather; environmental, literacy, and road safety campaigns; and fundraisers for the needy. The YLCs have become an integral part of their communities, woven into the tapestry of their societies. The success of these YLCs has not only encouraged additional communities to establish YLCs, but also prompted the support of other organizations and other funders to support the YLC concept. This is a testament to the replicability and sustainability of the YLCs.

KENYA: Tuna Uwezo

Launched in March 2012, the USAID-funded Kenya Tuna Uwezo (“We have the power” in Kiswahili) was designed to address the conflict drivers related to the wave of violence that shook the country in the aftermath of the 2007 presidential elections. Its aim was to reduce ethnic, political and ideological conflict in the informal settlements of Nairobi by increasing resilience and cohesion among communities. Kenya Tuna Uwezo (KTU) engaged communities under the assumption that political and ethnic violence resulted from manipulation of ethnic divisions by political leaders. Conflict could be transformed if communities could, through problem-solving dialogue and civic education, mitigate conflicts peacefully and become resilient to such manipulations Global Communities' analysis of preventing election violence (PEV) suggested that political manipulation along tribal lines was one of the major conflict drivers. To prevent violent conflict and build up community resilience, KTU included a strong civic education component that would support the CMM efforts as well as the Kenyan national cohesion policy. KTU focused on educating communities on how to operationalize the devolution of power enshrined in the 2010 Constitution to address community concerns and provide an alternative to political violence. KTU trained community representatives from target settlements as semi-professional paralegals, to serve as community-based resources who could help address questions and concerns within the community and support the devolution process. Kituo provided additional training and coaching to community organizations and change agents: in how to civically engage with devolved structures; and in participatory budgeting processes. KTU then sought to mobilize target communities to participate in county budget hearings.

Best Practices:
• Provide concrete job skills to youth in civic engagement fields such as paralegals and public accountants.
• Engaging “gatekeepers”.

Challenges in implementation: Ensuring youth drive certain processes and activities.
HEALTH EDUCATION

KENYA: Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe women

DREAMS is a President’s Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) initiative, in partnership with the Gates Foundation and the Nike Foundation, that aims to help adolescent girls and young women lead Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe lives. Global Communities, in partnership with USAID, implements the DREAMS initiative in the Pumwani Ward of Nairobi, which is one of several countries where the initiative is being implemented. Global Communities and its local partners are working with adolescent girls and young women between 10 and 24 years of age from the Pumwani Ward and the greater community emphasizing healthy sexual behaviors including abstinence and delayed sexual debut; gender norms; prevention of gender-based violence (GBV); life skills; prevention of drug and alcohol abuse; adherence to Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) as applicable; positive attitudes towards people living with HIV; stigma reduction and livelihoods and positive health-seeking behaviors. This is being accomplished using a two-pronged approach – blending customized, individual support to adolescent girls and young women, as well as strengthening of education, health, social and economic systems in order to create positive lasting impact on at-risk adolescents and young women and the greater community.

GHANA: WASH and Security Improvement Project

From October 2014 to June 2015, Global Communities and Cummins Ghana Ltd. partnered together to implement the Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Security Improvement Project in the Lartebiokorshie cluster of schools in Accra, Ghana with funding support from The Cummins Foundation. The WASH and Security Improvement project included several need-specific program interventions. To improve the security of the school grounds, the Cummins Ghana Ltd. team built security gates and reinforced the school compound’s walls to protect the school grounds from unwanted pedestrian traffic. Secondly, Cummins Ghana Ltd. renovated the schools’ toilet facilities and established a water purification system using water from a previously dug borehole. The water system now provides sufficient potable water for drinking, cooking, handwashing and for the toilet facility.

Best practices:

• Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) – an innovative methodology that mobilizes communities to increase sanitation access and help build healthier, more disease-resistant communities.
• Improved the capacity of the School Management Committee, Parent Teacher Associations, School Health Committees.
• Peer education using school-based, peer-to-peer approach. Working through secondary schools, trained peer educators delivered HIV prevention information via both in-school and after-school. In primary schools, the sessions were teacher-led
with PE delivering messages. In secondary schools the PEs conducted the sessions with minimal support from teachers. In pairs of two, PEs conducted individual and group sessions during break times, free lesson times, games and club times, and out of school. The group sessions targeted 25 students per session – usually held during the allocated extra-curricular period in the school timetable to avoid interfering with academic sessions and to fit into the school routine.

Challenges:
- Integrating information into national curriculum.
- Training and support to parents.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

LIBERIA: Sustained Transformation of Youth in Liberia

Across Liberia’s cities, thousands of young men are at a high risk of turning to violence, becoming armed robbers, drug dealers, and petty criminals. Changing the mind-set and behavior of these young men and integrating them into law-abiding society is one of Liberia’s most pressing priorities. The Sustainable Transformation of Youth in Liberia (STYL) program will provide young men with the highest-risk of engaging in violence with an 8-week behavior change and cash transfer intervention that bolsters participant’s cognitive and social skills, readying them to start a business or enter the workforce and equipping them to reach their goals. STYL is based upon Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), a goal-oriented psychotherapy treatment that changes patterns of thinking and behavior through targeted therapy sessions that provide strategies to respond to challenging, stressful situations in a more effective way. Trainings include lessons on anger management, impulse control, and critical thinking.

From 2011-14, Global Communities partnered with a Liberian NGO, NEPI (the developers of STYL) and researchers from Columbia University, Harvard University and the World Bank to evaluated STYL. Using a with a randomized control trial of 1000 of the highest-risk men in Monrovia, Their studies showed that STYL’s interventions helped participants raise their incomes and reduce crime and violence dramatically, making it one of the most effective rehabilitation programs in the world.

KENYA: Tuna Uwezo

Another dimension KTU was working with the perpetrator of political violence in overcoming the trauma of violence. KTU staff identified trauma as a major obstacle to reconciliation and transformation. During the dialogue process, youth discussed their past violent acts, discussions that brought to the forefront issues of trauma and shame. The transformative approach was used
with “at-risk” as a path for them to genuinely to break with past practices and attitudes. Using the transformative approach, perpetrators of violence must admit their misdeeds and take full responsibility for their acts. This implies avoiding any excuses or attempts to put the blame on others for one’s deeds. Trauma and healing usually lead the perpetrators to want to ask the victims, their relatives and/or the community for forgiveness.

**Best practices:**

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a short-term approach that tries to reduce self-destructive beliefs or behaviors and promote positive ones by working with beneficiaries to become more aware of their automatic thoughts: inaccurate or negative thinking about themselves or others, and shifting automatic thoughts allows them to respond to everyday situations in a more effective way. A central principle of CBT, is to actively practice new behaviors, often starting with simple tasks and, through repetition, positive reinforcement, and gradually increasing the difficulty or complexity of the tasks, changing both behavior and thinking.

- Trauma and healing counseling to understand the biology of fear, how it affects behavior and encourages a cycle of violence; to equip youth to manage their own fears more effectively; and thus be better able to forge constructive dialogues contributing to improved social relationships; and to understand the basics of forgiveness counselling and its role in PTSD reduction. In cases of severe violence, sexual abuse, trauma, being in a war zone, in combat – it is the invisible mental and emotional wounds that are often the hardest to heal.

**Challenges:** Transformation of “at-risk” youth is a long and fragile process. The program has the responsibility to closely follow-up on the evolution of transformed youth to prevent them from reverting back into their former lifestyle.

**CONSTRUCTION**

**Academy and Schools for Scientific Fortune: Access for Syrian Refugees**

Houran for Investments and Education is the company that owns the Academy and Schools for Scientific Fortune, a private school in Ramtha, Irbid governorate, in the northwest of Jordan. The town’s location on the border with Syria makes it a community particularly impacted by the Syrian refugee crisis. Its public schools are at overcapacity, and Scientific Fortune is
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the only private one serving students from pre-school through 10th grade, enrollment at which creates room in the public system and provides direct educational access for Syrians that can afford to pay the tuition.

In 2013, JLGF provided an OPIC guarantee to Bank al Etihad’s $247,000 loan to build ten new classrooms. The expansion allowed for space for 100 new students and the creation of five full-time jobs. JLGF also provided technical assistance to the school, including assisting with the loan application, preparing the cash flow projections, and providing one-on-one training in cash management to its financial manager.

Fursan School in Karak: Providing alternatives in education

Against conventional wisdom that parents would not be able to send their children to a private school in the modest Al Hawiyyah area of Karak governorate, Musa Al Madadha Institute for Consulting’s Fursan School in Karak was started in 2014 with the help of a loan guarantee from JLGF.

The mobilized $700,000 from Cairo Amman Bank financed the construction of the first school in the area to utilize technology for teaching – and the first with central heating. A modern, fully equipped primary and secondary private school, the institute opened to over 500 enrolled students, reaching 85% capacity in its very first year and employing 49 people.

Studio Be Company in Amman: After-school facility for children

Studio Be Company was established in late 2015 to deliver training courses in digital arts, including photography and design, with techniques that promote creative thinking among adolescents.

Considering technology as its main educational component, it serves as an after-school facility for children between the ages of 12 and 17. A start-up business that created six jobs, it was made possible with a $120,000 loan from Bank al Etihad that included a loan guarantee facilitated by JLGF.