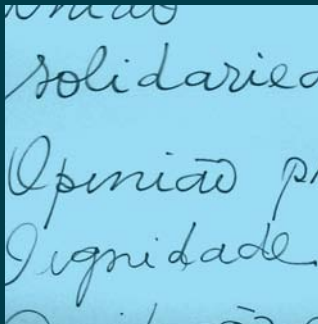


A NEW MODEL FOR EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING

PROGRAMA PARA O FUTURO

Enabling Disadvantaged Youth
to Build New Futures



Center for Applied Technology

Published by the Academy for Educational Development
Based on a project designed and carried out by AED Center for Applied Technology



Academy for Educational Development
Connecting People > Creating Change

1825 Connecticut Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20009
For more information contact:
Eric Rusten
erusten@aed.org
1(202) 884-8714

Founded in 1961, the Academy for Educational Development is an independent, non-profit organization committed to solving critical social problems and building the capacity of individuals, communities, and institutions to become more self-sufficient. AED works in all the major areas of human development, with a focus on improving education, health, and economic opportunities for the least disadvantaged in the United States and developing countries throughout the world.

In Brazil, please contact
Tania Ogasawara
togasawara@aed.org
(55-81) 9272-6198

In response to the success of *Programa Para o Futuro* and other AED initiatives in Brazil, the Academy decided to establish a new independent nongovernmental organization (NGO), to be located in Recife, Brazil. This new Brazilian NGO will be a sister organization to AED in Washington, DC. The two organizations will collaborate to achieve their respective missions. This partnership will also enable the two organizations to bring Brazilian development expertise and experience to other countries around the world.

PROGRAMA PARA O FUTURO

Enabling Disadvantaged Youth to Build New Futures

A NEW MODEL FOR EMPLOYABILITY TRAINING

Eric Rusten, Tania Ogasawara and Kristin Brady



Foreword

For over forty years, dedicated AED staff have been working in partnership with people from more than 150 countries to advance human welfare. Much of this work has and continues to focus on improving educational quality, relevance and equity. Over the last decade, AED has paid increasing attention to the needs of youth, especially those from disadvantaged communities, and the special challenge they face in transitioning from schools to careers. This monograph presents lessons from one especially successful initiative, *Programa Para o Futuro*, in Recife, Brazil, that designed and tested an innovative strategy for employability training that enabled disadvantaged youth to gain the skills needed to earn jobs and transform their lives permanently.

In recent years, the issue of youth unemployment has emerged as one of the most critical challenges facing all nations. Changes in the demographic profile of many countries are intensifying this problem as young people become a larger percentage of total populations. At the same time, a rapidly changing global economy and a shift toward knowledge-based jobs is making it increasingly difficult for youth, especially disadvantaged young people, to compete successfully for available jobs. Unfortunately, education systems are not keeping pace with the changing world-of-work and as a result, more and more young men and women enter for the labor market without the skills needed to find decent work or continue their education.

Youth without jobs or prospects for decent work have a cascading impact on societies. As larger numbers of youth are excluded from the work force, the capacity of a country to progress is weakened. For youth, the inability to find quality work increases their vulnerability and feelings of uselessness, which often leads to personal and socially destructive behavior. Over time, more and more of a nation's greatest assets, its youth, are lost along with all the potential that each young person has for making a positive contribution to society.

There are no easy solutions to this vicious cycle of poverty, unemployment, frustration, and vulnerability. There are, however, options for reversing this trend and viable approaches for enabling youth to gain the skills they need to find work and remain employable through out their lives. AED's experience with *Programa Para o Futuro* offers great promise. This pilot project demonstrates that under the right conditions, it is possible for very poor, disadvantaged youth to break the grip of poverty and transition successfully into the modern world-of-work. AED is dedicated to building on these lessons and working with local organizations, businesses, and governments in the United States and around the world to bring about a better present and future for the world's youth.



Stephen F. Moseley
President and Chief Executive Officer
Academy for Educational Development

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the following individuals for their contributions to the development of this monograph: Vera Lucia Suguri, the Executive Director of LTNet-Brasil, for her help in reviewing multiple versions of the monograph and offering creative suggestions for improving the document; Maria Aparecida Cavalcante, AED-Brasil's e-Mentoring Coordinator, for fact checking and reviewing the draft; Christina Files for helping to prepare an earlier draft; Mary Maguire, Debora Morris and Jean Bernard for editorial support; and Anne Quito for designing the cover, preparing the graphics and the publication's layout.

The success of *Programa Para o Futuro* (PPF) was truly a team and community effort. The many people and institutions mentioned below played multiple critical roles in this complex and ambitious program. We wish to thank the Brazil office of the U.S. Agency for International Development for partly funding the *Programa Para o Futuro* pilot project in Recife, Brazil. Specifically, we would like to thank Nena Lentini, USAID's Program and Social Development Officer, for her support. AED thanks IBM-Brasil for their generous contributions of computer equipment and funds for other equipment and student uniforms. We thank Patricia Menezes for believing in the project team and taking a risk in supporting an unproven idea. We want to recognize the Recife office of the Bank of Brazil for providing such a wonderful space for the project's training facility, a quality professional environment for the youth to learn in and more importantly for making our team and students feel at home. We specifically thank three Bank staff, Luiz Humberto Costa, Elda Madruga and José Maria Rodrigues, for their support of and belief in what we were seeking to achieve. AED wishes to thank the Associação Brasil América (ABA) for providing two highly skilled English teachers to PPF. We also want to thank Microsoft Brasil for providing all Microsoft software used by the program. We want to thank Júlia Castro from Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu in Recife who helped PPF with the employability curriculum, introduced PPF to the HR volunteers and three mentors from her company. We want to thank Dr. José Valente from the University of Campinas for his guidance of pedagogical staff and the development of the PPF Curriculum. We want to thank Dr. José Valente, a volunteer from the University of Campinas, for guiding the pedagogical team and for helping develop the PPF curriculum and instructional method. We want to thank David Stephens and his staff at IBRATEC for offering free scholarships to their excellent technical college program to all PPF youth.

We also thank the leadership and professionals at our four collaborating NGOs, Casa de Passagem, CDI-Pernambuco, LTNNet-Brasil and Porto Digital, for their support and essential contributions in making PPF a success. Special thanks need to be given to the PPF team who worked so hard and who were so dedicated to helping our youth build their new futures. The members of the PPF team are listed below in alphabetical order.

Antonio Correia (Casa de Passagem)	Marcos Mensallas (CDI-PE)
Bárbara Formiga (ABA)	Maria Aparecida Cavalcante (Porto Digital)
Camila Drummond (ABA)	Marli Ramos (Casa de Passagem)
Eric Rusten (AED)	Marliete Carvalho (Casa de Passagem)
Gilvani Holanda (Casa de Passagem)	Odete Sidericoudes (LTNet-Brasil)
Helena Lopes (CDI-PE)	Paulo Araripe (CDI-PE)
Joselia Caldas (CDI-PE)	Rodrigo Coutinho (CDI-PE)
Josélio Oliveira (Casa de Passagem)	Rosângela Maia (Casa de Passagem)
Julianne Pepeu (Porto Digital)	Sandro Pereira (Casa de Passagem)
Kleuder Costa (Casa de Passagem)	Silvia Albuquerque (Casa de Passagem)
Laene Freitas (Casa de Passagem)	Simone Maior (Casa de Passagem)
Magda Silvestre (Casa de Passagem)	Thelma Torres (Casa de Passagem)
Marcelo Correia (CDI-PE)	Tania Ogasawara (AED)
Marcelo Fernandes (CDI-PE)	Vera Suguri (LTNet-Brasil)
Marcio Rocha (LTNet-Brasil)	Zoracy Guerra (Casa de Passagem)

In addition, we want to thank all of the e-Mentors for taking time for the PPF youth and being dedicated guides on their road to a better life.

Equally, we want to thank the parents and guardians of our PPF youth for trusting us with their children and believing in them as they struggled to transform their lives. Finally, we want to acknowledge the courage and celebrate the achievements of all the PPF youth for working hard and taking the risk to change their lives and build new futures.

Eric Rusten, Ph.D
PPF Project Director
Academy for Educational Development

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Youth Unemployment: Context, Challenges and Issues	9
A Global Challenge	9
The Brazilian Context	9
Transformation for Employability	10
Responding to the Challenge	12
Focusing on Demand-Driven Workplace Skills	13
Breaking the Cycle of Poverty	16
A Curriculum for Employability	17
Four Curriculum Areas	17
Project-based Approach to Learning	17
Building Employability Capacity	19
Emphasizing Strong Communication Skills	21
Building Social and Workplace Skills	22
PPF Critical Success Factors	24
Brazil's First e-Mentoring Program	24
Giving Staff the Freedom and Responsibility to Innovate and Take Risks	25
Supporting the Social and Material Needs of Youth	26
Employing Specialized Staff	28
Investing in Teachers	28
Including First Offenders in PPF	30
Multipartner Collaboration	31
Public-Private Partnerships	33
Achievements, Replicating, and Scaling	34
Achievements, Replicating, and Scaling	35
Replicating PPF	37
Scaling Up PPF	37
Important Issues	38
Frequently Asked Questions <i>Programa Para o Futuro</i> Fact Sheet	41

Figures, Tables, and Textboxes

Figures:

Figure 1: The Dynamic Nature of Being Disadvantaged	15
Figure 2: PPF's Four Curriculum Areas	18
Figure 3: How PPF's Core Competencies are Integrated in Projects	19
Figure 4: Creating Synergy Among Skills Through Integration	20

Tables:

PPF Innovative Features	14
Factors Contributing to Being Disadvantaged	16

Textboxes:

Transforming Lives	11
Joana... in the beginning...	15
Project-Based Learning Defined	17
Joana, Midway through PPF: The Road to Achievement	21
Essential Skills for Employment Success	23
PPF Student Starts Computer Repair Business	26
The Programa Family	27
PPF Graduate Excels Professionally and Academically	28
Celebrating Achievement and Success	36
Joana, At the end of the Project: A productive future before her	38

Introduction

People from all social and economic strata often dream of starting over with a clean slate and reinventing themselves.

Unfortunately, even though the dream of a new life is an essential part of change, it cannot by itself enable people to transform their lives and create new futures. For disadvantaged youth living in poverty, with limited education, inadequate networks, and poor communication and workplace skills, faded dreams are often all that they have.

So, what does it take to enable disadvantaged youth to transform themselves and build new futures? This is the question that *Programa Para o Futuro* (PPF) was designed to answer. More specifically, the pilot program tested and refined a strategy for permanent transformation that integrated technical, basic education; employability; and social skills training with mentoring and a strong social support system. The PPF team selected 50 disadvantaged youth (ages 16–21) from poor communities in Recife, Brazil, to participate in this yearlong pilot project. PPF's principal goal was to test a new approach to enabling disadvantaged youth to transform their lives and build new futures. The Academy for Educational Development (AED) designed and implemented this innovative program with core funding from the U.S. Agency for

International Development (USAID).¹ To supplement funds provided by USAID, AED organized a consortium of private companies in Brazil to provide essential inputs, resources, and funds.

The Academy partnered with four Brazilian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to carry out this pilot, which enabled unemployed, at-risk youth in the program to gain the technical, social, communication, workplace, academic, and life skills necessary to become employable. At the end of the project, more than 88 percent of these youth earned jobs and/or were attending college or university. Upon completing the training program, IBRATEC, the best technical college in Northeast Brazil, offered all PPF youth scholarships.

Most of these youth thought they were merely enrolled in a computer course at the start of the program. They soon realized, however, that the PPF team was actually asking them to do much more: to envision a new future, gain new skills, and build the self-confidence required to transform their lives permanently.

¹ USAID funded *Programa Para o Futuro* under Leader Associate Award “Bridging the Digital Divide and Enabling Employability for Disadvantaged Youth in Brazil through information Technology” number GDG-A-00-01-00014-00.

Youth Unemployment: Context, Challenges and Issues

Young women and men are the world's greatest assets.

Like all assets, however, realizing the potential intrinsic to all youth depends on how well we educate and prepare them for the present and the future. Achieving this potential entails a mix of fundamental choices about youth that all countries must make. Making good choices increases that probability that youth will create positive and productive futures for themselves and in turn a better, healthier and more peaceful world. Poor choices lead to less desirable alternatives.

For disadvantaged youth, making good choices is even more critical since these youth face greater barriers to success and have fewer options to help them realize their potential than their advantaged peers. Understanding the context and issues surrounding youth unemployment and the challenges disadvantaged youth face as they grow into adults, can help us make good choices about providing all youth, with viable options and opportunities for creating a better future for themselves and the rest of society.

A GLOBAL CHALLENGE

Young people, ages 15–24, comprise about one-sixth of the world's population of 6.2 billion—over one billion people. More than 85 percent live in developing countries where most are poor and suffer disproportionately from chronically high levels of unemployment.

The International Labor Organization estimates that approximately 88 million young women and men are unemployed throughout the world, accounting for 47 percent of the 180 million unemployed globally. Many more young people work long hours for low pay in the informal sector, some in hazardous conditions. Most alarming, unemployment rates among the world's youth are increasing in many developing and industrialized countries. Disadvantaged youth who suffer from poverty, discrimination, and isolation experience much higher rates of unemployment overall than do youth in general and are more likely to be involved in crime, have children early, have low self-esteem, and have little faith in their chances for a better future.



THE BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

In Brazil, youth ages 15–24 comprise approximately 20 percent of the population (about 34 million). In 2004, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics estimated unemployment for youth 18–24 years old in Brazil’s formal sector at 18 percent, and a survey estimated overall youth unemployment in Brazil at more than 40 percent in 2004.²

Unemployment rates for disadvantaged youth are even higher than overall youth unemployment rates.

For disadvantaged youth, unemployment is usually a permanent state that at best transitions to underemployment and a life of low-paying periodic work in the informal sector and at worst leads to drugs and crime. Unemployed disadvantaged youth also lack access to the means to transform their lives, create productive futures, and break the cycle of poverty.

Brazil continues to have one of the largest gaps between rich and poor, and poverty in Brazil correlates strongly with low education and lack of marketable skills. Brazil also has one of the highest education repetition rates in South America, and youth, on average, leave school with only six years of schooling.

Over the past decade, Brazil’s economy, the 14th largest in the world, has grown and diversified. An important part of this success has been the country’s dynamic information and communications technology (ICT) sector, which, along with manufacturing and agriculture, has fueled much of Brazil’s economic growth. Despite a relatively strong economy, unemployment remains a chronic problem in Brazil. There are no opportunities

for quality employment with career possibilities for these youth. This bleak situation becomes even worse for disadvantaged youth as Brazil transitions to a knowledge-based economy, and the skills required for entry-level jobs become more sophisticated and linked to ICTs. Unfortunately, Brazil’s education system has not kept pace with this economic trend.

TRANSFORMATION FOR EMPLOYABILITY

Many job-training programs in Brazil and elsewhere succeed in placing only 20–30 percent of their graduates in jobs, often only temporarily and with little potential for career growth or long-term employability.

Recognizing the insufficiencies of training programs that focus on short-term job goals, AED designed and carried out the pilot PPF project to test an employability training approach that integrated job skills training into a comprehensive capacity-building program to meet the needs of disadvantaged youth and prepare them for the world of work.

PPF’s primary goal was to enable the youth to build their capacity for continuous employability rather than simply obtain temporary jobs. To help them change, PPF created a stimulating and professional learning environment and provided essential social and physical support to enable the youth to carry out hands-on learning projects, reflect on their current lives and their new skills, experience professional work environments, and imagine themselves in a new future. In short, the PPF approach created a fertile and safe environment for personal transformation.

² The *Projeto Juventude/Instituto Cidadania* (Youth Project/Citizenship Institute), in partnership with *Sebrae* and the *Instituto de Hospitalidade*, conducted a survey in 2003 with 3500 youth ages 15–24.

“...employability is about learning and depends on developing critical, reflective abilities, with a view toward **empowering** and enhancing the learner. Employment is a byproduct of this enabling process.”

The PPF design team, Eric Rusten from AED and Vera Lucia Suguri from LTNet-Brasil, recognized that to enable disadvantaged youth to create the capacity for lifelong employment and professional growth, defined by AED as employability, the program needed to address the myriad social and economic barriers that prevent disadvantaged youth from attaining productive, rewarding jobs and careers.

Employability is much more than simply getting a job. It is about developing critical thinking, self-managed learning, and problem-solving skills. It's having the capacity to network and market oneself, navigate through a career and remain employable throughout life. It requires the ability to ask questions, acquire new skills, identify and evaluate options, adapt successfully to changing situations and the courage to innovate. Even though having technical skills, especially in the ICT sector, is important to finding a job, it is the complex set of “soft” skills mentioned above that is most important to building the capacity for employability. In short, employability is about learning and depends on developing critical, reflective abilities, with a view toward

Transforming Lives



GEORGE: At age 19, George was unemployed and living at home in Peixinhos-Olinda, a community far from the city center. He worked occasionally as a cleaning assistant for a car company as he studied for the public service exam. Without money for private tutoring, George had little hope of passing the exam, finding formal employment, and leaving the slum.



CINTIA: As a 20 year-old unemployed youth, Cintia lives with her parents and two siblings in Dois Unidos, a community on the outskirts of Recife. She completed high school in 1999 but was not able to find quality work or continue her education. With little to look forward to, Cintia was resigned to a life with few dreams or achievements.



JOANA: At 19, Joana lived with her godmother because her mother could not afford to support her and her four siblings. While Joana struggled to complete high school, she worked part time as a housecleaner and nanny to help put food on the table. After the murder of one of her brothers, Joana could not imagine that her future could improve.

What do these young people have in common? Like thousands of their peers, these youth had uncertain futures with little chance of becoming productive adults and rising out of poverty. Unlike their peers, however, these young people had the fortune to join 47 other disadvantaged youth from Recife, Brazil to participate in *Programa Para o Futuro*.

Within 15 months of starting PPF, 71% of the students had earned jobs and over two-thirds of the graduates accepted full scholarships to attend IBRATEC, the premier technical college in northeast Brazil. Ninety-eight percent of the PPF youth completed the program, and one year after the program's end, 92% have been employed and are building careers.

PPF participant, Cintia Arantes, was on the cover of the 9/27/04 international edition of *BusinessWeek* that highlighted the importance of appropriate training to enable youth to start technology careers.

Cover picture used with permission from *BusinessWeek*



empowering and enhancing the learner. Employment is a by-product of this enabling process.³

RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE

In response to this reality, PPF included the following principal features:

- A curriculum that integrated technical skills training (including computer hardware, software, troubleshooting, and repair skills) with Portuguese writing, basic English, math, and creative thinking skills;
- Employability skills, including problem solving, communication, teamwork, leadership, presentations, and other “soft” skills;
- A dynamic process for developing the curriculum that was not predetermined but, rather, evolved over time through continuous dialogue with employers to align the training program with business needs and local realities;

- A project-based learning approach that simulated the workplace so that youth would gain real-world, hands-on skills;
- An e-Mentoring program that linked students with professionals, most of whom were working in ICT-related fields, as mentors to give students access to new professional networks, a clear understanding of what it means to work in the formal sector, and the opportunity to practice professional communications skills using ICT tools;
- A system of social support that included a full-time social worker/psychologist and active links to families to help address personal struggles and build self-esteem; and
- Essential physical support, including an attractive uniform to build a strong sense of personal identity with the program, daily meals, and bus tickets to address issues of poverty that would have prevented youth from participating.

AED carried out the pilot project in Recife, one of Brazil’s major cities on the north-eastern coast, in the State of Pernambuco. Recife has approximately 3.5 million citizens, with an estimated 30 percent youth unemployment rate. According to a 2004 UNESCO study, Pernambuco has the third highest murder rate in Brazil for victims ages 14–25. From 1993 to 2002, the murder rate increased more than 62 percent among the population in general and over 88 percent for youth. This escalating rate of violence among youth is strongly linked to the absence of viable alternatives for positive futures.

³ Harvey, Lee (2003). “Transitions from higher education to work” from: <http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/cre/publications/d1transitions.doc>. Centre for Research and Evaluation, Sheffield Hallam University.

“Just knowing how to use a word processor or being able to describe how a computer network functions isn’t going to get a young person a job.

Businesses demand more. They are seeking people who can solve real-world business challenges using a variety of computer-related and workplace skills, who can communicate effectively, take initiative, relate effectively to co-workers and customers, and who know how to learn new skills when the need arises.” –Eric Rusten, Project Director, *Programa Para o Futuro*.

The dire situation for youth in Pernambuco was one of the main reasons AED chose Recife as the site for PPF. AED also selected Recife because it has a robust and growing ICT sector with demand for entry-level workers; it would expand USAID’s existing at-risk youth program in the Northeast; and capable NGOs interested in collaborating. In addition, the Bank of Brazil provided a well-appointed room on the ninth floor of its Recife headquarters for use as PPF’s training facility.

The PPF target population was youth, ages 16–21, with a family income up to half the minimum salary per month and per person in the household. All PPF youth came from families with no real opportunities for quality education and employment. If their parents were employed, most worked as day laborers in the informal job market. Fifty youth, half boys and half girls, were selected from 200 applicants following assessment activities to evaluate reading and communication skills, basic math, and logical thinking abilities as well as small-group assessments with the social worker and psychologist to assess the youths’ social and group dynamic skills.



Tania Ogasawara (left), PPF’s Project Coordinator, and Joseleia Caldas (standing), CDI-PE activity coordinator, helping youth prepare for an employability presentation. Team work and mentoring results in success.

FOCUSING ON DEMAND-DRIVEN WORKPLACE SKILLS

Employers today value workers’ emotional quotient (EQ), the mix of workplace skills that enables people to succeed and progress in the workplace, more than their IQ and narrow, static technical skills. A 2003 PriceWaterhouseCoopers survey of personnel recruiters highlighted five key qualities employers are seeking:

- motivation and enthusiasm
- ability to work as part of team
- oral communication skills
- flexibility
- initiative

PPF's Innovative Features

- Making all learning hands-on and experiential rather than focusing on textbooks and theory.
- Emphasizing communication skills in both Portuguese and English.
- Emphasizing building employment capacity rather than simply focusing on finding jobs for youth.
- Integrating first-offender youth into PPF.
- Hiring a part-time gender specialist to explicitly integrate gender awareness activities into the curriculum.
- Hiring professional teachers as learning facilitators rather than depending on volunteers.
- Partnering with the private sector to identify high-demand skills to help formulate the curriculum and provide resources to help support the pilot.
- Scheduling bimonthly meetings with parents and youth to reinforce family support for youth participation in the project and to address problems youth might be facing at home.
- Providing consistent guidance to teachers and staff from project and pedagogical coordinators.
- Providing robust and continuous Internet access with a 1:2 computer-youth ratio.
- Offering youth an online learning program for specialized technologies, e.g., Linux (an open-source operating systems software application).

“Many youth graduating from such factory-style programs do not have the skills necessary for the current job market, and they do not have the capacity to **adapt** to changing requirements and remain employable over time.”

In a similar vein, Brazilian companies contacted by PPF staff remarked that they recruit employees who are good with numbers, literate, able to adapt to market shifts, think and act independently, work well in teams, respond to customers' needs, and apply their knowledge in a world of constant change. When Coca-Cola Brazil interviewed some PPF graduates, the company looked particularly for character attributes such as self-assurance, responsibility, determination, and flexibility. The youths' technical skills were of secondary importance. The Coca-Cola personnel manager was so impressed with the PPF youths' employability skills that he hired a graduate to join the company's team in Recife.

Many public schools and job-training programs neglect these essential capacities. One reason for this is that it is easier and less expensive to focus on a narrower set of technical skills than it is to build durable employability capacity with “soft” skills. In addition, many more youth can be “trained” in less time with one-dimensional programs than can be prepared with multidimensional employability programs. This makes the one-dimensional programs appear to be more efficient and cost effective.



Figure 1: Along with depicting the dynamic nature of being disadvantaged, this diagram shows approximately where youth who participated in PPF originated on this scale.

Unfortunately, many one-dimensional programs are neither. Many youth graduating from such factory-style programs do not have the skills necessary for the current job market, and they do not have the capacity to adapt to changing requirements and remain employable over time. In addition, programs that focus on a narrow set of technical skills often graduate many more applicants than the market can absorb. *This results in programs that essentially train youth for unemployment rather than helping them to develop their capacity to be employable.* Anticipating market demand and providing appropriate job training to meet current and emerging employment demands is not easy in any economy. In fact, rapid shifts in the global economy can make today’s hot jobs tomorrow’s redundant positions. These and other challenges suggest that job-training programs should focus on building youths’ employability and should target a broad spectrum of technical, social, and employability skills that are in demand across several economic sectors.

Joana...in the beginning...

“One day my sister told me about this project [PPF], and I decided to apply. Thanks to God, I was admitted, and today I am here telling a little bit about myself. What I hope to gain from this project is learning, experience, and, if possible, a job, because I live alone and have to support myself. I am 19 years old. My day is like this: I wake up, I go to this course, from here, I go to work, at work I wash, tidy, iron clothes, cook, and when necessary baby-sit. After work, I go to school, and then I go home.”

–Joana D’arc
Da Silva,
PPF youth



Factors Contributing to Being Disadvantaged

- Income poverty
- Poor or inadequate education
- Weak or non-existent family support systems
- Poor self-esteem
- Limited access to water, electricity, or social services in their homes and community
- Poor and inadequate nutrition
- Living in violent homes and/or communities
- Geographic isolation
- Prejudice (social, racial, gender)
- Small homogenous networks that reinforce one's disadvantaged state
- From families whose parents and grand parents have little or no education or experience working in the formal sector
- Pessimistic view of the future
- Lack of technical and workplace skills
- Poor understanding of the formal job market.

“Income poverty is an important factor to being disadvantaged, but it is only one among many that work together to cause someone to be disadvantaged.”

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

It is not easy to define the concept of being a disadvantaged or at-risk youth. Definitions commonly focus on income poverty as the primary indicator and cause of being at-risk or disadvantaged. Income poverty is an important factor to being disadvantaged, but it is only one among many that work together to cause someone to be disadvantaged. In planning for PPF, the AED team assessed the characteristics of being a disadvantaged youth in Recife. This assessment showed that a mix of mutually reinforcing factors, shown in the table on the left cause people to become and remain disadvantaged. Also, being advantaged or disadvantaged is not absolute or unchanging. Rather, there is a continuum or scale of being more or less advantaged or disadvantaged, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Furthermore, no two disadvantaged youth are disadvantaged for the same set of factors, and a person's position on this scale is not fixed; it is possible for people to move along the scale by changing the mix of factors responsible for their unique characteristics. Based on this understanding, the PPF team believed that attacking a variety of the most common factors responsible for youth being disadvantaged would create an environment in which youth could transform their lives.

A Curriculum for Employability

To address the special employability challenges of disadvantaged youth in Brazil, the PPF design team created a curriculum comprising four curriculum areas and used project-based learning to integrate this complex mix of academic, technical, employability, and social skills.

Throughout the program, students carried out learning projects that simulated the workplace and required them to apply new skills and knowledge, do research, work in teams, and create products that demonstrated real-world capacity.

FOUR CURRICULUM AREAS

The PPF design team developed an employability training curriculum that integrated the following four broad areas of learning and skills development: 1) Basic Education Skills; 2) ICT Technical Skills; 3) Social and Life Skills; and 4) Employability Skills, as shown in Figure 2.

PROJECT-BASED APPROACH TO LEARNING

The power of project-based learning is no longer questioned. The traditional teacher-led model of passively learning facts and reciting them out of context is not sufficient to prepare students to be knowledgeable workers and to meet the dynamic demands of today's workplace. Learning to solve

complex problems and adapt to the changing job market, to interact effectively with people, and to perform in diverse environments requires that students possess a mix

Project-Based Learning

“Project-based learning is... focused on teaching by engaging students in investigation. Within this framework, students pursue solutions to nontrivial problems by asking and refining questions, debating ideas, making predictions, designing plans and/or experiments, collecting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, communicating their ideas and findings to others, asking new questions, and creating artifacts (e.g., a model, a report, videotape or computer program).”

Blumenfeld, Phyllis, Soloway, E., Marx, R., Krajcik, J., Guzdial, M., & Palincsar, A. (1991) “Motivating project-based learning: Sustaining the doing, supporting the learning.” *Educational Psychologist*, 26 (3 & 4), 369–398.

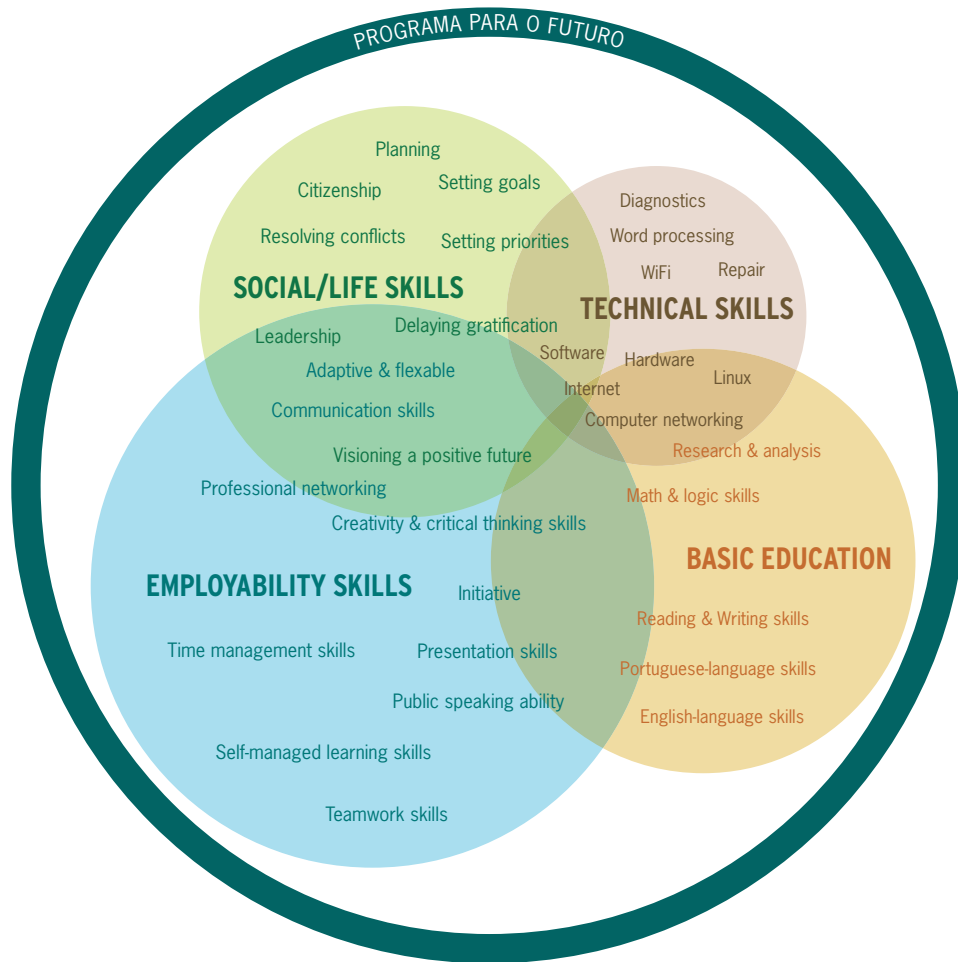


Figure 2. The PPF curriculum integrated content from four broad skill areas.

of fundamental skills. Project-based learning enables students to gain these skills quickly and to use them to become the directors of their learning process when guided and mentored by a skilled learning facilitator.

The teachers collaborated closely to develop learning projects that integrated different subjects and core competencies. The curriculum and instructional approach enabled and encouraged students to be active exploratory learners, making their own connections and building understanding and new skills by using information from the PPF reference manual, gathered from the Internet,

and from their own constructed knowledge. Gradually, students' dependence on teacher-centered instruction gave way to self-managed learning as they took responsibility for their education and future. This learner-centered approach enabled the youth to learn and build their skills at a phenomenally rapid rate.

Many PPF project-based learning tasks called for cooperation, discussion, and debate, and many projects required the teams to present their finished products to the whole group. While some tasks and projects focused on building specific skills such as math and English, others focused on hardware and

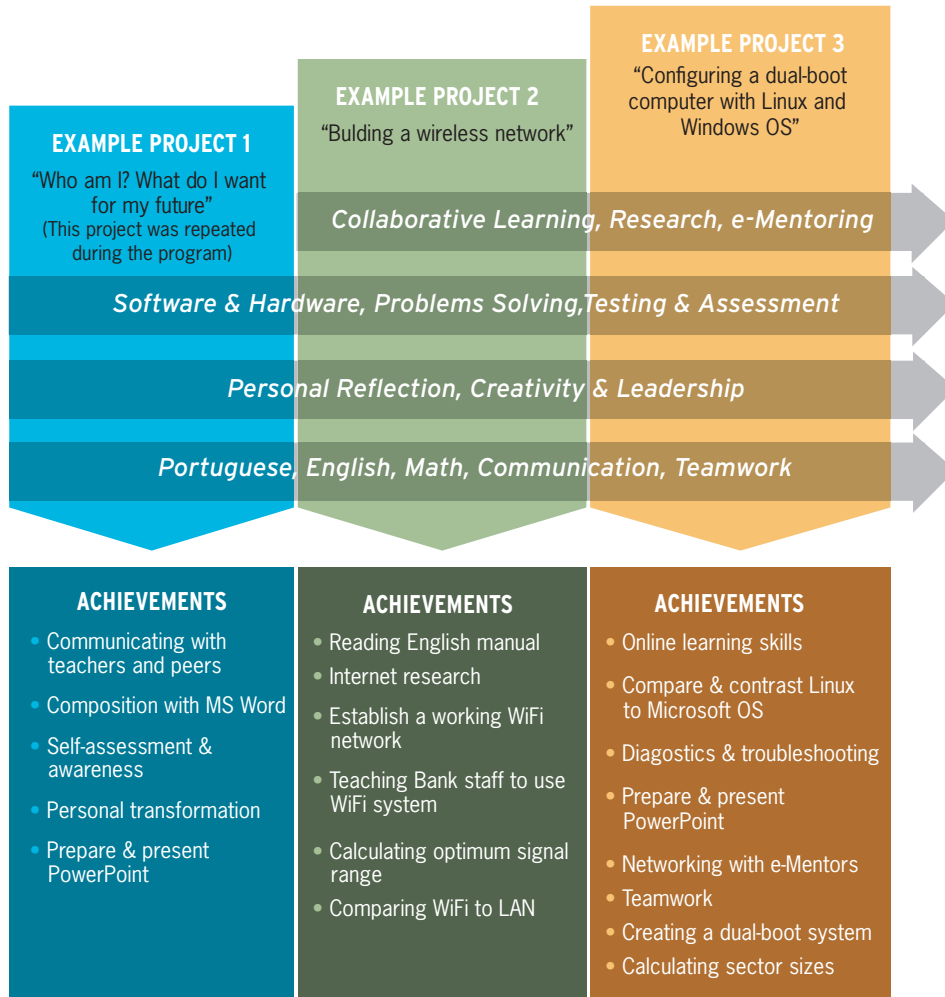


Figure 3: Illustration of how PPF core competencies are integrated across learning projects.

software skills, and still others concentrated on individual competencies. Figure 3 above shows how some of PPF's core competencies were integrated into three sample projects.

The learning projects were results-oriented and were assessed by peers and the faculty. Students organized their results into products, just as required in the workplace. Many projects also required the student teams to prepare and make PowerPoint presentations. Other projects required students to prepare formal reports, create spreadsheets, draw diagrams, develop databases, and build mini-Web sites.

BUILDING EMPLOYABILITY CAPACITY

Cutting across all learning activities was a focus on building youths' capacity to communicate and behave in a professional manner. PPF learning projects emphasized eight different employability skill areas. Figure 4 illustrates how integrating these different skill areas into a single learning program created synergy among the skills and amplified the learners' resulting employability capacity.

Youth also learned to identify job opportunities using different sources, apply for jobs, and follow-up with employers. Resume

REFLECTION ON THE PPF CURRICULUM



"I thought the program would be a course like any other, where I would simply learn something about computers. I was wrong. Instead of only preparing us to be technicians, PPF did more, with classes on gender, creativity, math, English, software, hardware, Portuguese, e-Mentoring, etc. The program built a citizen, [one] who had no expectations for life before the program. I felt privileged for having all that PPF provided, which I could never have imagined being possible."—Manoel Quaresma

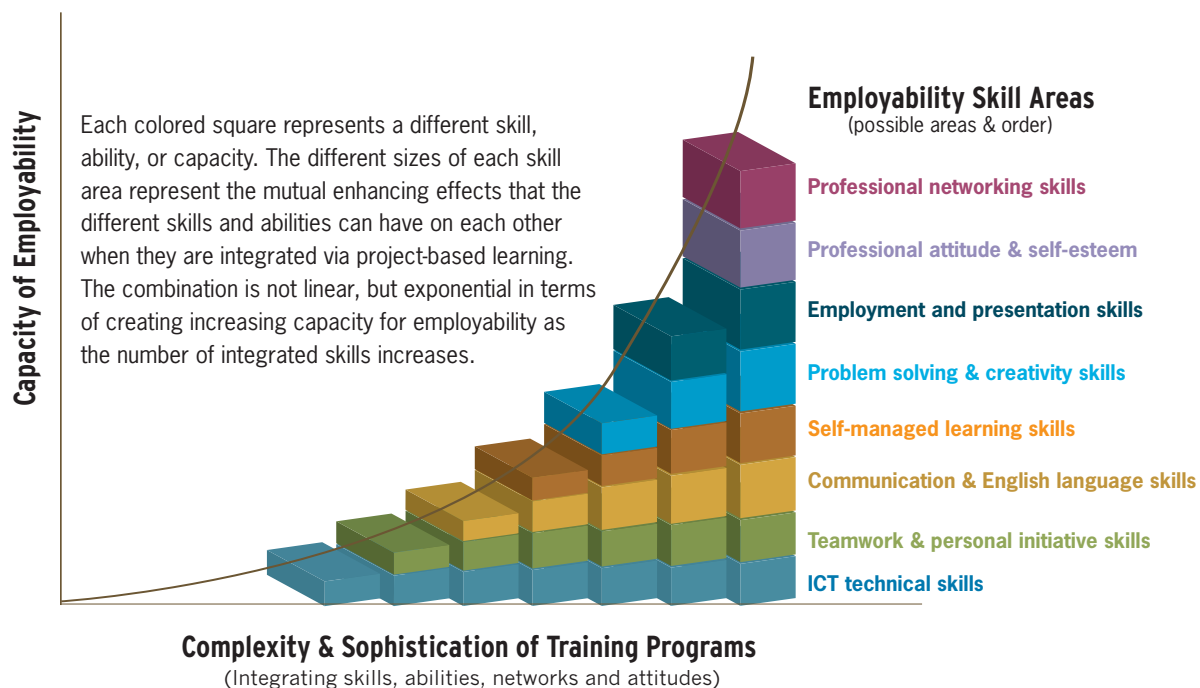


Figure 4

ONE MENTEE'S EXPERIENCE

The e-Mentoring activity was one of my favorite activities. Today, I have a mentor and a friend. She is very busy but she gives me attention whenever she has time. She helped me to understand the labor market and to see things inside of me that I had not been able to see before. This has helped me make decisions about my life. She especially helped me with spelling and grammar. She also helped strengthen my dedication, persistence, and fortitude. In short, she was marvelous.
—Joana D'arc Silva, PPF youth

writing and mock interviews with human resource professionals from partner companies provided further opportunities for students to strengthen their employability skills.

The training facility located in the Bank of Brazil enabled the youth to interact with working professionals every day. The location was a critical aspect in creating personal transformation and new behavior patterns as youth would interact regularly with working professionals, observing and modeling professional behavior and workplace communication skills. Through daily immersion in a professional environment, along with numerous presentations to visitors and professional organizations around Recife, the youth were able to gain the skills and confidence needed to imagine themselves as new

persons, in new realities, and to sustain active participation in the program. The PPF team believes that this professional training environment was one of the main reasons that 98 percent of youth who started the pilot completed this intense, yearlong training program.⁴

Along with the professional environment at the Bank of Brazil, the e-Mentoring program linked each youth with a professional through e-mail and instant messaging. Observing, modeling, and engaging professionals in substantive discussions on a regular basis was essential to enabling youth to imagine themselves as working professionals and to believe that it was really possible for them to join the professional community and pull themselves out of poverty.

⁴ One PPF youth was murdered during the program. As a result, only 49 youth actually completed the program.

One of the most important challenges of all job-training and employability programs for disadvantaged youth is making the transformation and increased employability capacity permanent. Enabling disadvantaged youth to achieve permanent transformation demands that training programs integrate as many employability skill areas as possible into a comprehensive program. The process of transformation and building employability capacity also takes time and requires consistent engagement in program activities.

EMPHASIZING STRONG COMMUNICATION SKILLS

One of the most critical employability skills is the ability to communicate effectively in writing and speaking. Weak communication skills can limit employment, close off opportunities, and cause people to avoid situations such as job interviews that highlight their shortcomings. Having a limited vocabulary and poor grammar and using slang excessively can also stimulate prejudice against youth. To address this problem, the PPF design team included building strong communication skills as one of PPF's core competencies.

All PPF learning projects integrated reading, writing, and speaking. One important communications activity was an emphasis on reflection: students and teachers wrote about their projects, their changes in perceptions, and how they were changing as people. Students presented these reflections and the results of their projects using different communication media. As with all PPF learning projects, communication activities included frequent formative assessments and continual self-, peer, and teacher evaluations of products.

Communication skills were further refined by pairs of youth making presentations to professional groups such as the Lions' Clubs of Recife and the Human Resource Association of Pernambuco. Teachers and peers provided ongoing feedback—written and verbal—on presentations made by the youth to the group or outside the training facility. The teamwork, presentations, and continual feedback nurtured the youths' self-esteem, technical skills, creativity and their ability to accept criticism, all critically important characteristics for disadvantaged youth's success in the workplace. Ana Celia Arcanjo, a PPF student, commented, *"Every public presentation is unique, and the learning is huge."*

Joana, Midway through PPF:

The Road to Achievement

"Early in the program, I gave a presentation before the Human Resource Professionals Association at the Porto Digital office. I was embarrassed to speak in public, but my shyness was applauded and eventually praised. I finished the presentation thinking that I had hurt the PPF group and myself, but Tania, the PPF coordinator, said I did well. I don't know if she said that to encourage me or if she really thought that, but I know that my first job was the fruit of this presentation."

(Author's Note: An HR representative who attended this presentation invited a group of PPF youth for interviews and hired Joana.)

THE POWER OF PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS



Eduardo Santana, a PPF graduate, is in charge of the IT department at Tozzini, Brazil's largest law firm. One day, Eduardo's boss from Tozzini's office in Recife (Tozzini, Brazil's largest law firm, is headquartered in São Paulo) asked Eduardo a question about testing the power supply of a computer without having it connected to the motherboard.

After the two had struggled together to solve this problem without success, Eduardo launched his instant messenger software and tapped into his network of peers and e-Mentors. Another PPF graduate on his network, Cleyton Santos, knew the answer to this question and together the two PPF youth solved the problem, much to the delight of Eduardo's boss.



A team of PPF youth diagnosing and repairing a computer for an eager client.

We talk with such different people. The skills we need for these occasions, I noticed, come from practicing."

The program team also invited professionals to visit the training facility to make presentations about their companies and the characteristics they look for when recruiting employees. In addition, the team arranged for staff from several IT companies in Recife to carry out specialized training sessions as a way to introduce new technologies and expose youth to the variety of ways that ICTs are important to businesses. These visits allowed the youth to observe firsthand how professionals behaved and handled questions in formal settings.

BUILDING SOCIAL AND WORKPLACE SKILLS

Helping PPF youth gain effective social and workplace skills was critical to the program's success and necessary to build the youth's

self-esteem, maturity, and social conscience. The "Who am I?" project, which was repeated during the program, was designed to help achieve students' self-awareness and build self-esteem. For this visioning activity, youth were asked to describe who they were, their daily activities at that moment, what they expected from PPF, and what they expected their future to be.

During the PPF program, the students worked in teams, just as they would in the workplace. Rather than simply moving passively from one activity to the next, the team learning process also required youth to reflect on what they were learning, the process of transformation, and to imagine themselves realistically living a future different from their current life. This reflection and visioning process proved essential to achieving transformation.



Many social issues and personal challenges surfaced during the training period. PPF staff used open discussions and collaborative decision making to address many of these problems and required the youth to take personal responsibility for their problems and to devise their own solutions. At the same time, members of the instructional team and peers worked closely with the youth to guide their reflective and diagnostic efforts and to identify causes and viable solutions. The PPF team also helped youth to understand that permanent solutions to complex problems require persistence, time, and commitment. For example, a common problem faced by youth was pressure from home to leave PPF to work in menial jobs. Talking about this problem and working with parents to see the value of making long-term investments in their children helped youth remain in the program. The team also helped the youth to use available resources and their emerging professional network to work toward successful solutions.

Essential Skills for Employment Success



Job-hunting success demands that youth integrate and demonstrate critical skills and abilities effectively. The following shows how a group of PPF youth was able to demonstrate its *Initiative*,

Self-Confidence, *Communication Skills*, and *Technical Knowledge* during an interview and gain employment.

During a group interview by a computer and telephone integration service provider (CTI Consultants) with six PPF youth, the interviewer was asked if the company worked with clients that used Linux operating system software. (Linux is the dominant open-source operating system software.) When the interviewer replied that his firm specialized in Microsoft software, Edison, one PPF youth asked if the company would be willing to lose business if it was unable to help potential clients with Linux. The owner paused and then asked the PPF youth to tell him about Linux. The six PPF youth started explaining the costs and benefits of using Linux and compared Linux and Microsoft's OS and other network operating system software.

At the end of their description of Linux, the interviewer, an IT manager, offered two of these youth jobs as interns in the company's call center and later hired Edison.

Author's Note: Through LTNNet-Brasil, PPF provided youth with an online learning program for Linux that was created and managed by staff at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul under the direction of Dr. Lea Fagundas.

PPF Critical Success Factors

Alone, the integrated curriculum and the project-based instructional method described above would not have been sufficient to enable disadvantaged youth to get jobs, develop careers and fully transform their lives.

PPF challenged youth on many levels. Over time, the youth became competent learners, open to asking questions, exploring and seeking information from multiple sources, and actively pursuing challenges—all essential for a professional career in the ICT and other sectors.

To leverage the full power of PPF's curriculum and learning method, AED incorporated a variety of program activities and tested many innovative features.

BRAZIL'S FIRST e-MENTORING PROGRAM

Professional and social networks are critical assets for finding good jobs and creating an effective career path. Few if any disadvantaged youth have such networks. The social networks of disadvantaged youth are characteristically small and homogeneous, primarily comprised of youth like themselves. As a result, these networks usually exert negative reinforcing pressures, making it extremely difficult for youth to improve their lives.

To address the absence of productive and supportive networks, AED designed and launched an e-Mentoring program. Fifty professionals from 36 organizations (mostly private companies but some government agencies and NGOs as well) made personal efforts and/or involved their companies and peers to participate in PPF's e-Mentoring program. Some companies supplied multiple mentors so that each of the 50 PPF youth had his or her own mentor. The majority of mentors worked as IT professionals, and IT companies represented about half the companies providing mentors.

PPF's full-time e-Mentoring coordinator, Maria Aparecida Cavalcante, was responsible for planning and implementing this pioneering activity in Brazil. She matched mentors to each PPF youth, developed an e-Mentors' manual, trained the professionals to be effective mentors, organized e-Mentoring activities, and facilitated the development of productive and durable mentoring relationships. Students and their

“The e-Mentoring activity is a showpiece. There is a professional who guides and tells us how to behave in a professional environment. For youth of *Programa Para o Futuro*, the job market is a new world, full of barriers to finding and keeping a job. For both youth and professionals, it has been a fantastic experience. Both learn together. Some professionals see themselves as the mirror of the youth, because all of them were young once, trying to get into the very competitive market.”

—Marilia Silva, PPF youth

e-Mentors used e-mail and instant messaging (IM) to carry out most e-Mentoring activities. The e-Mentoring program helped PPF youth learn to establish and use professional networks, while also learning to communicate professionally.

Communicating with their mentors in writing gave the youth a strong incentive to improve their Portuguese-language skills and provided an effective way of modeling professional behavior, communication, and attitudes. The result was a rapid change in the quality of language and communication used by the youth and corresponding improvements in their self-esteem and confidence. By the end of the program, the e-Mentoring network was so successful that there were more mentors than youth, and each youth interacted with several mentors. While many mentoring relationships around the world only last three to four months, the PPF mentoring relationships remained active after the program ended.

One of the most important long-term benefits of e-Mentoring is that the mentors opened doors to the professional world and provided essential contacts when youth

sought for work. Mentors also became adult friends who offered nonjudgmental advice and encouragement about the professional world and life in general. The youth were amazed that someone from outside their social and economic class would care about them as people and take a sincere interest in their future. These feelings often translated into a strong sense of personal commitment to succeed in the program as a way of repaying their mentors for believing in them. This experience also helped youth overcome some of their feelings of isolation and anger with society so common among disadvantaged youth.

GIVING STAFF THE FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY TO INNOVATE AND TAKE RISKS

Early on in the program, a human resource professional from the Bank of Brazil brought his computer to the PPF classroom to see if the students could fix it. A local computer company had told him that the computer’s motherboard was defective and that a replacement would cost more than US\$130. Two youth asked Marcio Rocha, the training facility coordinator, if they could use class time to try to diagnose and fix the computer.

ONE MENTOR'S EXPERIENCE



Jailson da Silva,
Finance Manager,
Siemens Brazil

“Being a mentor is a unique experience for me. Even though my mentee is someone from out of my company, the activity has been requiring as much responsibility as I dedicate to my own employees. The gains of this rich experience are for both mentor and mentee. Programa Para o Futuro fills a gap in social programs in Brazil. The mentees have a great and unexplored potential. They are waiting only for an opportunity. I feel honored to have participated in such a wonderful program.”

Without hesitating, Marcio suggested that they work on the computer during the last 30 minutes of the session. After a few minutes spent investigating the problem, the students discovered that a small US\$3 battery on the motherboard was no longer working. After replacing the battery, the computer started working normally. The computer's owner was stunned that these PPF youth were able to do something that the computer professional at the store was unable to do and, in the process, save him money. Word of this success spread, and soon other people started bringing their

computers to the training facility for PPF youth to repair.

The instructional team built this repair activity into learning projects and integrated it into the instructional program. Recognizing the impossibility of designing a program for every opportunity and challenge, the AED design team created a culture within the program that enabled and encouraged program staff to make decisions on their own about how best to meet the needs of youth and achieve the goals of the project. Team members also were encouraged to try different approaches and be flexible in meeting youth's diverse needs. This project culture tapped into the team's capacity to innovate and go beyond the narrow limits of each member's specific job. To reinforce this ethic, PPF management recognized and celebrated staff who took risks to try new activities and test alternative solutions. This enabled AED and the PPF team to learn a great deal about successfully preparing disadvantaged youth for quality jobs and careers and contributed much to the program's ultimate success.

PPF Student Starts Computer Repair Business



Early in the training program, PPF youth Weidson Melo approached training facility coordinator Marcio Rocha to request more opportunities to learn about computer hardware.

PPF's ethic of being responsive to the needs of the youth and commitment to the freedom to make decisions and take risks allowed Marcio to respond positively to Weidson's request and tailor learning activities to give him more time working with hardware. This level of flexibility was rewarded when Weidson established his own computer repair and service business, *W&W Informatica*, after formal training ended. Weidson's business, run out of his mother's home, is thriving and providing essential income for his family as well as enabling him to plan a bright future.

According to Weidson, *"Before Programa Para o Futuro, I could not have dreamed that it would be possible to have my own business. Like so many of my peers, I had no direction, no focus, and I had no abilities to succeed in business. I now know what I want, and I have the skills, abilities, and professional network to enable me to achieve my goals."*

SUPPORTING THE SOCIAL AND MATERIAL NEEDS OF YOUTH

PPF's social support system was vital to the pilot project's success. Youth were provided with a nutritious daily meal, which they ate with staff, two uniforms (funded by IBM-Brasil)⁵, and bus fare to and from the training site. The daily meal was essential to ensure that PPF youth could engage in rigorous learning. Providing bus fare was also a necessary economic support, since the youth

⁵ Rather than simply buying the uniforms, AED gave *Casa de Passagem*, one of PPF's NGO partners in Recife, the funds provided by IBM to buy cloth and other parts of the uniform. Casa staff then organized disadvantaged youth in its tailoring training program to sew the uniforms for the PPF students.

lived far from the city center and had no money for transportation.

Providing a professional-looking uniform was one of the most important psychological support features of PPF. It boosted the youths' self-esteem, gave them a sense of belonging to something special, and provided a unified identity, especially when they participated in public events. Providing uniforms also mitigated the problems that could arise when poor youth compared their clothing with the business dress of workers at the Bank and other offices visited by PPF students.

PPF youth faced a variety of difficult social, cultural, and economic problems. Many came from difficult home situations with single parents struggling to make ends meet, no parents, or one parent abusing drugs or alcohol. The youth wanted and needed to discuss these and other difficulties, including pregnancy (theirs or their girlfriend's) or their involvement in violence and/or drugs. Furthermore, faced serious personal and family financial concerns, and domestic disputes over money and unemployment were common.

PPF social coordinator Rosangela Maia and other core staff shared the role of responding to students' social needs. The social worker would contact youth who were absent for more than a day and follow up with parents or other adults to determine the reason. In some cases (accident, sickness, pregnancy, etc.), she invited parents for meetings, and in more critical situations, she visited the youth at home or in the hospital to offer support and identify other needs and services, such as free medical care offered by the community. The psychologist also created group activities to help the youth reflect on and address challenges they were facing at home, in

The Programa Family

During the training program, Flavia, a young unmarried female participant, became pregnant.* After a couple of months, her pregnancy made it difficult for her to take the long bus ride to the training facility, and she announced that she would have to drop out of the program. Rather than allowing her to completely leave the program, the PPF instructional team offered to provide learning materials so she could continue the PPF program at home. In addition, her PPF peers and the project social worker went to her home to help her with her studies, and they encouraged her to stay in the program. After three months at home, Flavia returned to the classroom and completed the training program. She gave birth toward the end of the training period and with help from her family for child care, she was able to accept the scholarship at IBRATEC for the technical degree program. This combination of perseverance and the ability of the PPF team to respond flexibly to Flavia's needs were rewarded when Flavia was hired as an intern at Coca-Cola.

* Studies show that approximately 18 percent of Brazilian teens (15-19 years old) become pregnant. (Health Ministry, 2004)

finding employment, or in adjusting to courses at IBRATEC. During these sessions, the youth also discussed their progress, current challenges, and goals for the future. In addition, the social worker and psychologist organized bimonthly meetings with the youth's families at the training facility, providing critical support for the youth's success in the program.

EMPLOYING SPECIALIZED STAFF

Much of PPF's success was due to employing specialized and experienced professionals for different aspects of the pilot program. It is common for social programs in Brazil and elsewhere to rely heavily on volunteers to implement program activities. Volunteers can be powerful additions to programs; however, over-relying on them, especially to fill core jobs, can hinder program success since they may not have the needed skills and can easily leave a program for paid employment. In contrast, using skilled professionals increases program quality and continuity. Many e-Mentors, for instance, commented that the success of the e-Mentoring program would not have been possible without the daily coordination and weekly support provided by PPF's full-time e-Mentoring coordinator. At the same time, employing skilled professionals can increase costs and limit the number of youth who can participate.



PPF benefited greatly from the services of a paid professional team. Given that PPF was a pilot project with a mandate to test new methodologies and approaches, PPF used more staff than would be found in an ongoing program. Ten paid staff comprised the core instructional team, covering software, hardware, math, English, and Portuguese, along with creativity and employability activities. Staff also were hired to manage such specialized PPF activities as gender awareness, e-Mentoring, and social work and to coordinate activities at the training facility. Given the different subject areas and the team-teaching approach, the average student-to-teacher ratio in the classroom was 3:1. Now that the pilot is complete, the design team believes that a five-member core instruction team, comprised of multi-skilled professionals, will be able to carry out the program with no loss in quality.

INVESTING IN TEACHERS

One of the most critical challenges facing all comprehensive employability training programs for disadvantaged youth is creating an approach to and an environment for learning that can enable youth to learn a great deal of knowledge *rapidly*, gain expertise in many new skills quickly, durably transform their attitudes, and build their capacity to become employable. Recognizing that conventional teacher-centered approaches and traditional classrooms cannot enable youth to achieve all of these goals, nor accomplish them in relatively little time, AED and LTNet-Brasil developed its learning approach to accelerate

PPF Graduate Excels Professionally and Academically



Just two months after starting his courses at IBRATEC, PPF graduate Cleyton Gonçalves and another IBRATEC student were selected by their network teacher to work as volunteer IT technical assistants at the Federal University of Pernambuco's School of Economics. Three months later, Cleyton was hired as a formal employee by PROMATA, a large Pernambuco State project.

At the end of his first semester at IBRATEC, Cleyton received the "Top Team" prize given to the students with the best grades at the school (based on objective assessments and teacher recommendations). Cleyton continues to receive recognition, not only for his technical skills, but also for his networking ability and leadership. He stays in weekly contact with his e-Mentor and is recognized by his peers as a model of the success to which they aspire.

learning and create a learning environment to leverage the youths' own energy and hunger for learning and a better future.

Central to PPF's learning approach was preparing professional teachers to teach in new ways and in an unconventional classroom.⁶ All PPF teachers faced tremendous challenges adapting to PPF's student-centered project-based learning approach and adjusting to the radically different team-teaching environment. Brazil's education system, rooted in the French tradition, relies on a formal teacher-centered approach to instruction based primarily on subject-specific lectures. In PPF, teachers became learning facilitators and members of collaborative learning teams within the one-room training facility.

Collaborative teaching ensured that multiple subjects and topics were integrated into learning projects and that the youth had rapid access to a variety of learning facilitators as needed to guide learning activities. PPF's approach to team teaching heightened student interest in the different subject areas and provided the youth with a high degree of personalized contact with adults. PPF's approach to collaborative learning also stimulated a great deal of peer learning among the youth.

To prepare these teachers for PPF, LTNet-Brasil, one of the four Brazilia

⁶ PPF recruited most of the teachers from public schools. One of the computer teachers came from an IT company, and the others were recruited from a private technical school.

⁷ Dr. Valente is a professor at University of Campinas and one of the pioneer developers of methodologies for integrating ICT in education in Brazil.

PPF's e-Mentoring Coordinator, Marli Cavalcante, enjoying the joy of success with three PPF youth

collaborated with AED on the project, designed and carried out an intense two-week teacher training program. The program designed with help from Dr. José Armando Valente⁷, a volunteer advisor with PPF, focused on active, project-based learning and the integrated subject matter that comprised the PPF curriculum. LTNet-Brasil designed the training program to enable the PPF teachers, who had originally been trained in conventional teaching methods, to transition quickly to the new approach. Since most of the teachers, other than the hardware and software teachers, had little experience using computers or the Internet (several teachers had never used e-mail before the training), the training program also provided staff with introductory computer and Internet skills, with a focus on using these tools in learning projects.

To prevent teachers from reverting to the comfort of their conventional approaches, PPF provided them with an online learning environment, which they used throughout the project. LTNet-Brasil created and administered this environment that connected the PPF teaching team to volunteer professors at the University of Campinas, to a doctoral graduate student from Catholic University of São Paulo, and to PPF's pedagogical coordinator. Teachers could ask questions, daily if necessary, and publish their learning projects online for

ADDRESSING PERSONAL ISSUES

"I was quite motivated, but in the last months of the program, I became a bit depressed because of the many problems at home... There are times when we need to speak about our problems, or it becomes impossible to concentrate on anything. It is good to be able to talk about this with the social worker or psychologist." –PPF Youth

"I have already felt all emotions possible in this project; all good and bad things are possible. I lived through so many experiences at PPF, and I met so many people from whom I learned. Wow, when I look back, I am amazed at how I have grown." –PPF Youth

"It was very hard to deal with the pressure from my family; after all, I am 19 and need to work and help support my family. But, I resisted the pressure and told them that to have a better opportunity, I would have to finish my course at PPF. Today, my family understands." –PPF Youth



The dialogue that emerged among the instructional team and between faculty and advisors from LTNNet-Brasil resulted in a creative process that encouraged flexibility in applying the curriculum. To enhance this online environment, LTNNet-Brasil organized weekly meetings with the teachers, project coordinator, and pedagogical advisors. This online and face-to-face professional development system provided essential support to the teachers and enabled them to adopt the PPF instructional approach. A critical part of this success was PPF's effort to have teachers evaluate and reflect on each day's activities and revise their approach as needed.

Despite the challenges of transitioning to the new approach, all but one of the teachers stayed with PPF until the end of the program.

During the pilot, many teachers commented that they had never experienced such a rapid rate of student learning, and they expressed concern that they would have a difficult time returning to a conventional classroom in their public schools, where teaching and learning were less enjoyable and less effective.

INCLUDING FIRST OFFENDERS IN PPF

Brazil's Justice Ministry operates a "First Offenders" program that allows NGOs, in partnership with government agencies, to organize community service activities for youth under age 21 who have been arrested for their first offense. NGOs that work with first offenders usually do not integrate these youth into social programs for non-first-offender youth. Some NGOs in Recife that have tried integrating first-offender youth into existing programs report that these experiences have failed. Nonetheless, the project director believed that it was possible to integrate these extremely disadvantaged

youth successfully into PPF by applying the following principles:

- **Dilution Effect:** Limiting the number of first-offender youth per training group makes it possible to effectively integrate these youth into the group and thus mitigate the impact of possible misbehavior.
- **Modeling Positive Behavior:** Youth characteristically want to be like their peers and will often model the attitudes and behavior of the group. This factor coupled with the dilution effect increases opportunities for troubled youth to learn and practice positive behavior patterns.
- **Anonymity:** Only three PPF staff knew who the first-offender youth were. This enabled these youth to enter the program without the pressure of prejudice, preconceptions or expectations about their character. In their PPF uniforms, these youth were like all the other PPF youth, and they could freely adopt positive behavior and attitudinal patterns.
- **Support and Counseling:** The more disadvantaged youth are, the more support and care they need to enable them to transform their lives. In addition to the support provided by PPF to all youth, the first offender youth were discretely provided with additional counseling time, home visits and attention.

To test this belief, PPF and Justice Ministry staff identified four first-offender youth to integrate into the program. Of these four first offenders, two—Marta and Pedro (not their real names)—graduated and went on to begin successful careers. Marta became adept at building and fixing computers and served as the project's digital photographer. After the

“The program design also allocated specific project activities among the partners based on their professional expertise, practical experience, local knowledge, and networks. At the same time, PPF’s collaborative management system enabled and encouraged innovation and the integration of new ideas—two factors critical to the success of all pilot projects.”

program, she turned down the scholarship to IBRATEC to pursue art classes and part-time work. Because of Marta’s progress and success, her sentence was commuted. Pedro also made exceptional progress in the program. He accepted the scholarship to IBRATEC, and a local organization hired him full time as a technical support technician. Pedro also had his sentence commuted. The third first offender completed the program, but because of a serious problem with drugs, he has been unable to secure employment. Unfortunately, the fourth first offender was murdered during the program.

The success with two of these special students demonstrates that it is possible to include some very disadvantaged youth in programs like PPF. Doing so, however, requires a high level of commitment and additional support resources. Relatively small amounts of money can be invested in these youth early in their lives to help them become productive citizens with promising futures.

MULTIPARTNER COLLABORATION

AED collaborated with four Brazilian NGOs to implement the PPF pilot project. These NGOs were chosen as partners because of their unique strengths, knowledge about Brazil and Recife, experience working with disadvantaged youth, networks with local businesses, and in one case, the capacity of one NGO to develop and refine the PPF curriculum and learning

methods. AED also felt that the process of working together on the pilot project would build the capacity of each NGO and create opportunities for sustainability.

Nearly all decisions about implementing PPF were made collaboratively and responsibilities for carrying out project tasks were shared. The program design also allocated specific project activities among the partners based on their professional expertise, practical experience, local knowledge, and networks. At the same time, PPF’s collaborative management system enabled and encouraged innovation and the integration of new ideas—two factors critical to the success of all pilot projects. In addition to the benefits arising from this collaborative structure, working with four local NGO partners increased the complexity, difficulty, and labor costs involved in managing PPF. Regardless of the inherent challenges in working collaboratively with multiple organizations, the open approach fostered by AED and the project’s design team, and Tania Ogasawara’s collaborative management style contributed greatly to PPF’s success.

Three of the project’s NGO partners—*Casa de Passagem*, *Porto Digital*, and *CDI-Pernambuco*—are based in Recife. The fourth, *LTNet-Brasil*, which has a national mandate to improve the use of information technology in education, is based in Brasilia. Each NGO





Marcio Rocha, PPF training facility coordinator, providing personalized guidance to one of PPF's youth. This style of collaborative learning with faculty working as learning facilitators accelerated learning and enabled youth develop life-long learning skills.”

partner provided staff for the project, oversaw specific program components, and contributed materials, resources, and financial support to carrying out PPF.

- **Casa de Passagem**, a well-established NGO with years of experience working with youth and families in some of Recife's poorest communities, was responsible for the social and psychological components of the project and managed meals and transportation for the youth, provided teachers, and managed relationships with the families.
- **CDI-Pernambuco**, with a mission to bridge the digital divide for disadvantaged youth, helped with corporate partnerships, installed equipment in the training room,

provided ICT teachers, and helped with employability activities.

- **Porto Digital**, which incubates IT businesses in the State of Pernambuco, supported employability activities, provided links to local companies, coordinated events, interacted with the local media, and hosted the e-Mentoring and the project coordinators.
- **LTNet-Brasil** developed the curriculum and learning methodology, designed and carried out the teacher training, developed and managed the online professional development environment for teachers, coordinated day-to-day youth training activities, and provided the pedagogical coordinator.

Thelma Torres, executive director of Casa de Passagem, felt that the multiple NGO partners worked well together: *“For Casa de Passagem, the program represented a successful experience in collaborative work, accumulating the knowledge of each partner as a complementary action.”*

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The success of any employability project depends on its ability to prepare youth with the skills and abilities to fulfill the needs of the workplace and to enable youth to remain employable throughout their lives.

Throughout the project, AED and PPF staff created and maintained strong links to the private sector in Recife and around Brazil to ensure that training activities and the skills gained by the youth would match those in demand by the job market. Before designing the curriculum, AED surveyed local human resource staff in the private sector to ensure that the program met employers’ needs. Frequent presentations to companies and business associations, and the e-Mentoring program, provided students with a mix of professional networks and a greater understanding of professional life and employer expectations.

USAID’s commitment to the pilot project helped AED to attract private sector partners to support PPF. Without USAID support, it is likely that few, if any, private companies would have been willing to take the risk of supporting an unproven approach to employability training. The following five companies contributed material and financial support and helped to make PPF successful:

- **The Bank of Brazil** donated a large room with electricity, air conditioning, and security on the ninth floor of its headquarters in Recife for the project’s training facility.
- **IBM-Brasil** provided a server, 20 desktop and seven laptop computers, and funds to purchase printers and to enable *Casa de Passagem* to make the youths’ uniforms. IBM-Brasil also contributed 3 volunteers who provided training activity for youth on special hardware and employability.
- **Microsoft Brasil** provided software for the training facility, including Legacy versions of Microsoft operating system software.
- **IBRATEC**, the premier IT technical college in Northeast Brazil, provided scholarships for all PPF youth for its 1.5-year technical training program.
- **ABA**, a well-established English-language school in Recife, provided two English teachers free of charge.

In addition to these five major partners, some 36 small to large companies and organizations in and around Recife made it possible for their staff to become PPF e-Mentors. AED could not have implemented PPF without this support from the private sector. AED estimates that the monetary value of private sector contributions to carrying out PPF exceeded US\$400,000. Of possibly greater importance than the financial value of these contributions was the psychological impact of this commitment on the youth and the links to the real world of work these partnerships enabled.

Achievements, Replicating, and Scaling

As of May 2005, approximately one year after formal training ended, 92 percent of the PPF graduates have worked, were attending postsecondary school, or both.

Of this total, 43 have worked since graduating, and 35 are enrolled in postsecondary education programs, including 31 at IBRATEC and three at public universities (public universities are free in Brazil but are very difficult to get into). The 92 percent “employability rate” achieved by PPF surpassed all expectations.

In addition, many PPF graduates either have been promoted or have moved from their first job to better positions. Most of the youth found employment as formal paid interns. A national law regulates internships in Brazil and requires youth to be enrolled in a certified education programs to qualify for internships. Under this internship program, firms are able to provide young people with their first formal work experience as interns for the duration of the education program. Although internships are not supposed to substitute for formal employment, employers often see them as an alternative to formal employment because they are a less costly way to hire staff. As a

result, most Brazilians begin their careers in the formal sector through these internships.⁸

Most of the youth took jobs as IT technical support staff. One in four accepted managerial or administrative positions, and one in 10 work in other sectors. Remarkably, most PPF youth are earning salaries one-third higher than the government’s minimum salary (similar to the minimum wage in the United States), proving the PPF program’s success in breaking the poverty cycle for these youth. In addition, as of April 2005, at least 10 employed youth received salary increases, and some were working in managerial positions supervising at least one other employee.

Many companies that hired PPF youth commented on the exceptional qualities of the graduates. One human resources manager at Amanco, a subsidiary of Teletex (a national ICT technical service provider), had this to say about their employee from PPF: “*The main*

⁸ The internship program provides young students with job experience and allows companies to hire young employees at a lower cost. Taxes and benefits, on average, add about 130 percent overhead to a salary in Brazil, versus an average 35 percent overhead in the United States.

difference between Alex and the other interns is his humbleness. When he does not know the solution to a problem, he seeks help from more experienced people. Alex recently traveled to Joinville in the south of Brazil for training at the company's headquarters. He proved himself a dynamic and committed learner. If there are more openings at my company, I have no doubts about inviting a PPF youth to compete in the hiring process."

REPLICATING PPF

Based on the PPF experience, AED staff believe this new model for employability can be replicated within Brazil and elsewhere and scaled up to help address the growing demand for this type of initiative. AED staff also believe that the lessons learned from the pilot will enable organizations to implement this comprehensive employability program for a lower cost and in less time than the pilot required. While this project focused on preparing youth to be competitive candidates for jobs and careers in the ICT sector, the design team believes that PPF could easily be adapted for other technical areas and economic sectors.

One of the keys to successful replication of PPF in Brazil or elsewhere is to ensure that the core elements of the program and the high-impact success factors described above are included in future versions of the program. If a version of PPF were to be replicated in a different part of Brazil or in another country, it would be essential that the main program elements be adapted to local realities, especially with respect to the job market.

At the time of publication, AED staff were designing a follow-on PPF project. In designing PPF II, the AED team is applying lessons learned from the pilot and enhancing the initial design by including new program

elements. The following new elements are being integrated into the enhanced version of PPF:

- **Use Graduates as Volunteers:** To accelerate the process of youth adapting to the PPF approach, the new project will make extensive use of graduates from the first PPF program as volunteers. These graduates will demonstrate better than any staff member the impact PPF can have on their future and will focus attention on critical elements of the program. Some graduates may also become e-Mentors.
- **Integrate Entrepreneurship Training:** Because some youth are more interested in starting their own businesses than attending college or working for someone else, the new program will include an entrepreneurship specialization component. This new curriculum will enable youth to learn critical business skills and will lead to developing a business plan and request for a micro-loan. AED will then partner with a local bank or micro-lending NGO to create opportunities for graduates from PPF with an entrepreneurship specialization to secure business start-up loans.
- **Increase the Number of First-Offender Youth:** As with the pilot program, PPF II will continue to include youth from more extremely disadvantaged populations such as youth in Brazil's first-offenders program. The goal is to increase the number of such youth to possibly 25 percent of the total participants and to seek funding to provide these youth with access to special counseling and support services.



Celebrating Achievement and Success



JOANA: Near the end of the PPF, a local hardware company hired Joana as their IT intern. The Joana who is now working is completely different from the young woman who joined PPF a year earlier. Over the course of PPF, Joana became an active participant in all learning projects and discussions and is assertive and self-assured about her abilities and future. At the time of publication, Joana was married and about to give birth to her first child. After the arrival of her daughter, Joana intends to reenter the job market and study English or Spanish. Joana also plans to leverage her skills and new attitudes by eventually starting her own business. Reflecting on her past, Joana can hardly believe that her life has changed so much and as a young mother, she now has the abilities to succeed for herself and her daughter.

GEORGE: After completing PPF, Sintequímica (a pigments processing company) hired George as a Production Planning and Control Technician to plan and monitor the production of pigments at a factory. He still lives at home and now helps to support his family and retired grandparents. Reflecting on his situation before PPF George says, “Without PPF I wonder what I would be doing today. I had no technical skills before PPF while today they are essential for my job.” Speaking like a mature professional, he describes a recent conversation with his boss where he negotiated his salary and received a 30 percent raise. Even though he is working, George comments that he will continue to “keep an eye on the market.” He ends his conversation by inviting the PPF coordinator to visit his company. “It would be a pleasure showing you the plant and my job” explains George, with pride and confidence.

CÍNTIA: Through her e-Mentor, Cintia learned about a job opportunity with Capital Login, a local IT Support Company. She first started working as a volunteer but was soon hired as an intern. At the start of her job, her boss gave her the English manual for a new software application that she had to learn to use in order to test and develop programs. In addition to work, she used her professional network to earn a scholarship at one of the best English schools in Recife. She now studies English on Saturdays, attends IBRATEC in the morning and works in the afternoon. When she started, she was the only woman in her department working with software development. Her eagerness to get ahead drove Cintia to work at a phone company’s call center in the evening. As her internship approaches its end, she is looking to the future and hopes to transition to a formal job so that she can enroll in a preparatory course for the federal university in Recife, where she wants to study computer science. Unlike her life before PPF, Cintia now has realistic dreams for a bright future and the skills, abilities and networks to achieve them.

- **Emphasize Leadership Skills:** An unanticipated result from the pilot was that many PPF youth developed their leadership skills. To capitalize on this, PPF II will introduce explicit projects and activities to guide youth in developing and honing their innate leadership abilities. Feedback from employers shows that youth who exhibit such skills are more successful in the workplace than are youth who do not have these skills.
- **Establish an Alumni Network:** One of the most important assets from the PPF pilot is the graduates. One of the consequences of PPF is that very strong bonds of caring and professional commitment developed among PPF youth. AED is building on these qualities by establishing a formal PPF Alumni Network and will use this network to implement different aspects of the new version of the program.
- **Create a Computer Refurbishing Facility:** As PPF graduates transition from internships to jobs and from one job to another, it is critically important that they have access to a place where they can prepare job applications, receive advice, use computers with Internet access, and learn about new opportunities from peers and staff. At the same time, these youth need a place where they can remain connected to the program and learn new skills. To achieve this, AED is planning to create a computer refurbishing facility linked to the PPF training site. This facility will also provide a meeting space for alumni activities; and make it possible for youth who are between jobs to work in a positive environment and sharpen their skills by refurbishing computers.

SCALING UP PPF

To enable AED to scale up PPF so that many more youth can benefit from this training experience, staff are developing several high-potential scaling up strategies. In addition to enabling PPF to scale up, these enhancements to PPF may also increase opportunities for sustainability. The scaling-up strategies include:

- **Linking with Public Schools:** Establishing substantive links with public high schools to enable youth graduating from public school will have some of the skills needed to effectively transition to jobs and careers. This effort would be piloted with one or two high schools in collaboration with local government.
- **Building NGO Capacity:** While the new PPF program will continue the strategy of working with local NGOs to implement PPF, the new effort will likely include a more explicit focus on building the capacity of these partners to initiate similar training activities and adapt features of PPF into their existing programs.
- **Expanding Private Sector Partnerships:** To provide essential inputs and resources and enhance job opportunities, the next version of PPF will expand private sector partnerships.
- **Promoting e-Mentoring:** Along with expanding the full PPF program, AED will take the e-Mentoring activity, and possibly other PPF elements, and create stand-alone project activities. AED believes that the e-Mentoring program could provide powerful enhancements to many other youth programs while also increasing opportunities for small companies to engage in social responsibility initiatives.



“The children of youth who **transform** their lives will also likely replicate their parents’ success.”



- **Highlighting New Perspectives about Youth:** One of the pilot program’s prominent features was being very transparent about what the program team was learning and communicating this information in a variety of ways. The new PPF program will continue and expand this effort and more actively promote new perspectives on youth employability as an essential part of the scaling-up strategy.

IMPORTANT ISSUES

There is an urgent need to provide opportunities for large numbers of disadvantaged youth to benefit from programs like PPF. In seeking to scale up activities, however, it can be very tempting to eliminate or water down program elements, shorten the training period to less than six months, or use ad hoc volunteers in place of professional educators to make the program more affordable and to increase the numbers of youth who can be served. Unfortunately, such efforts would create an ineffective program that would not produce the results of the pilot effort. Considering the following issues can help program designers make decisions about modifying the PPF program design.

- **Quantity vs. quality:** Scaling up programs without commensurate increases in funding or private sector contributions will likely result in decreased quality of the employability training and lower immediate and long-term success of youth. Increasing the numbers of youth participating in PPF is a

critically important target; however, achieving short-term quantitative gains at the expense of immediate and long-term employability capacity of youth is shortsighted and an ineffective use of scarce resources. Careful scaling up of PPF can help identify the correct balance between increasing the number of youth and retaining quality results. Optimizing program inputs with outputs will likely provide the greatest benefits to youth and produce the greatest return on investment (ROI).

Joana, At the End of the Project:

A Productive Future Before Her

“After entering the PPF program, I became a more confident person. High self-esteem is my friend. I live without fear, and am less timid and more communicative. I have become even more responsible, and my will to be successful is even stronger. I know I will attain my dreams. I know I will arrive where I want to be in life and truly be a new person. All of these transformations I owe first to God, and then to the Programa Para o Futuro.”



- **Transforming disadvantaged youth vs. preparing advantaged youth for jobs:** Designing and implementing employability training programs for disadvantaged youth is different from, and more expensive and much more challenging than, doing the same for more advantaged youth. Organizations that want to work with disadvantaged youth must recognize these critical differences and allocate sufficient resources to achieve success. One of the most important characteristics of disadvantaged youth is their fragility. They usually lack the family and social systems to protect them from failed programs, and they have less capacity to bounce back when their expectations are raised and then dashed by inadequate or poorly designed initiatives.
- **Permanent transformation vs. temporary change:** One of the biggest challenges facing programs for disadvantaged youth is making it possible for these youth to permanently transform their lives and break the cycle of persistent poverty. If these goals are not achieved, then much, if not all, of the investment made in these youth can be lost. At the same time, achieving these goals demands multidimensional programs that

target the principal causes of being and remaining disadvantaged. Programs for disadvantaged youth must carefully consider whether they will contribute significantly to enabling youth to transform their lives or simply enable temporary change.

- **Measuring program success:** During the design and implementation of employability training programs, it is important to determine the most appropriate measures of program success. It is common for programs to focus on inputs as measures of success, such as the number of youth recruited, the number trained, the attendance rate, etc. These measures are important, but they are not sufficient to measure success, which should focus on immediate and long-term program results. For example, the number of youth who gain immediate jobs at the end of a program is important; however, the number who remain employed over time and progress to better jobs and careers is a much more effective measure of success. Being able to transition to postsecondary education opportunities such as colleges and universities can also be a much more important indicator of long-term success and impact than just getting an entry-level job or

Many of the PPF family celebrating a successful presentation at the Bank of Brazil. Demonstrating that joy comes from personal achievement and being part of a successful group.

internship. Determining the quality of jobs and the career prospects for specific jobs is another important measure of success. True employability training programs should target lifelong employability not just immediate, temporary jobs.

- **The economic and social value of permanent transformation and employability (ROI) vs. the ROI of basic job training:** Job-training programs for disadvantaged youth rarely try to measure their ROI. When such calculations are attempted, they are usually limited to dividing the total cost of the program by the number of youth trained and then comparing the cost per trainee to the value of the immediate jobs these youth get. This simplistic calculation does not capture the full spectrum of the social and economic value of successful

employability training programs for disadvantaged youth. A more accurate calculation would include the value to society of enabling youth who were likely to remain a drain on society to become full citizens and make positive social and economic contribution to their communities and countries. Another important element of an ROI calculation is the value of adding new and creative human capital to society, compared to what would be lost if these youth remain disadvantaged and never have the opportunity to achieve their potential. We should also include the value of breaking the cycle of intergenerational unemployment so common with disadvantaged people. *Ultimately, the children of youth who transform their lives will also likely replicate their parents' success.*

Frequently Asked Questions

Programa Para o Futuro Fact Sheet

- **Who provided the funds for PPF?** The Brazil office of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provided US\$400,000 in core funding to design and carry out the PPF pilot project. In addition to this funding, each of the four Brazilian NGOs that partnered with AED provided essential contributions. *Porto Digital*, for example, contributed high-speed Internet access for the training facility; *Casa de Passagem*, contributed food it received as donations to help prepare meals for PPF youth; LTN-Brasil provided free air tickets to enable the pedagogical advisors from São Paulo to visit Recife for ongoing training activities; and CDI-Pernambuco contributed staff time. In addition, as mentioned earlier, several private companies provided critical inputs and funds equal to about US\$400,000 to help support different aspects of PPF.



- **How many youth participated in PPF?** Of a pool of 200 applicants, 50 youth ages 16–21 were selected from disadvantaged communities in the metropolitan area of Recife, in the State of Pernambuco to participate. An equal number of boys and girls comprised this group. Within this group of 50 youth, four were from the first-offenders program in Recife.
- **How much time did the youth spend training during a typical week?** Two four-hour training sessions were held each day, and 25 youth participated in each session. This training allowed youth who were completing high school to attend a morning or afternoon PPF session and then attend their high school program during the other part of the day.
- **How long did the PPF program last?** Formal training activities lasted one year. Training started on May 5, 2003, and ended April 30, 2004. Since not all youth had found jobs or had enrolled in IBRATEC at the end of the formal training program, informal training activities were extended for four months. This extension allowed youth who had not yet found jobs to use the training facility to search for openings, prepare letters, print copies of their resume, and communicate with peers and e-Mentors via e-mail and instant messaging.



- **Were all PPF staff full-time paid employees, or did PPF use volunteers?** Most PPF staff were part-time paid employees. All paid staff were hired through one of the four Brazilian NGOs that partnered with AED. Some staff worked part-time at PPF while also working on other projects of their parent organizations. Some staff, such as the English teachers provided by ABA, worked as volunteers and were paid by their host institution. All 53 e-Mentors were also volunteers. The project coordinator, e-Mentoring coordinator, training facility coordinator, and some of the teachers were full-time paid employees.



- **How did PPF make it possible for youth to make presentations to companies and organizations in Recife?** Early in the project, staff at ASSESSPRO⁹ asked Tania Ogasawara, the PPF program coordinator, to make a presentation about PPF to their members. Rather than simply accepting this invitation, Tania suggested that it might be better to include some youth in the presentation. Nine youth volunteered for this special activity. With coaching from Tania and other members of the program team, the youth prepared a PowerPoint presentation about PPF and practiced their presentation in front of their peers and instructors. Using one of PPF's laptop computers donated by IBM-Brasil and the program's projector, the youth made their first-ever formal presentation to strangers. The success of this activity led the program team to arrange for all youth to gain similar experience creating and making presentations to other groups and companies around Recife on different aspects of PPF.



- **How was the two-week teacher training activity organized?** The first week of teacher training used a hands-on approach to learn about PPF's project-based learning method, create learning projects, learn to work in instructional teams, and learn to use computers. During the second week, a group of youth joined the training program to enable the teachers to practice the new teaching approach and test their learning projects with real students. Including real students in the training program improved teacher learning and accelerated the process of transitioning from their conventional teaching style to PPF's project-based approach.



- **How were the four first-offender youth selected?** Three PPF staff worked with local NGOs that implement the Justice Ministry's Program *Liberdade Assistida* to identify a pool of first offenders from which candidates were selected. Only five first-offender youth old enough to participate in PPF were identified by the Ministry team. From this pool, the PPF team selected four youth. Only three PPF staff knew the identity of the first offenders at the start of the program, and none of the other youth knew that first offenders were participating in the program. The design team felt it was critical that the first offenders begin the program without any prejudice from the instructional team or their peers. Every two months, the social coordinator, the social worker, and the project coordinator held meetings with social workers from NGOs and the Recife Municipal Government who were responsible for the first offenders participating in PPF to report on the progress of these youth.
- **How did PPF arrange for the scholarships for youth to attend IBRATEC?** As part of routine efforts to reach out to different companies, organizations, and institutions in Recife, PPF coordinator Tania Ogasawara scheduled a meeting with David Stephens, IBRATEC's president, to tell him about PPF. In addition to the value of a college program, attending IBRATEC, would enable youth to seek jobs as formal interns. This discussion eventually led to IBRATEC's offering all PPF youth, who had completed high school and graduated from PPF, scholarships to attend this highly respected technical program.

⁹ ASSESSPRO—*Associação das Empresas de Tecnologia da Informação Software e Internet* (Association of Information Technology, Software and Internet Businesses).

AED's Partners in Implementing Programa Para o Futuro



Casa de Passagem coordinated activities for the social and psychological development of youth, managed meals and transportation, provided teachers, and managed relationships with families.



CDI-PE helped with partnerships for corporate contributions, installed the equipment in training room, provided IT teachers, and helped with employability.



LTNet-Brasil developed the instructional curriculum and methodology, carried out teacher training, coordinated youth training activities, and provided the pedagogical coordinator.



Porto Digital supported employability activities, linked with local companies, coordinated events, and hosted the e-Mentoring and project coordinators.

The following companies and organizations provided critical inputs, support and funds for the pilot phase of *Programa Para o Futuro*.



Associação Brasil América (ABA)—Provided two English-language teachers free of charge.



Bank of Brazil—Provided the program with the room for the PPF training facility on the ninth floor of its office building in Recife. This included free electricity, security, air conditioning, and staff support.



IBM-Brasil—Donated all computer equipment used by PPF, including a server, 20 desktops, and seven laptop computers. IBM also provided funds to purchase printers and to pay for student uniforms made by Casa de Passagem.



IBRATEC—This private college provided scholarships for all PPF youth to attend the 1.5-year technical training college for free.



Microsoft Brazil—Provided all Microsoft software applications for free, including the network operating system, MS Office, and legacy versions of the Windows operating systems.

The following companies and organizations in Recife and São Paulo allowed their employees to participate in Brazil's first e-Mentoring program.

Ampla
Aris Tecnologia
ABA
Athiva Tecnologia
Bompreço
Câmara Municipal do Recife
Casa de Passagem
Centro de Informática da UFPE
Centro Social L. Freire
CIEE
Corpo de Bombeiros
Creatto Comunicação

Deloitte
Developtec
Diretiva Digital
Hotlink
Esposende Calçados
Eurovia Veículos
Faculdade São Miguel
FISEPE
FITec
GCF Sistemas
SESC
DETRAN-PE

Capital Login
Ministério Público-PE
Novar
Porto Digital
Prefeitura do Recife
Portais Brasil
PROCENGE
SEBRAE-PE
Siemens
Tempest
UFRPE
W3 Tecnologia



Academy for Educational Development
Connecting People > Creating Change

AED Headquarters

1825 Connecticut Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20009
Tel. (202) 884-8000
Fax (202) 884-8400

AED•Brasil Office

togasawara@aed.org
Recife, Brazil
+55-81-9272-6198

<http://www.aed.org>