



International
Labour
Organization

THE PREJAL PROJECT:

Promoting Youth Employment in Latin America and the Caribbean

Youth employment is an important issue in Latin America and the Caribbean where unemployment rates can be between 2.3 and 5.5 times higher than for adults (an aggregate average of the region including 13 countries in 2007 estimated youth unemployment to be 2.9 times the rate for adults). Youth are also more likely to partake in precarious and low paid employment. Furthermore, structural problems also exist, such as the high percentage of young women devoted to household tasks. The challenges that young people face in entering the labour market reduce the future social and economic development of those countries and can lead to social and political conflict. In this context, the promotion of decent and productive employment for young women and men in the region is of crucial importance for the present and future of Latin American and Caribbean societies.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Partners:

Telefónica Foundation, Ad-ecco Foundation, The Real Madrid Foundation, Endesa International, Santander and Prosegur; the Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations; The Government of Spain (Ministry of Labour and Migration), the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development

Beneficiary Country:

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and the Dominican Republic

Timeframe:

2005 - 2010

Total budget:

USD USD 5 500 000

THE RESPONSE

In 2005, the ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean – assisted by the ILO Office in Madrid – commenced the PREJAL project. It was a regional initiative for the promotion of youth employment in Latin America, and one of the first public-private partnerships in this region to focus on this important issue.

The primary aims of the project were to:

- More centrally position the youth employment issue at both regional and national levels through awareness raising in all layers of societies on the importance of access to full and productive jobs for young people;
- Promote and support the elaboration of

policies and programmes on youth employment through technical assistance;

- Develop innovative methods for the capacity building and inclusion of young women and men in order to support them to find employment;
- Improve access to work experience and employability of disadvantaged young people in the finance, energy, security, human resources and sports sectors;
- To facilitate the sharing of knowledge and project results through a virtual platform and a communication and dissemination campaign.

RESULTS

The project led to the following results at the national and regional level:

- A significant increase in the collective consciousness, awareness, and understanding of the youth employment issue. The issue became more central to the political agenda nationally and regionally. Awareness-raising was conducted through a combination of the creation of the first regional web platform on youth employment, a virtual library, online training seminars, and a communication campaign;
- Research undertakings, including

contributions to the first ILO regional youth employment report in 2007, and national reports on policies and programmes for youth employment in Peru, Chile, Brazil, Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Argentina;

- Tripartite networking by conducting national tripartite seminars in Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Honduras, Chile, and Dominican Republic, and the signing of tripartite agreements for the design and implementation of national policies on youth employment in Peru, Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Honduras;



“The PREJAL project has allowed us to bring together two programmes: the Social, Sportive and Professional Training Centre and The Real Madrid Foundation in Argentina.”

Elena Álvarez Montesinos,
Project Manager at The
Real Madrid Foundation

Specifically targeting individual youths and in collaboration with companies and foundations the following results were realised:

- The creation of a scholarship programme, by the ILO and the electricity company ENDESA, for approximately 395 university students and specialized and non-specialized workers. Following the six month training period, the majority of the young participants were hired by companies in the ENDESA Group;
- Fundación Telefónica trained 1,812 vulnerable young women and men, many of whom were former victims of child labour;
- The Adecco Foundation’s contribution benefited 1,820 young people in Argentina, Colombia and Peru through vocational activities, employment orientation and support for young jobseekers;
- Prosegur trained 4,003 young women and men in security services, such as surveillance. Approximately 90% of those trained joined the Prosegur group;
- Santander worked in Argentina, Chile and Mexico, benefiting in total 7,402 young people in areas such as banking training, computer skills, and commercial networking;
- The Real Madrid Foundation helped 1,854 young people from poor socioeconomic backgrounds in Argentina and Brazil with professional training related to sports associations in the fields of management, administration, and grounds maintenance.

BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

The PREJAL project allowed for the design and implementation of national policies on youth employment in five countries and improved the legal framework for enterprise activities through making them more conducive for companies to hire youth. The project also served to raise awareness on the youth employment issues in Latin America.

The PREJAL project trained and/or obtained jobs for 17,284 young women and men (only 12,000 were originally planned) thus contributing to Millennium Development Goal Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.

Partner companies succeeded in training and recruiting talented young people for their activities in Latin America.

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