

Youth Placement Program

This is an intervention summary from the MSD for employment (MSD4E) landscape assessment.

The Youth Placement Program aims to create a sustainable ecosystem for youth employment in Zambia where universities and colleges will build a talent pipeline that is appropriate for the private sector, and the private sector will have access to and gainfully employ skilled young talent. The intervention will aim to engage a large proportion young women as they face numerous challenges in finding and sustaining gainful employment.

Background information

Project	USAID/Zambia Enterprise Development and Growth Enhanced (EDGE) Activity
Funder	USAID
Implementer	ACDI/VOCA
Contact	Caroline Bailey (cbailey@acdivoca.org)
Rural or urban?	Rural
Sectors	Agriculture
Intended employment outcomes	Job creation Access to jobs
Target group (end beneficiaries)	Young people (17-29), emphasis on young women.
Cross-cutting priorities	Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion (GYSI) Climate Change Integration Science Technology Innovation and Partnerships (STIP)
Years of operation	2020-2025

What constraints did the intervention aim to address?

- Youth unemployment, especially among young women.
- Skills mismatch between youth and SME needs.
- Weak labour market information functions - lack of feedback loop between labour supply and demand.

Provides a market-driven solution to these issues by identifying a partner who has an interest in establishing feedback loops between labour supply and demand.

Which market actor partners did the intervention work with?

1. Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs)

2. Talent acquisition agency with a social mission (Nchitonet).
3. Agriculture SMEs where students are placed.

What were the intended behaviour changes for these partners?

The aim to create a sustainable market-driven solution where feedback loops between SMEs and HLIs are established through a partner with a vested interest (recruitment agency).

1. SMEs:

- See youth, especially young women, as viable employees.
- Pay for recruitment services to hire quality candidates.
- Ultimately pay for other HR services.

2. Talent Acquisition Agency (Nchitonet):

- Provides training and tools for youth to prepare for applying for jobs and interviews.
- Offers tools for SMEs' HR departments to source diverse talent.

3. HLIs:

- Listen to and learn from SMEs about what skills youth are lacking.
- Update curriculum to address key gaps.

EDGE offers no financial support, just technical assistance and facilitation (e.g. venues and staff time to bring partners together).

How sustainable are these behaviour changes?

Sustainability is unclear at this point, but this is the third iteration of a youth employment programme, built on learning from the first two phases, which were more traditional internship programmes and unsustainable once prior phases ended. This concept was designed based on a Pause and Reflect with all involved partners after phase 2, and discussions about this new arrangement with HLI and SME partners have been encouraging.

What were the intervention's key results?

- Nothing to report at the time of publication.

<i>Has a third party been involved in measuring these results?</i>	No
<i>Is the partner behaviour change the sole/major/minor contributing factor towards the employment-related outcome you've reported? (i.e. are there other contributing factors?)</i>	Major
<i>Results chain available?</i>	No

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