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**THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2014**

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11:15am–12:30pm

**Lessons Learned and Achievements in Job Placement**

Last year, IYF hosted two regional meetings in Indonesia and Panama that brought together partners and stakeholders to discuss program accomplishments and goals for the future. A key topic of those discussions was how to develop effective job placement strategies designed to enhance and re-affirm the central objective of the program: job placement. In this session, IYF and its partners will share quantitative and qualitative achievements in supporting youth with job placement globally. Partners will also share lessons learned in the job placement process along with recommendations for the future.

- Lewis Rosen, Key Accounts Executive, Harambee
- Dante Muñoz, Director of Finance and Administration, Tecsup
- Wiwin Windrati, Program Manager, Indonesia Business Links
- Moderator: Dan Oliver, Director - Learning and Evaluation, International Youth Foundation

**Context**

- Aggregate job placement rate among EquipYouth partners is 62%.
- IYF has been doing employability work for 25 years – starting from entra21 to today. We've collected a host of resources to make employability work.
- Dan – key lessons on job placement:
  - **Job placement** is really our core metric. We measure a host of metrics with Caterpillar Foundation, but job placement still holds as the number one.
  - We really need to be focused on the **dual client perspective** – employers need skilled employees - we train young people to have the requisite skills. Young people also have skills and desires. We work to mesh both of these perspectives.
  - We heard a lot about **life skills for employability** and the importance of this to facilitate employability. These skills are critical to job placement.
  - The **role of women** is key. About a 1/3 of our beneficiaries are women but we've attained these ratios in the program without a really focused gender strategy.
  - The role of **innovation and technology** is also key. How can we make this search for job and accumulation of skills fun and “sexy.”

**Wiwen Windrati – Program Manager, Indonesia Business Links, Indonesia**

- Figures of achievement for EquipYouth Indonesia: 911 youth trained in life skills, 577 in technical skills, 518 placed in jobs.
- In our program and methodology for job placement services, we begin by engaging with the private sector to establish partnerships with key businesses to understand their need, their opportunities and develop relevant skills training curricula that address both needs and opportunities.
- From these investigations, we found in Indonesia that workers tend to get 2-year contract work and adjusted to that accordingly.
- We coordinate industry workshops to hear from HR staff of companies' difficulties they face in getting the right employees – this forum also allows us to teach about the program and bring youth to the needed positions.

- We also conduct job-counseling services, as schools often do not, or the areas in which they counsel are irrelevant to the market (i.e. not meeting the needs of local employers). To do this, we work to help youth participants complete or create their CVs, prepare for interviews and train for recruitment tests.
  - This is an area when we engage with Caterpillar, as the Program Manager participates in the youth counseling workshops.
- We have set-up 24-hour consultation services for youth where they can call, text etc. It's meant largely for job preparation, but we've found that youth will also call us about their different challenges or opportunities in their lives.
- We also organize field visits so that youth can gain experience and understand first-hand what a particular company is like and imagine themselves on the job.
- School-based job placement offices exist, but often do not fulfill their duties or lack the knowledge to engage with employers. We fill this gap by bringing employers to schools and make this linkage for them.
- Lessons learned:
  - Building relationships with local employers is key to link youth to employment opportunities;
  - Tailoring training to meet labor market job demands is needed;
  - It's important to provide youth with job placement support – Indonesian youth are very active on Facebook, so we use this along with SMS job opportunities and workshops;
  - It's important to manage youth's expectations – salaries expected vs. reality;
  - Youth face some challenges in the industrial sector, these include:
    - Height restrictions for mechanical jobs;
    - Health – many have poor nutrition;
    - Social pressures – sometimes parents will not allow youth to travel the needed distance to go to work;
    - Gender – only 10% of females participate in the sector.

## Dante Munoz Diaz, Finance & Operations Director, Tecsup – Peru

- This initiative with EquipYouth has been challenging because we have 3-year career tracks
  - We have been able to enroll 15% women;
  - As our model relies on short-term classes and targets very vulnerable Peruvian youth, costs have been higher for us to offer 3 different tracks as well as recruit these vulnerable youth;
  - Our career tracks include: communication networks, heavy equipment maintenance and warehouse management;
  - We provide them with not just technical skills, but integrate life skills.
- Outside of EquipYouth, we also target poor and vulnerable youth.
- In the next few semesters, we will offer new career tracks.
- How do we offer such a variety of classes for youth with low-income backgrounds, low education levels and with the high cost of these classes? (for non-EquipYouth)
  - We have an educational credit program – youth don't pay anything at the beginning of the program and we help them with a line of credit that covers program costs and that is expected to be repaid once in a job.
- How have we been able to retain youth in our program so well and be effective in job placement (3% dropout rate and high job placement rate)?
  - Since our participation in entra21, we learned to look for more vulnerable youth – from religious institutions, to partnering with specific populations-serving organizations.
    - We believe it's important to give them a stipend – namely, transportation and meals.

- We do some informal trainings that increase employability outside of the courses – this is to teach them interpersonal skills, personal interviews etc.
- What could we do better?
  - For the life skills training, we could look for a commitment by companies to continue this kind of training which is crucial for vulnerable youth;
  - With the government, we could work with the program Cunamas, which serves single mothers and involve them and their children in the program.

## Lewis Rosin, Harambee

- Our motto is “work for Work.”
- We try to reach the most disadvantaged communities in South Africa.
- 85% of those who actually get their first jobs in the formal economy, they stay in it for life. So that’s what Harambee works towards.
- Employers were trying to understand, “what is it that we need” – very often, people were coming in but not staying.
- Thus far we have reached 9,600 placements in jobs – we will achieve 10,000 next month.
- Within the next 2 years, we will place 10,000 youth per year – within the formal economy.
- What are the challenges?
  - It’s a balancing act between employers and employees.
- Employers: We have to understand them and speak their language. There are many sectors beyond just public and private. Each sector is very diverse and speaks different languages.
  - We first must understand the business to understand the individual we need for employment – it’s not the skill but rather the will. Secondly, understand the language. You must speak about the favor you’re doing for the business by getting employees they need with the skills they need – it’s not just that we’re helping disadvantaged youth.
- Employees: Understand them. If the individual is paying more than 20% on travel, they won’t stay in their job. You have to understand where they are and where they are going.
  - Psychometric testing: we test our youth for potential (i.e. learning potential). This ability will allow them to be resilient. We match lower levels with lower level jobs and higher levels to higher-level jobs;
  - Bridging program: Not a one-size-fits-all– it is a bridge for each employer. It tries to echo the work that each one does. It shows the individuals what challenges they might face. For those coming out of our bridges: average retention rate of 85% after 1 year at a job;
  - When employees come out of the bridge, they know they have a great chance to be employed.

## Q&A

- Could each of you talk a little bit about your recruitment strategies?
  - Wiwien: In Indonesia, we socialize the schools and go to disadvantaged schools – the company will come to the school to get the employees, but when youth don’t have the opportunities to meet employers, we bring youth that have less opportunity or exposure.
  - Dante: We don’t have a totally structured system – we create alliances with associations and with organizations that work with low-income youth. We bring program awareness through workshops, pamphlets, advertisements, etc. 7/10 women are subject to violence in the family – we have to work to really convince them to get in the program. We’re planning to involve other family members in the program to sensitize them to women’s needs for employment.

- Lewis: We proactively go out to communities with different mediums – we also use feet on the street. We put youth in the street to go around and tell their story. We employ 120 of our own Harambee youth to do these activities. We source in the right areas to service demand; students have to have some of the requirements – i.e. matriculation. They are invited into our assessment centers – they can test up to 600 people a day with mobile testing and deployment. When we tested people, we found low scores because they hadn't eaten as well as we thought. We then provided them with peanut butter sandwiches and fruit – then found that the score went up 30 points.
- Question: Lewis – probing further on your recruitment strategy. What percentage of the total youth you put through the psychometric testing actually qualifies? Are there any incentives for kids to not drop out? How do you deal with the fact that the most disadvantaged youth need to work as quickly as possible?
  - Answer: Because it's demand-driven, we do focus on communities that can meet the demand. In recent research one of the most trusted brands in South Africa included Harambee. We don't do any external advertising, people trust us to do the best we can. If they can't get in the first round, they can get in later. As far as incentives, we don't give incentives we just provide a stipend for the youth to get to the training (transportation). If the young people do well, they get the recognition – it's the only incentive. In terms of the pledge, the most we ask is a small amount after employment.
  - No one bridge fits everyone – they know there is a very good chance that they will be employed. That is the biggest incentive.
- Question: Lewis - on the psychometric testing, isn't it a bit of a high bar? For young people with no experience, aren't we just going for the best rather the most needy?
  - We're not looking for the ones with the highest IQ. I think this is a misunderstanding of psychometric testing.
  - We use Tram 2 to tweak the test itself – there is no language involved and the youth are instead given abstract objects. It gives us *learning potential* rather than actual intelligence. We have to measure the point in time and teach them what they need to learn. If someone has high potential, we won't put them in a job where they can't grow because they will get bored and leave quickly. We put them in the kinds of jobs that they will have the highest chances of success.
- Question: Dante – transportation and payments, is this seen as sustainable and how can we keep this going? Are there other incentives?
  - The young people can't attend without these incentives due to poverty etc. It's a key element
  - Additional incentives is that we add the help of the tutor to keep motivating them and keeping them interested in the program.
- Question: The idea of a decent job – can each of you speak a little bit to the type of jobs these young people are being tracked into? How do you get them into high quality jobs? Also, the role of informal sector jobs?
  - Wiwien: Youth have high self-expectation and look for high quality in their jobs. They want to work in Honda, Toyota etc. They don't want a retail job since it's a lower salary. We work with high salary providing jobs since there are 900 companies in this sector. This continues to be a challenge because often the youth don't have the high qualifications needed for the highest of salaries. On the informal jobs, we have some small entrepreneurs and give youth opportunities to go in this direction. Youth don't want these jobs however and tend to wait for the next job.
  - Dante: We monitor the student's skill acquisition and match what the market needs.

- Lewis: Decent jobs for me are jobs with a decent employer – we vet every employer rather than the actual job. With SMEs this is more difficult, so we focus only on the formal sector. Young people's expectations are sometimes really high – it depends on the brand they are going into. One employer may be more attractive – we give a lot of career advocacy to let them understand and once they are inside the sector they need to be able to grow and move around. Keep it simple, look at growth potential.
- Question: With your selected students, if they fall into some social ills (pregnancy, drugs, etc.) are they lost to the program?
  - Wiwien: We work largely with the schools, so we've never faced that issue. The schools really support us and invite parents – parents thus support youth to join the program and encourage its importance.
  - Dante: We have a vulnerable population, so we have these problems. For the educational credit – we allow flexible payments. In terms of pregnancy etc, we allow students to take leave and reengage later. Then we worry if young people will re-join and make sure to follow up if we haven't heard from them in a while. If we have dropouts, we follow up with the students by phone and find out what happened to try and re-engage them.
  - Lewis: These are very different issues. Pregnancy – we aren't allowed to ask for potential employment but we stress the problems that will arise (i.e. if on your feet all day there could be problems). Once they leave and go to the employer, the employer deals must address the issues. With drugs and psychological issues – there are requirements of employers and they simply don't want certain boxes ticked. For example, if students have a record then it's difficult. If there are problems identified before students join Harambee, we don't put them in a bridge but rather refer them to get the help they need. They don't actually enter the Harambee system at all.
- Question: Wiwien – you mentioned industry workshops, I'm curious to understand how you do this? Also, can elaborate on having job placement housed in your office. To Dante, you mentioned revolving credit – a fund of 60 million dollars where students attend without paying, could you elaborate on this?
  - Dante: Seed capital has been enacted for 30 years of Tecsup. 90% is funded by the graduates' repayment. And repayment is at 99%. The youth sign an honor document to return the money so that other students can access the funding. There is no bank in Peru that works in this way; 16 year olds simply don't have access to any credit. For Tecsup, we are in a formal market that needs graduates trained by Tecsup specifically. We had an experience with Ferreyros (CAT dealer), where 2 years ago a whole class who trained over 2 years was told they were all hired. Tecsup holds value as a technical training institution.
  - Wiwien: We implement the workshop with many companies. We encourage companies to do more CSR. In terms of industry relations, all vocational schools have this. But they don't have the confidence or know-how to talk to companies and engage with them. We bridge this gap and teach them how they can do this.