

Confident Youth Reclaim Their Future



Skills training has helped Prisca Cherono, 26, develop a greater sense of agency.

KENYA



As a single mother of two with little formal education, Prisca Cherono couldn't find any viable employment opportunities in Eldoret, Kenya. So she pursued the only path she thought was open to her: domestic help. "I had resigned myself to do this until I die because I saw no other way out," Prisca said.

When Prisca's friends told her about TechnoServe's STRYDE (or Strengthening Rural Youth Development through Enterprise) program in 2016, she registered immediately. "I had a feeling that one way or another, STRYDE was going to be my last chance to get out of this vicious cycle of menial jobs."

Each morning during the three-month training, Prisca would get her 6-year-old ready for school, find a

quick cleaning job, then bring her toddler son to training. Participatory sessions about personal effectiveness helped Prisca identify her strengths and weaknesses and provided coaching on communication, negotiation and critical thinking – important soft skills that few rural youth in East Africa have the opportunity to develop. She also learned the ins and outs of entrepreneurship: how to conduct market research, establish prices, calculate profits and so on.

"Before STRYDE I was very shy and could not stand up to defend my rights, and thus was a pushover," the 26-year-old said. "During the training I learned that I have to speak out strongly and audibly in order to be heard and taken seriously."

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IN FOCUS

Integrated Youth Training Drives Employment

STRYDE's proven and replicable curriculum equips youth with the confidence, skills and opportunities they need to achieve economic independence. Trainers employ a participatory learning approach and encourage a change in mindset through seven modules.

The training kicks off with four sessions focused on **personal effectiveness to build participants' self-awareness as well as critical soft skills** in goal-setting, communication, time management and decision-making.

The curriculum then addresses professional effectiveness to develop employability skills such as job searching and interviewing. **Comprehensive training in agribusiness, entrepreneurship and business planning prepare participants for self-employment.** Sessions in personal finance and savings help to develop vital financial management skills, while a training on gender sensitivity encourages both men and women to reach their full potential.

STRYDE 2.0 incorporates a train-the-trainer component. We train local partners – including prisons, colleges and vocational training institutes – to administer the full curriculum, ensuring that this invaluable resource continues to meet critical youth development needs in the region after the program ends.

Our Youth Work around the World

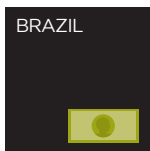


GHANA: VIVIAN AWOTWE



ENTREPRENEURIAL STRIDES

At a recent conference for Ghanaian entrepreneurs, Vivian Awotwe provided her credentials: “Who am I to stand before 200 people to talk about the success of my business? I started as a shoeshine girl and today I have a factory producing shoes.” The 33-year-old had spent much of her adolescence shining shoes in Sefwi Wiawso, Ghana, before dropping out of junior high school. Vivian continued her education as an apprentice at a footwear manufacturer, and managed to save enough money to launch her own venture, Obaasima Leather Works, in 2011. TechnoServe’s Enhancing Growth in New Enterprise (ENGINE) project has been instrumental in Obaasima’s success. After joining the project in October 2015, Vivian sharpened her financial skills and improved the company’s equipment to make Obaasima more efficient and productive, increasing her revenue by 40 percent. Now, as she expands her operations, Vivian pays ENGINE’s support forward by training prison inmates and others with little education in footwear design and manufacturing.



SHARING PROSPERITY

In Brazil, TechnoServe is partnering with Anglo American to create prosperity through enterprise development in urban and rural communities.

The Crescer project has provided business advice to more than 215 entrepreneurs in Minas Gerais state, projecting \$6.1 million in financial benefits. TechnoServe ensures that the impact is sustainable by facilitating long-term financing and supply contracts for participants. The program also works for the communities’ continued prosperity by investing in local youth. Crescer trains youth in essential skills for gaining formal employment and handling personal finances. After graduating from the program, participants are connected with recruitment staff from local medium and large companies, and are well-equipped to get their first job, or a better-paying one. “The training was fundamental to my gaining experience and moving on to getting a formal position,” said participant Mayara Venâncio. In 2017, Crescer expects to improve the livelihoods of 182 direct and 7,500 indirect youth participants.



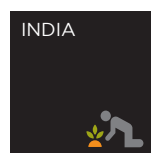
FIGHTING POVERTY WITH POULTRY

Philani Vilakati grew up in a region of eastern Swaziland that is characterized by high youth unemployment. Even after finishing his education, the 23-year-old could not find a job and felt helpless to support his widowed mother and four siblings. An entrepreneurship program run by TechnoServe in partnership with a local sugar company sparked Philani’s desire to start his own enterprise. He joined the program’s youth seed capital challenge, and after completing the business training, Philani presented a plan for a poultry business. He won \$400 in seed money, which he used to buy basic equipment and 100 day-old chicks. In six short months, he has raised and sold four batches of chicks, and is saving to build



SWAZILAND: PHILANI VILAKATI

another poultry house. “My life has changed dramatically in a short space of time thanks to the seed capital challenge,” he said. “I know there are a lot of challenges ahead, but at least now I know that my future is in my hands.” Twenty-eight participants graduated from the training and launched microenterprises in 2016, generating more than \$18,000 in six months combined.



GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Jagdeesh has always had strong business prowess, which he applied to his family’s rice paddy and coconut farm. In April 2016, Jagdeesh joined the Cargill Agri-Fellow (CAF) program, part of Project Saathi, a collaboration between Cargill and TechnoServe to address the shortage of agricultural skills in Davangere, India, and provide opportunities for the region’s youth. Jagdeesh, 30, began the program with a month and a half of practical training at the University of Agricultural Sciences at Dharwad, Karnataka, where he took an increased interest in horticulture. He then



INDIA: JAGDEESH

spent the following months in the field with TechnoServe staff, developing a plan to intercrop marigolds in his 3-acre coconut orchard. After a successful first season, in which he harvested approximately 24 tons of marigolds and generated more than \$3,200 in revenue, Jagdeesh plans to cultivate two crops of marigold next year and more than double his annual income. The CAF program enrolled 16 new fellows in January 2017.



STARTING UP AND SCALING UP

The African Youth Agripreneurship Program (AYAP) empowers a new generation of entrepreneurs in Africa’s agribusiness sector. AYAP has provided training to 320 young men and



SOUTH AFRICA: SAMUEL MAMABOLO

women to start up or scale up their small and growing businesses in Kenya, Ghana, Mozambique and South Africa. One such entrepreneur is 30-year-old Samuel Mamabolo in Limpopo, South Africa. Samuel struggled to find employment after graduating high school, so he was excited to hear about AYAP’s start-up bootcamp and decided to start a farm,

despite the stigma agriculture carries among his young peers. He remained persistent, even when his crop of cabbage, spinach and onions was devastated by drought. Through AYAP training, Samuel learned about agricultural best practices, including improved water management that will help him prevent crop loss during future droughts. He also gained access to markets and a network of fellow farmers. Samuel demonstrates that with the appropriate technical and business skills and support, young people can start and grow their business in agricultural value chains and build productive lives. After a successful one-year pilot, TechnoServe is extending AYAP in South Africa through 2019 with support from Barclays Africa.

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After graduation, Prisca opened a hair salon. Using some savings and a small grant from a technical assistance fund, she rented a space and bought basic salon equipment.

Today she’s earning 80 percent more than she did as a domestic worker – and she sees herself in a new light. “I can now feed and educate my children comfortably while running my own business,” Prisca said.

Prisca’s story resonates throughout East Africa, where TechnoServe runs the STRYDE program in partnership with The MasterCard Foundation. With the global youth unemployment rate on the rise and 11 million young Africans entering the job market annually, helping youth tap into their tremendous potential to become agents of change is critical to economic growth and stability.

That is why TechnoServe is committed to empowering youth who are productively engaged in the economy and are socially active leaders in their communities.

Since 2011, STRYDE has provided training to more than 35,300 rural youth in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania, helping participants increase their income by an average of 133 percent. Like Prisca, more than 49 percent of STRYDE’s participants are young women, who play a critical role in transforming the economic status of their households. “Women carry the responsibility of taking care of their children and the entire extended family. Thus we cannot afford to ignore their role in sustainable development,” says Angelique Tuyisenge, STRYDE Program Manager in Rwanda.

Beyond limited skills and resources, TechnoServe has found that a lack

of confidence is a significant barrier to youth engagement in economic activities, especially for women. The program’s curriculum is carefully structured to develop fundamental skills and behaviors that help young people manage independent lives and feel a greater sense of agency. Technical skills, like managing a budget and writing a business plan, are layered on top of this foundation, along with gender sensitivity training. (See box on page 1 for more about the training.) Upon graduating, about 15 percent of STRYDE participants find casual employment, while the majority start their own businesses, including agribusinesses. STRYDE business counselors provide nine months of customized support to the new entrepreneurs to ensure success.

TechnoServe is replicating this tested methodology and adapting it to youth projects across the world.

Next Generation of Coffee Farmers in Honduras



DENIA MELÉNDEZ



MELÉNDEZ FAMILY



JOSÉ MELÉNDEZ

HONDURAS



For Denia Meléndez and her younger brother José, coffee farming is a family affair. Their parents, Will and Isabel, have been growing coffee in the lush highlands of Yoro, Honduras, for 35 years, holding a vision for a sustainable multi-generational family farm. “I didn’t want the kids to leave the farm. I wanted us to be a united family,” says Will, who gave each of their five grown children his or her own land title.

But that was threatened in 2013 by an epidemic of *roya* fungus, which ravaged half of the Meléndez’s coffee trees. Seeking to fortify their future through better coffee earnings, the family joined Techno-Serve’s MAS project to improve their farming practices and link to new markets. Once 26-year-old José started learning techniques such as pruning and proper fertilization – and saw the positive effect on his coffee trees’ health and productivity – he pursued a

In the three years since joining the USDA-funded MAS project, the Meléndez family’s income has grown by 30 percent.

new opportunity: training others. José joined the project’s staff as a community trainer, responsible for sharing these techniques with 190 farmers in his region using Techno-Serve’s adult learning methodology. The part-time position allows him to better provide for his wife and their 3-year-old daughter by supplementing his coffee income and carving out a promising career in agronomy training.

Denia, meanwhile, wanted to expand her activities in the coffee sector by becoming a cupper – a specialized coffee taster who assesses the attributes and quality of bean samples. The MAS project presented an opportunity for the

27-year-old to develop this passion through ESCOBACAFE, a school that trains predominantly young female coffee cuppers, helping to integrate the country’s value chain. After completing the program, Denia secured a competitive apprenticeship cupping for a major coffee exporter.

In the three years since joining the USDA-funded MAS project, the Meléndez family’s income has grown by 30 percent. All seven farmers in the family are producing higher-quality coffee, and getting a better price from selling directly to an exporter rather than an intermediary. But for young Denia and José, the project has opened up new opportunities in the coffee value chain, allowing them to stay close to the family while expanding their career options. They’ve even started roasting their own pepper-infused coffee and selling it at local markets. Customer demand has been high, and Denia hopes to someday start a full-scale roasting business.