

CAREER BUILDERS TOOLKIT

A Guide for Creating, Evaluating, and/or Enhancing Career Counseling and Youth Support Programs in Global Workforce Development

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North Carolina State University and
Research Triangle Institute – International**

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Preface

The contents of this Toolkit are the culmination of a collaboration between RTI International and North Carolina State University; the RTI University Scholars Program. Through this partnership, a Delphi study was conducted to develop critical guidelines for the development and implementation of global youth career and workforce development programs by reaching consensus among experts in practice, policy and research domains. The findings from this study provide the context of this Toolkit which is designed to support effective career and workforce development programs for working age youth (ages 15-24) around the globe.

Introduction

With youth (ages 15-24) representing approximately 16% of the total world population (United Nations, 2015), youth are three times as likely as adults to be unemployed (International Labour Organization, 2017). As local and international communities continue to address important issues related to socioeconomic realities that challenge workforce development and employment outcomes, this global youth population is faced with concurrent challenges related to access of and ability to sustain decent work opportunities. Youth engage in the informal labor economy at higher rates than adults, with initial quick entry into the workforce corresponding to increased continued participation in irregular employment or self-employment over the course of their lifetimes (ILO, 2017). Entry into stable employment continues to be a challenge for a large global cohort of youth (O'Higgins, 2017). In the United States, the rates of unemployment or underemployment of youth remains persistently high, with notable disparities among different racial and ethnic groups.

With ease of technology use and access to the internet standing as hallmarks of the generations currently defined as youth, this feature is impacted by regional and socioeconomic factors. New technologies are rapidly changing the world of work into which youth are entering (ILO, 2017). Around the globe, youth are impacted by economic insecurity and disparities affecting themselves and their families. Global conflicts and sociopolitical factors also impact youth. Workforce development programs, which serve to enable individuals to acquire needed skills, knowledge, and attitudes to integrate into the workforce infrastructure, are bolstered by the integration of a comprehensive career development framework (Nassar & Al-Qimlass, 2017).

This guide is designed to aid policy makers and practitioners involved in workforce and career development for global youth in creating, evaluating and/or enhancing career counseling and youth support programs toward having a more impactful and mutually synergistic intervention program. The key components and items identified in this Toolkit were garnered from a comprehensive synthesis of the perspectives and experiences of experts within practice, policy, and research within the arena of global youth workforce development. Providing a comprehensive synthesis of policy, research, and practice so that mutually impactful infrastructure and connections among these three domains can be established, the goal for this Toolkit is to facilitate a unified approach for practitioners and policy makers in the United States and around the globe to tackle the global challenges of global youth under- and unemployment.

This document provides information, and assessments, that can be used for program development and/or evaluation for youth career and workforce development programs. The information, and corresponding assessments, are organized into the 6 Key Components of an effective career and workforce development program for youth. Within each Key Component, are corresponding considerations, which were identified through a process of systematic input from experts within the field of global youth workforce and career development across these three domains of policy, research, and practice.

Directions for Use

Information and a corresponding assessment for each Key Component (listed below) follows in the corresponding sections. To use this Toolkit, review the provided information prior to using the assessment to examine your own program for strengths and areas of growth.

1. Holistic, Systemic, Comprehensive Framework
2. Needs Assessment
3. Trainer Curriculum
4. Participant Curriculum
5. Delivery
6. Evaluation

Selected resources for additional information are included at the conclusion of several Key Component. Additional information and support is available through consultation with the developers of this Toolkit. Please contact Sylvia Nassar for more information

<https://sites.google.com/a/ncsu.edu/sylvia-nassar/>

Key Component One: Holistic, Systemic and Comprehensive Framework

Career development is a three-fold process that involves career exploration (learning about career interests, values, vocational preferences as well as the world of work and the different possibilities within it), career planning (making decisions about work), and developing the skills to be able to manage your career as situations change and career experience expands. An integrated career and workforce development program should be based within a comprehensive framework that addresses the holistic needs of the individual and the systemic needs of the community. Specifically, career and workforce development programs for youth should have an ecological framework, that is, one that is holistic, systemic, and comprehensive. This type of framework then supports the integration of important ethical and cultural considerations into your program. Additionally, this framework should be seen throughout the program as a major contributing factor, influencing all other components.

A framework for career and workforce development programs for youth that is holistic, systemic, and comprehensive should aim to address the following considerations:

Consideration 1: Include programs that are developmental and progressive

The program should include components that are developmental, and progressive. That is, program curriculum should be age specific, from secondary school through transition aged youth/young adults, to address those needs unique to the various developmental stages. Overall career and workforce development should also be considered as lifelong and progressive, introducing these concepts to participants, thereby empowering them to make work-related decisions throughout their lifetimes that adapt to environmental and individual changes.

Consideration 2: Address the unique characteristics and needs of the participant groups

As the context in which the program takes place varies greatly from country to country and region to region, the program should address the unique characteristics and needs of the participant groups. Program curriculum should be customizable, depending on these characteristics and needs. Moreover, it should be culturally appropriate to the participants and the community.

Consideration 3: Utilize theories and frameworks to inform career and workforce development programs for youth

There is not just one theoretical foundation that should inform all career and workforce development programs for youth. Seeking congruence between individual characteristics (interests, skills, aptitudes) and workplace characteristics and demands of a job are key concepts in trait-and-factor career development theory. Learning and cognitive behavioral theories allow room for consideration of other importance concepts, including learning experiences and participant's view of him or herself. Developmental theories foster consideration of the multiple roles that participants play through the course of their lifetimes and the multi-faceted influences that impact vocational self-concept. Additional career development theories continue to increase

of different dimensions impacting career and vocational development and the role of work in people's lives. The program should utilize both conventional and new, innovative theories to inform career and workforce development programs. Particularly, the use of new, innovative career development theories (e.g. constructivist, Psychology of Working, ecological approaches, Life Design) account for the changing socio-economic sphere.

Consideration 4: Focus on programs, trainings, and information that have practical information

Trainings, programs, and information that are integrated into the career or workforce development program should have a practical application to the participants. Such practical information includes access to financial services such as loans, scholarships, and grants that are youth friendly and able to provide a mechanism for youth to participate in the program. This can include off-setting the financial impact of participation in the program, gaining access to capital for entrepreneurial ventures, or savings programs for achievement of longer term goals. Evidence based programs (e.g. career adaptability, career self-efficacy, career decision making) and trainings should be provided. Additionally, information and/or access to financial services should also be provided to participants to mitigate the practical logistics regarding monetary burdens involved in entrepreneurial endeavors (e.g. personal loans, small business loans, budgeting, etc.).

Consideration 5: Be rooted within the community

Ultimately, career and workforce development programs for youth should be rooted within the community to help create a program that is sustainable and has longevity. That is, input from multiple institutions and organizations should be sought and integrated into the program to achieve the goal of a holistic, systemic, and comprehensive program. With a reciprocal focus, the career development program should build awareness throughout the community while incorporating initiatives to build interest among community stakeholders. As an example, programs can look toward creation of a community service program where youth participants are involved in and contributing to the community while also developing networking and vocational skills.

Assessment Tool: Holistic, Systemic and Comprehensive Framework

Directions:

Review the information regarding Key Component One above, and then complete the following sections as they apply to your program.

Growth Need: Use the explanatory descriptions for the Considerations (above) to determine your program's growth need. Assign one of the following numerical scores, or corresponding descriptors, to this space.

2 (*Sufficient*) signifies that there is no additional growth need for that consideration.

1 (*Existent*) signifies that the program already has some features included in this consideration but should be improved.

0 (*Absent*) indicates that there is a high growth need as features addressed within this consideration are lacking.

Detail: Use this space to identify *existing features* of your program that are applicable to that item. (e.g. "8th grade curriculum" or "target population: transition-aged youth")

Needs: Use this space to identify what is most needed within your program as applicable to that consideration (e.g. staff time to develop program)

Supporting Resources: Note supports (including individual and institutional supports) that can help as you move toward meeting growth needs (e.g. access to building with internet, support of leadership at local university)

Next steps: Use this space to identify specific action step(s) that can be made within a realistic timeframe (e.g. set up meeting to discuss collaboration with X organization)

	Growth Need 2- Sufficient; 1-Existent; 0-Absent						
1		Consideration 1: Include programs that are both developmental and progressive (age-specific, lifelong)					
		Detail	Needs			Supporting Resources	Next Steps
2		Consideration 2: Address the unique characteristics and needs of the participant groups (customizable, culturally appropriate)					
		Detail	Needs			Supporting Resources	Next Steps
3		Consideration 3: Utilize conventional and new, innovative theories to inform career and workforce development programs for youth.					
		Detail	Needs			Supporting Resources	Next Steps
4		Consideration 4: Focus on programs, trainings, and information that have practical applications (evidence based, information and/or access to financial services)					
		Detail	Needs			Supporting Resources	Next Steps
5		Consideration 5: Be rooted within the community (input from multiple institutions and organizations awareness and support throughout the community)					
		Detail	Needs			Supporting Resources	Next Steps

Resources

Developmental and progressive

- Age Level Career Development Guide – Minnesota Career and College Readiness Collaborative
 - http://www.mncareercollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Career_Development_Guide-MN_CCRC.pdf
- Activities that support career development – National Services to Employment Project (NextSTEP)
 - http://serviceandinclusion.org/nextstep/programs/spt_career/

Career development theory

- Applying Career Development Theory – Career Professionals of Canada
 - <https://careerprocanada.ca/applying-career-development-theory/>

Key Component Two: Needs Assessment

Completing a comprehensive needs assessment is a critical component in the creation and sustainability of a career and workforce development program for youth. A needs assessment is any action or activity used to identify gaps and deficiencies within a community or large group (Royse et al., 2009). The needs assessment, which ultimately informs program implementers of the path their program should take, involves identifying and involving stakeholder groups, including the youth themselves. Accounting for their priorities, resources, and needs to co-create goals for the program is crucial.

A needs assessment for career and workforce development programs for youth that is comprehensive and effective should aim to address the following considerations:

Consideration 1: Aspects of Implementation

Within the needs assessment that occurs prior to program development and implementation, key aspects of implementation should be considered. First, process needs should be identified (e.g. who will implement the program, when will this happen, where will the program take place). There should be a defined process for implementation that considers local and regional needs, as well as logistics (such as school calendar, method of data collection, location, time of the day/week when program is offered). Additionally, aspects of accessibility should be considered. Accessibility needs include consideration of program accessibility for individuals with disabilities, language differences, socioeconomic factors (including internet access and transportation).

Consideration 2: Include a wide range of factors impacting youth

Assessment of program needs should consider a wide range of factors impacting youth. Needs assessment should consider the talents, skills, values, and interests of the target youth population. Additionally, the knowledge and intellects of youth should be considered, so as to develop, prepare, and implement the program in a way that is consumed and understood easily by the participants (i.e. the manner and method with which the program curriculum is delivered to the participants matches the participants' level of comprehension). Important in the needs assessment is the consideration of challenges that have traditionally impacted youth, including housing, childcare, health, transportation, poverty, gender bias, education/literacy level, emotional support, demographics.

Consideration 3: Current state of community

Current and pre-existing community factors need to be considered within the needs assessment process. This includes social, political, and economic stability within the local and wider geographic community. Other factors include the make-up of the population and the extent to which refugees are present, labor demand and existing industries, the current taxation and economic infrastructure, etc. Historical, economic and sociopolitical factors that are impacting youth employment should be considered. Cultural considerations, for example individual vs. collectivist, common beliefs, morays, and values, should also be addressed. Within the needs assessment process, community awareness regarding program initiatives should also be assessed in order to foster sustainability and community buy-in of the program.

Consideration 4: Individual stakeholders

In addition to individual needs of youth participants (potential and actual), the needs of the following individual stakeholders should be assessed: parents, counselors, researchers/scholars. Each of these latter stakeholder groups are, in effect, supporting resources for the youth participants and offer unique insights into program needs and current state of community. Additionally, family/parent influences are one of the greatest factors that impact youth career development. If applicable, researchers and scholars from local

or regional educational institutions may have access to informational and other resources that can serve as assets for the program.

Consideration 5: Programmatic stakeholder groups

A collaborative approach can be an asset to a workforce development program for youth. As part of the needs assessment, policymakers and/or practitioners should consider the involvement of educational programs in the area (if applicable), other employment programs, as well as social programs, including other youth & advocacy organizations.

Consideration 6: Professional stakeholder groups

Involvement of professional stakeholder groups from local and regional agencies and industry can benefit the program in terms of collaboration, information gathering, and support. Private sector industry, trade unions, and professional associations are examples of professional stakeholder groups within the community that should be included within the needs assessment of a youth career and workforce development program.

Consideration 7: Collaboration between all stakeholders

Above all, there should be a system for communication between stakeholders; including why and how they are involved. The program should consider diverse and specific goals agreed upon by multiple stakeholder groups.

Assessment Tool: Needs Assessment

Directions:

Review the information regarding Key Component Two above, and then complete the following sections as they apply to your program.

Growth Need: Use the explanatory descriptions for the Considerations (above) to determine your program's growth need. Assign one of the following numerical scores, or corresponding descriptors, to this space.

2 (*Sufficient*) signifies that there is no additional growth need for that consideration.

1 (*Existent*) signifies that the program already has some features included in this consideration but should be improved.

0 (*Absent*) indicates that there is a high growth need as features addressed within this consideration are lacking.

Detail: Use this space to identify *existing features* of your program that are applicable to that item. (e.g. "rural location, public transportation limited")

Needs: Use this space to identify what is most needed within your program as applicable to that consideration (e.g. "modules accessible via mobile phone")

Supporting Resources: Note supports (including individual and institutional supports) that can help as you move toward meeting growth needs (e.g. local church – volunteers willing to help program)

Next steps: Use this space to identify specific action step(s) that can be made within a realistic timeframe (e.g. "set up focus group with parents")

	Growth Need 2- Sufficient; 1-Existent; 0-Absent					
1		Consideration 1: Takes into account key aspects of implementation (process and logistics, accessibility issues)				
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps	
2		Consideration 2: Assesses a wide range of factors impacting youth (talents, knowledge, skills, values, interests and intellects of youth; challenges that have traditionally impacted youth)				
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps	
3		Consideration 3: Includes consideration of current state of the community (current and pre-existing community factors, labor demand, level of awareness regarding program initiatives)				
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps	
4		Consideration 4: Individual stakeholder groups are considered (parents, counselors, researchers/ scholars)				
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps	
5		Consideration 5: Other programmatic stakeholder groups are involved in the program (educational programs, employment programs, and social programs, including other youth & advocacy organizations)				
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps	
6		Consideration 6: Needs of professional stakeholder groups are addressed in the program (local & regional agencies, private sector industry, trade unions, professional associations)				
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps	

7	Consideration 7: There is a system of collaboration between all stakeholders that includes why and how they are involved, and considers diverse and specific goals agreed upon by multiple stakeholder groups					
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps

Key Component Three: Trainer Curriculum

The third key component is selection and training of trainers within global youth workforce development programs. Program directors should identify and select final trainers based upon the findings of the prior needs assessment. This identification and selection process will likely build upon existing community infrastructures (for example, classroom teachers). It should also incorporate country-specific and external education and career curriculum experts.

In identifying and preparing prospective trainers within global youth workforce providing career and workforce development programs, the community infrastructure should be employed. Existing education and career curriculum experts can be engaged in the process of preparing these trainers. There are a number of ethical and cultural issues that should be considered, as well as various components that should be included in curricula to train career and workforce development trainers.

The trainer curriculum for career and workforce development programs for youth should aim to address the following considerations:

Consideration 1: Utilize the most appropriate personnel in providing the career and workforce development programs for youth

Depending upon the context of the program, different personnel can deliver the participant curriculum given they are adequately trained in the content area of the participant curriculum. For example, appropriate personnel could include teachers who have specialized and focused training in career and workforce development. Teachers and specially trained career and workforce development consultants should work together in providing the programs.

Consideration 2: Include theories and techniques of helping and career development

Theories and techniques of helping and career development are important components of trainer curriculum. An orientation to the helping professions and roles will support trainers in building rapport and trust with participants and is an important component of trainer curriculum. Curriculum should be taught in an applied and practical approach. It should be adaptable and adapted to the trainer as well as to end-users/consumer groups. The curriculum should include information about career choice and decision-making.

Consideration 3: Developed from multiple sources

Multiple sources should be utilized in the development of a trainer curriculum. Demographic needs of the target participant/end-user population should influence the trainer curriculum. Additionally, the trainer's current areas of strength and need should be considered. Any curriculum evaluation conducted prior to the program also should influence the trainer curriculum. Curriculum content experts can provide important input into trainer curriculum. Several resources for identified content experts are in the resource list at the end of this section. The trainer curriculum should be influenced by collaboration between internal and external stakeholder groups. Additionally, the curriculum should be influenced by aspects of Positive Youth Development (PYD), which is an approach to global youth development which engages youth within their communities and promotes positive outcomes and relationships. Information of this approach can also be found in this section's resources. Finally, the curriculum should support the

trainers' ability to recognize their own preconceived notions, biases, and beliefs so that they are not negatively impacting the implementation of the program and relationships with the participants.

Consideration 4: Address psychosocial needs

Career and workforce development trainers should work in collaboration with local agencies who provide the necessary psychological and therapeutic support for participants experiencing crisis and trauma, substance abuse, and other needed psychosocial interventions. Training in psychosocial interventions should be offered at an advanced level for certain trainer groups.

Consideration 5: Include operational and business components of an effective global youth workforce development program.

Operational and business components of effective program delivery are important to include in trainer curriculum. The curriculum should involve a hands-on program development component. It should also include innovative and low-cost procedures for operating the program. Through the curriculum, career and workforce development trainers should be empowered to support expanding career opportunities for end-user/participants through consideration of additional training and awareness of transferable skills. Another way to do this is through incorporating social entrepreneurial skills into trainer curriculum so trainers are able to help program participants or end-users in tackling social, cultural, and environmental challenges with innovative solutions. Trainer curriculum should include coaching strategies to support participants in taking concrete steps to achieve vocational goals. Curriculum should also include marketing strategies to support effective promotion of the program to external and internal stakeholders.

Assessment Tool: Trainer Curriculum

Directions:

Review the information regarding Key Component Three above, and then complete the following sections as they apply to your program.

Growth Need: Use the explanatory descriptions for the Considerations (above) to determine your program's growth need. Assign one of the following numerical scores, or corresponding descriptors, to this space.

2 (*Sufficient*) signifies that there is no additional growth need for that consideration.

1 (*Existent*) signifies that the program already has some features included in this consideration but should be improved.

0 (*Absent*) indicates that there is a high growth need as features addressed within this consideration are lacking.

Detail: Use this space to identify *existing features* of your program that are applicable to that item. (e.g. "contract from USAID to hire trainer")

Needs: Use this space to identify what is most needed within your program as applicable to that consideration (e.g. "attend trainer workshop")

Supporting Resources: Note supports (including individual and institutional supports) that can help as you move toward meeting growth needs (e.g. "unemployment problem getting attention in the media")

Next steps: Use this space to identify specific action step(s) that can be made within a realistic timeframe (e.g. “review GCDF and other career development training options”)

Growth Need						
2- Sufficient; 1-Existent; 0-Absent						
1		Consideration 1: Utilize the most appropriate personnel in providing the career and workforce development programs for youth.				
		a. Local teachers with specialized and focused career and workforce development available to provide training				
		b. Collaborative environment facilitating teachers and specially trained career and workforce development consultants to work together				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
2		Consideration 2: Trainer curriculum includes theories and techniques of helping and career development.				
		a. Curriculum is taught with an applied and practical approach.				
		b. Curriculum is adapted to trainer and end-user consumer groups.				
		c. Curriculum includes information about career choice and decision making.				
		d. An orientation to the helping professions and roles is included.				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
3		Consideration 3: Trainer curriculum is influenced from multiple sources, including:				
		a. demographics of the participant/end-user population				
		b. trainer’s current areas of strength and need				
		c. curriculum content experts				
		d. previous curriculum evaluation				
		e. collaboration between internal and external stakeholder groups				
		f. the trainer’s ability to recognize their own preconceived notions, biases, and beliefs				
		g. aspects of Positive Youth Development (PYD)				

			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
4		Consideration 4: Address psychosocial needs of participants (e.g. crisis and trauma, substance abuse, disability, etc.).				
		a. Linkages made to local agencies that provide this support/collaboration.				
		b. Training in psychosocial interventions should be offered at an advanced level for certain trainer groups.				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
5		Consideration 5: Include operational and business components of an effective global youth workforce development program.				
		a. Involves a hands-on program development component				
		b. Includes innovative and low-cost procedures				
		c. Includes strategies to support participants in broadening their career opportunities				
		d. Includes social entrepreneurial skills				
		e. Includes coaching				
		f. Includes marketing strategies				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps

Resources

Career Development Facilitator Training

- Center for Credentialing and Education: GCDF Global Career Development Facilitator
 - Information about credential: <http://www.cce-global.org/credentialing/GCDF>
 - GCDF Trainers: <http://www.cce-global.org/Credentialing/GCDF/US/Training>
- National Career Development Association
 - Links to Training Programs: <https://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sp/training>
 - Training Manuals: <http://store.ncda.org/training-manuals.html>
- Career Development Network: <http://www.careernetwork.org>

Positive Youth Development

- Overview: <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>
- Downloadable research agenda: <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>

Key Component Four: Participant Curriculum

Key findings from career and workforce development experts involved in the study that informed this Toolkit generated considerations that can be used in the development of innovative and effective curriculum for youth participants.

Participant curricula constitute the fourth core component. Implementers building such curricula need to incorporate career education, guidance, and counseling concepts. They also need to plan for involvement in these efforts by youth, parents, and other relevant stakeholder groups identified in the earlier phases. Topics should include self-exploration, the world of work (i.e., relevant career options, labor market information, and similar topics), and career decision making, as well as technical and vocational education and training, soft skills, and transferable skills. Those developing these programs must also take into account any vulnerabilities within the participant group(s), such as educational, literacy, and developmental levels, and address them accordingly in the curriculum development process.

A participant curriculum for career and workforce development programs for youth that is innovative and effective, should aim to address the following considerations:

Consideration 1: Developed with multiple sources

Participant curriculum should be developed by integrating input from multiple sources. These sources include labor market demand and what is the current economic infrastructure of the local area. Valid assessment tools (i.e. tools that accurately assess what they claim to assess) that provide data related to participant interests, skills, and values can provide information to increase relevance and applicability of the curriculum. Participant curriculum should integrate hands-on, participatory (i.e. led by the participant), and real-world delivery. Trainers and participants/end-user groups should be considered when participant curriculum is developed, with the trainers and participants collaborating to modify the curriculum as needed so that it is as valuable, applicable, and useful to the participant as possible. Finally, input from parents and other community stakeholders provides important information relevant to participant curriculum.

Consideration 2: Include curriculum for parents/family members

Taking into consideration the influence that parents and families have on the career development of participants, youth career development programs should include a component that involves parents/family members. This is especially important when program participants are under the age of consent. There are several recommendations for this curriculum. Information regarding career specific issues should be provided, for example accurate job descriptions and outlook for different jobs. Additionally, information about the implications of the education or vocational decisions made by the participant should be provided within this curriculum so parents and participants can make the most informed decision possible when deciding to pursue a particular academic degree program or career. Allowing a sufficient forum for discussion when needed, parent curriculum should empower the parents with the skills and information needed to assist their youth family member in making an objective career related decision. Additionally, this curriculum should provide information about current social, economic, and labor market trends.

Consideration 3: Include curriculum for other community members/stakeholders

A systemic framework for career and workforce development programs points toward the importance of considering the role that community has on perceptions, stereotypes, and attitudes about certain jobs or careers. Additionally, curriculum should address and develop social responsibility toward fostering support of the community from within. It should also provide mechanisms to support a creation of networks for career and workforce initiatives, including opportunities for internships and work for program participants.

Consideration 4: Recruit target participants through various avenues

Diverse avenues should be utilized when recruiting participants for career and workforce programs. Parents and other stakeholder groups can be effective sources for identifying potential participants. Additionally, youth themselves can self-nominate and/or identify others for participation. Program personnel should look to schools, local youth groups, social services agencies and local youth NGOs, as well as special education programs, for support in identifying youth who can benefit from innovative, effective programs. Additional avenues for recruitment include personal and community networks, as well as professional networks of staff and other stakeholders including local government and government agencies.

Consideration 5: Incorporate effective career education and guidance components

Career education and guidance is essential and should be the underlying theme throughout the program. Through design, the curriculum should support participants in their development within several key areas. Through participating in the program, participants should develop a better understanding of themselves and the world of work. (The world of work generally refers to the types of people, tasks, and demands that are part of a certain work environment, as well as the infrastructure of work which is changing and impacted by technological, sociopolitical, and economic factors.) Participant curriculum should lead to increased information related to skills needed to achieve a career-related goal, as well as a better understanding of the participant's career-related values. The curriculum should be seen as the starting point for career exploration and management, assisting the participants in finding a good match between self (i.e. their personal interests, abilities, aptitudes, etc.) and initial career/job, while also promoting work-based learning and career readiness skills. Through the promotion of career skills that youth will use throughout their lives, including self-determination and self-direction, this curriculum should support participants in developing clear direction, goals and a plan for reaching these goals. Additionally, participants are assisted in accessing key supports throughout the program.

Consideration 6: Incorporate effective technical and vocational training components.

Participant training should provide the tools necessary for youth to obtain wage-employment and self-employment. Effective technical and vocational training components should be structured such that they can be acquired by all youth, regardless of literacy and/or academic levels and abilities. Participant curriculum should create a full picture of career options, not just those requiring higher education. Academic training can, however, be included. As youth are impacted by the increasing global demands for skilled work, curriculum should incorporate effective technical and vocational training.

Consideration 7: Incorporate effective soft skills training components.

Within the participant curriculum, effective soft skills training is essential. It greatly enhances other training received and helps participants to address unknown future situations. Areas that should be addressed include: problem solving, networking, and independent and team work skills. Components focused on work ethic and attitude should also be incorporated. These components should be

customizable to the community/population of interest incorporating culture and other unique characteristics of the participant groups.

Consideration 8: Incorporate effective transferable skills training components.

In providing innovative career and workforce training for youth entering a global workforce, effective transferable skills training is essential. Within the curriculum, relevant transferable skills should be defined. Transferable skills are skills that are developed throughout the course of a lifetime that can be transferred from one work setting to the next. Examples include interpersonal skills, leadership, communication skills (writing and oral), and organizational skills. Transferable skills training helps youth to deal with issues related to temporary work. Additionally, it creates a continued effect as the participant moves from job to job or encounters new experiences. The training should be customizable to the community/population of interest.

Assessment Tool: Participant Curriculum

Directions:

Review the information regarding Key Component Four above, and then complete the following sections as they apply to your program.

Growth Need: Use the explanatory descriptions for the Considerations (above) to determine your program's growth need. Assign one of the following numerical scores, or corresponding descriptors, to this space.

2 (*Sufficient*) signifies that there is no additional growth need for that consideration.

1 (*Existent*) signifies that the program already has some features included in this consideration but should be improved.

0 (*Absent*) indicates that there is a high growth need as features addressed within this consideration are lacking.

Detail: Use this space to identify *existing features* of your program that are applicable to that item. (e.g. "Week 6-10 includes internship at local business")

Needs: Use this space to identify what is most needed within your program as applicable to that consideration (e.g. "financial support so internships can be paid")

Supporting Resources: Note supports (including individual and institutional supports) that can help as you move toward meeting growth needs (e.g. "collaborating agencies include local health clinic")

Next steps: Use this space to identify specific action step(s) that can be made within a realistic timeframe (e.g. "add curriculum focused on soft skills")

Growth Need 2- Sufficient; 1-Existent; 0-Absent						
1	Consideration 1: Developed with multiple sources.					
		a. considers labor market demand				
		b. considers valid assessment tools				
		c. considers hands-on, participatory, and real-world delivery				
		d. considers both trainers and participants/end-user groups				
		e. considers input from parents and other community stakeholders				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
2	Consideration 2: Include curriculum for parents/family members.					
		a. considers the influence that parents/ family members have on the career decisions that the young participants make				
		b. provides for participation of parents/family members, particularly when participants are under the age of consent				
		c. provides information on issues that are specific to different careers including job outlook and access points				
		d. provides information about current social, economic, and labor market trends.				
		e. provides the skills and information needed for parents/family members to assist their child in making an objective career related decision				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
3	Consideration 3: Include curriculum for other community members/stakeholders.					
		a. addresses stereotypes, attitudes, and perceptions about certain jobs/careers in order to expand career opportunities for all youth.				
		b. fosters social/community responsibility in investing in all youth				
		c. creates support networks for career and workforce initiatives and participants.				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps

4		Consideration 4: Recruit target participants through various avenues, including:				
		a. youth themselves (e.g. self and other nominations)				
		b. parents and other stakeholder groups				
		c. schools				
		d. public health programs				
		e. personal/community networks				
		f. professional networks				
		g. local youth groups, NGOs, and social service agencies.				
		h. special education programs and other programs that are already in place for individuals with disabilities				
		i. local administrations/government				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
5		Consideration 5: Incorporate effective career education and guidance components				
		a. Career education and guide is the underlying theme through the program.				
		b. Through inclusion of career exploration themes, supports youth participants in increased awareness and understanding of self and world of work.				
		c. Assists participants in finding a good match between self and career/job				
		d. leads to increased information related to skills needed to achieve a career-related goal, including support in developing goals and a plan to achieve them.				
		e. Leads to a better understanding of participant career-related values.				
		f. promotes work-based learning and career readiness skills				
		g. promotes career management including self-determination and self-direction to support career skills for youth to use throughout their lives.				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
6		Consideration 6: Incorporate effective technical and vocational training components.				
		a. can be acquired by all youth, regardless of literacy and/or academic levels/abilities				
		b. creates opportunities for both wage-employment and self-employment				

			c. creates a full picture of career options, not just those requiring higher education			
			d. can include academic training			
			e. meets the increasing global demands for skilled work			
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
7			Consideration 7: Incorporate effective soft skills training components.			
			a. Includes problem solving to address unknown future situations			
			b. Includes networking.			
			c. Addresses work ethic and attitude.			
			d. Includes independent work skills (e.g. setting goals, time management)			
			e. Includes team work skills			
			f. Is customizable to the community/population of interest.			
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
8			Consideration 8: Incorporate effective transferable skills training components.			
			a. Transferable skills training is included.			
			b. Relevant transferable skills are defined within the curriculum.			
			c. Transferable skills component is customizable to the community/population of interest.			
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps

Key Component Five: Delivery

Curriculum delivery is a central element of these programs pertaining to all participant groups. The two main questions to answer are the “where” and “how” of curriculum delivery. Examples of the “where” include either integrating career curriculum and interventions into existing, broader structures or implementing the effort as a standalone model, such as a career center. The “how” includes factors such as individual versus group approaches, technology-enhanced activities, and peer-to-peer interventions.

Effective delivery of a career and workforce development programs for youth should aim to address the following considerations:

Consideration 1: Respond to the realities of its participants and the community.

When determining how and where career interventions are offered, a number of factors should be considered. Access to technology for program participants, both existing within the community and through participation in the program, is important to consider. Literacy levels of participants are important to consider, as are language and translation issues. The realities of the participants also include such factors as socio-economic conditions of the participants, including refugee status, prior educational background, and existing access to job market information.

Consideration 2: Be feasible and accessible to its participants.

To be practicable to participants, a user-friendly approach should be utilized that address issues of accessibility, timing, and location. Different delivery mechanisms should be considered (e.g. electronic, paper, lecture, experiential). If appropriate, program staff should consider repeating programs (i.e. same program offered again); as well as offering short or online programs to make participation feasible to youth. The location of programs should be considered, with single stand-alone locations (such as career centers) for career and workforce development programs working in conjunction with the academic standards and practices already existent within the community.

Consideration 3: Include different approaches to curriculum delivery

When delivering the program, different approaches should be considered. These include project based/experiential approaches, as well as those that are participant-guided. Trainers should demonstrate positive models of behavior. Innovation and adaptability should be considered in program delivery. By combining different methods and interventions (e.g. online modules, face-to-face presentations), diverse communication and learning styles can be accommodated. Finally, trainers should integrate accountability tools (e.g. performance evaluations of trainers, effective communication of goals, expectations, successes, and failures of the program) into the program delivery to monitor effectiveness and assess need for program modifications.

Consideration 4: Effective delivery of career and workforce development programs should incorporate participant and stakeholder issues.

At all times of program delivery, privacy and confidentiality issues should be addressed. Information for family members should be integrated into the program. Time for discussion between stakeholders should be integrated into the program to build accountability and facilitate communication.

Consideration 5: Include individual interventions

Given the challenges youth participants face, program delivery should allow for specific, personalized attention and support for program participants. However, individual interventions should not be the only form of intervention.

Consideration 6: Include group interventions

Group interventions are an important component to integrate into the program delivery. Group interventions allow participants to learn from each other, improve participants' ability to work in groups, and improve their interpersonal skills. These interventions can take the form of small group guidance or, within a school setting, whole classroom activities. Group interventions are essential in promoting soft skills such as collaboration and problem solving.

Consideration 7: Include peer to peer interactions

Peer to peer interactions (e.g. one-to-one activities) are essential, in part because they facilitate social skills development. Peer to peer interactions can also foster social support toward improved career outcomes for youth.

Consideration 8: Incorporate technology

Technology is an essential component in career and workforce development programs. It provides flexibility, and can be used to present information in diverse ways. It also allows participant access to information at different times and locations. Curriculum should include teaching participants how to use technology to their benefit (e.g. finding valid/reliable information, how to search for needed services and job information, etc.). In order to be effective and appropriate it should be tied to other interventions.

Assessment Tool: Delivery

Directions:

Review the information regarding Key Component Five above, and then complete the following sections as they apply to your program.

Growth Need: Use the explanatory descriptions for the Considerations (above) to determine your program's growth need. Assign one of the following numerical scores, or corresponding descriptors, to this space.

2 (*Sufficient*) signifies that there is no additional growth need for that consideration.

1 (*Existent*) signifies that the program already has some features included in this consideration but should be improved.

0 (*Absent*) indicates that there is a high growth need as features addressed within this consideration are lacking.

Detail: Use this space to identify *existing features* of your program that are applicable to that item. (e.g. "Program offered once in the fall and once in the spring. Only in-person delivery.")

Needs: Use this space to identify what is most needed within your program as applicable to that consideration (e.g. "Flexible scheduling through online modules.")

Supporting Resources: Note supports (including individual and institutional supports) that can help as you move toward meeting growth needs (e.g. “Several former students are tech-savvy and could be involved in development of online modules.”)

Next steps: Use this space to identify specific action step(s) that can be made within a realistic timeframe (e.g. “Goal: offer online option for spring program.”)

Growth Need 2- Sufficient; 1-Existent; 0-Absent					
1	Consideration 1: Respond to the realities of its participants and the community.				
		a. Addresses issues related to access to technology			
		b. Provides curriculum appropriate for participant literacy levels			
		c. Considers socio-economic conditions and refugee status of participants			
		d. Accounts for language and translation issues.			
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
2	Consideration 2: Be feasible and accessible to its participants.				
		a. Curriculum is delivered using a user-friendly approach			
		b. Program timing accounts for potential and actual participants’ needs to increase accessibility (time of the day, day of the week, time of the year)			
		c. Considers location and accessibility issues (public transportation access, needs for those with disabilities, etc).			
		d. Utilizes effective delivery mechanism (e.g. electronic, paper, lecture, experiential)			
		e. Same program is repeated (as appropriate)			
		f. Length of program is appropriate for participant needs (e.g. short programs)			
		g. Online programs offered (with sufficient technology access for participants)			
		h. Single locations (such as career centers) that exist as standalone locations for career and workforce development programs work in conjunction with the academic standards/ practices already within the community			

		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
3	Consideration 3: Include different approaches to curriculum delivery				
		a. Utilizes project-based/experiential approaches.			
		c. Focuses on developing positive models.			
		d. Is adaptable, to include different methods of communications and learning styles, by combining different methods and interventions.			
		e. Considers participant-guided approaches.			
		f. Considers innovative approaches (e.g. creative activities, etc)			
		g. Integrates accountability tools.			
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
4	Consideration 4: Effective delivery of career and workforce development programs should incorporate participant and stakeholder issues.				
		a. Addresses privacy and confidentiality issues			
		b. Includes information for family members			
		c. Time for discussion between stakeholders.			
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
5	Consideration 5: Include individual interventions				
		a. Allows for specific, personalized attention and support.			
		b. Is integrated into program that includes other forms of intervention (group, online)			
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
6	Consideration 6: Include essential group interventions				

		a. Participants are provided opportunity to learn from each other and develop interpersonal skills through working in groups.				
		b. Participants participate in activities that foster collaboration, problem solving and effective group work skills.				
		c. Utilizes different group formats, including small group guidance and whole classroom activities.				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
7		Consideration 7: Include peer to peer interactions which facilitate social skills development				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
8		Consideration 8: Incorporate technology				
		a. Technology is utilized to present information in diverse ways.				
		b. Technology is utilized to allow participants to access information at different times and locations.				
		c. Participants are taught how to use technology to their benefit ((e.g. finding valid/reliable information, how to search for services, etc.)				
		d. Technology is tied to other interventions				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps

Key Component Six: Evaluation

Defined as “the purposeful and systematic collection and analysis of data or information used for the purpose of documenting the effectiveness, impact, and outcomes of programs, establishing accountability, and identifying areas needing change and improvement” (Dimmit, 2009, p. 396), evaluation is an imperative component of career and workforce development programs (Nassar & Al-Qimlass, 2017). Evaluation is critical at all stages of development and implementation to inform policy and practice decision. Evaluating effectiveness, impact, and outcomes of programs relies on the use of outcome measures which assesses the success of a program or process (versus output measures which quantify the result of an activity or process, e.g. number of programs offered).

Effective evaluation of career and workforce development programs for youth should aim to address the following considerations:

Consideration 1: Utilize basic fundamentals as related to its development and implementation. Evaluation should be measurable, utilizing simple evaluation tools that generate meaningful data that address key questions of performance. It should include different forms of data (e.g. quantitative and qualitative). Driven by common goals of stakeholders, the evaluation process should be contextual measuring factors that are unique to the program, participants, and community. Evaluation should combine progress measures with program outcomes. The progress measures provide a mechanism for quality assurance and should be focused on important factors to evaluate such as quality of life of the participant. Technology should be used to store participant data on assessments, progress, etc.

Consideration 2: Utilize clear operational definitions of items to be measured Program evaluation should be driven by a common definition and understanding of *impact* among all stakeholder groups. Clear and systemic inputs (e.g. interventions, etc.) should be matched with measurable outcomes. Furthermore, specific and detailed indicators should be used when measuring all program outcomes and output.

Consideration 3: Include observations from multiple aspects of the program Evaluation should include observations from multiple aspects of the program. Including output measures such as number of participants provides data that can inform logistics decisions. Additionally, evaluation should look at what has been learned and how the target audience was engaged throughout the program. Behavioral differences within participants should be evaluated, such as job-related skills, career interests, and attitudes. Through the evaluation process, it is also important to look at what has been invested within the program, including financial and staffing resources.

Consideration 4: Include intervention research; with the aim of analyzing and evaluating the program itself.

Intervention research (i.e. research that looks specifically at the efficacy of the interventions put in place) is essential in informing best practices in career and workforce development. Intervention research should include exploring the optimum timing, duration and mode of delivery of career guidance interventions. Additionally, it should explore the mechanisms as to why something works. Administrative and available online large datasets should be used in the analysis of interventions to help compare effectiveness across groups and contribute to the broader global workforce development community. Longitudinal studies should be considered and implemented, if possible, in collaboration

with researchers. Finally, intervention research should include the regular use of statistical meta-analyses as a way of synthesizing the literature.

Consideration 5: Include intervention research; with the aim of informing future projects and contributing to broader systemic change.

Intervention research also informs future projects thereby contributing to broader systemic change.

Intervention research should include how evidence interfaces with practice and practitioner. In addition to informing future projects, it should be targeted to policy makers and be seen as a way to add support to continued funding decisions. This research should assist policy makers in evaluating current policies, as well as developing new policies.

Consideration 6: Include key outputs and outcomes related to participant variables.

Participant variables that should be considered when evaluating the program include job satisfaction, personal confidence, and increased motivation and empowerment. Job retention is another outcome that can be examined. Additionally, program evaluation should include supervisor assessment of the youth participant's work performance.

Consideration 7: Include key outputs and outcomes related to program and community related variables.

Within the ecological, comprehensive framework of career and workforce development programs, program and community related variables are also relevant and should be examined through program evaluation. This should include the extent to which the program is sustainable, including different factors such as the development of resources (such as trainers, networks, and community buy-in), the context of where the program was delivered (such as community factors and delivery methods), and what the socio-economic context necessitates. The type of modality that was used and the activities that were undertaken should be included in program evaluation. Intervention research should include the extent to which the program addressed the needs of the community/participants, including whether target groups participated.

Consideration 8: Utilize methodological rigor when identifying and measuring key outputs and outcomes.

Inclusion of the following items will support methodological rigor when identifying and measuring key outputs and outcomes: the use of common terms throughout, use of both qualitative and quantitative data, and the use of both indirect and direct measures. Direct measures include firsthand observations of actual performance as it is occurring while indirect measures rely on reported observations and inferences made by others (Drummond & Jones, 2010). The sample (or subset of the population of interest) should be highly representative of this target population. Findings and analysis should be carefully and critically reviewed or vetted.

Assessment Tool: Evaluation

Directions:

Review the information regarding Key Component Six above, and then complete the following sections as they apply to your program.

Growth Need: Use the explanatory descriptions for the Considerations (above) to determine your program’s growth need. Assign one of the following numerical scores, or corresponding descriptors, to this space.

- 2 (*Sufficient*) signifies that there is no additional growth need for that consideration.
- 1 (*Existent*) signifies that the program already has some features included in this consideration but should be improved.
- 0 (*Absent*) indicates that there is a high growth need as features addressed within this consideration are lacking.

Detail: Use this space to identify *existing features* of your program that are applicable to that item. (e.g. “Program is evaluated on the basis of whether or not participants get jobs at end of the program. No other indicators.”)

Needs: Use this space to identify what is most needed within your program as applicable to that consideration (e.g. “Focus groups of recent participants will help to assess program impact on personal motivation.”)

Supporting Resources: Note supports (including individual and institutional supports) that can help as you move toward meeting growth needs (e.g. “Employer support exists for adding assessment for supervisors to complete on youth participant performance in the workplace.”)

Next steps: Use this space to identify specific action step(s) that can be made within a realistic timeframe (e.g. “Create short questionnaire to send to all current supervisors of youth participants.”)

	Growth Need 2- Sufficient; 1-Existent; 0-Absent				
1.		Consideration 1: Utilize basic fundamentals as related to its development and implementation.			
		a. Is driven by common goals and outcomes of all stakeholder groups			
		b. Is contextual to the community, participants, etc.			
		c. Uses simple evaluation tools (e.g. Likert scales, open-ended questions)			
		d. Is measurable			
		e. Is performance based			
		f. Utilizes technology to store participant data on assessments, progress, etc.			
		g. Combines progress measures (quality assurance) with program outcomes.			
		h. Includes different forms of data (including quantitative and qualitative)			
		Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps

2		Consideration 2: Utilize clear operational definitions of items to be measured				
		a. Is driving by common definition and understanding of “impact”				
		b. Clear and systemic inputs are matched with measurable outcomes				
		c. Explicit indicators are used.				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
3		Consideration 3: Include observations from multiple aspects of the program				
		a. Includes measures to evaluate what has been learned by participants.				
		b. Includes measures to evaluate behavioral differences within participants (e.g. interests, attitudes, job-related skills)				
		c. Includes measures that evaluate how the target audience was engaged throughout the program				
		d. Includes data of what has been invested within the program				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
4		Consideration 4: Include intervention research; with the aim of analyzing and evaluating the program itself.				
		a. Explores the optimum timing, duration and mode of delivery of the intervention				
		b. Examines why something works, as well as if it works				
		c. Utilizes administrative datasets and (online) big data				
		d. Uses statistical meta-analyses as a way of synthesizing the literature				
		e. Includes longitudinal work				
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
5		Consideration 5: Include intervention research; with the aim of informing future projects and contributing to broader systemic change.				
		a. Includes how evidence interfaces with practice and practitioner				

			b. Is targeted to policy makers and adds support to continued funding.			
			c. Assists policy makers in evaluating current policies as well as developing new policies			
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
6			Consideration 6: Include key outputs and outcomes related to participant variables.			
			a. Includes job satisfaction			
			b. Includes personal confidence			
			c. Includes increased motivation and empowerment			
			d. Includes job retention			
			e. Includes supervisor assessment of performance			
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
7			Consideration 7: Include key outputs and outcomes related to program and community related variables.			
			a. Addresses the need for development of resources (e.g. cultivation of professionals/employers, cultivating a network of trainers) so the program can be sustainable.			
			b. Includes activities undertaken and type of modality that was used			
			c. Includes the extent to which the program addressed the needs of the community/participants			
			d. Includes the extent to which the program is sustainable.			
			e. Addresses the context of where the program was delivered			
			f. Determines what the local socio-economic context necessitates.			
			g. Examines the participation of target groups.			
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps
8			Consideration 8: Utilize methodological rigor when identifying and measuring key outputs and outcomes.			

			a. Terms defined before collecting data.			
			b. Common terms used throughout the research process.			
			c. A highly representative sample used.			
			d. Both qualitative and quantitative data used.			
			e. Both indirect and direct measures used.			
			f. Vetted findings and analysis included.			
			Detail	Needs	Supporting Resources	Next Steps

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