

# Workforce Development

Investing in Today's Workforce. Preparing for Tomorrow's Opportunities.



Economic development relies on strong policies, sound institutions, adept entrepreneurs, and a capable workforce. However, providing job seekers and employees with economically relevant skills that support competitive industries and healthy economies is a challenge worldwide.

Workforce development initiatives aim to deliver targeted education, training, and employment support services that allow people to improve their opportunities for employment. These initiatives assist governments, universities, and training institutions to understand and anticipate the changing demand for skills. They also build tools and systems that bring together job seekers and employers.

For over 15 years, RTI International has helped governments, education and training providers, businesses, and civil society organizations work together to provide citizens with pathways to prosperity through employment and career advancement opportunities, as well as provide companies with the skilled employees needed to increase their competitiveness and respond to shifting markets.

## Expertise

- Performing supply- and demand-side labor market analysis
- Formulating workforce-driven value chain upgrading strategies
- Developing occupational skill standards and curricula
- Conducting industry-based competency certifications
- Strengthening education and vocational training institutions
- Fostering employability skills and job placement support
- Facilitating public-private partnerships (PPPs) and stakeholder dialogues
- Monitoring and evaluating workforce interventions

RTI has supported comprehensive workforce development interventions and research throughout the United States and the developing world. We build local capacity to design and implement tools and systems; align systems with employer needs; and create employment opportunities for women, youth, and disadvantaged target groups.

## Ongoing Research

RTI and Duke University's Center for Globalization, Governance, and Competitiveness are exploring how governments and their partners can best deploy workforce development strategies to provide businesses, employees, and job seekers with the right skills to compete in the rapidly changing global economy. We are working to analyze how workforce development initiatives can support and enable improvements in developing country participation in the global value chains of key agricultural, manufacturing, and service industries. Case studies illustrating the workforce dimensions of industry upgrading help inform the development of a framework that links economic and social upgrading and workforce development.



## Selected Project Experience

**El Salvador, Improving Access to Employment** (U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID]/CARANA, 2009–2013)

RTI is helping improve El Salvador's labor market by developing private sector alliances that support demand-driven occupational training programs. The project is developing and strengthening curricula for skill-based competency certifications and improving labor market information systems, including developing a monitoring system for training providers that measures quality and post-training success.

**El Salvador, Crime and Violence Prevention Project** (USAID, 2008–2011)

As part of this project's efforts to prevent crime and violence, RTI develops educational and corporate partnerships to provide vocational training and basic education for youth. Thus far, the project has supported entrepreneurship training and other prevention initiatives in over 30 schools, reaching 11,000 students and approximately 100 educators.

**Guatemala, Crime Prevention in Guatemala** (USAID, 2010–2014)

RTI facilitates PPPs to support vocational training programs that are designed around projections of future employment trends and business needs. As part of a larger strategy to prevent crime, the project targets youth under 30 from high-risk neighborhoods through a combination of training in technical and vocational areas; soft skills, such as work ethic and gender sensitivity; and job application skills, such as computer literacy and English language.

**Iraq, Local Institutions Support Program** (USAID, 2003–2005)

The project's Local Economic and Workforce Development Initiative provided vocational training, business, and employment support to job seekers and targeted youth through skills-development programs. Employment Services Centers facilitated the registration, matching, and hiring of over 12,000 Iraqis.

**Liberia, Excellence in Higher Education for Liberian Development (EHELD)** (USAID, 2011–2016)

RTI is creating Centers of Excellence at two Liberian universities to produce skilled graduates in engineering and agriculture to meet current and future workforce demands. EHELD is equipping top-performing young Liberian women and men to contribute to their nation's economic development in careers as engineers, extension agents, researchers, managers, leaders, and small business owners. EHELD is also building the capacity of university faculty through extensive degree training programs and mentoring.

**Morocco, Youth-Focused Labor Market Assessment** (USAID, 2010)

RTI conducted a situational analysis of youth in the Moroccan labor market, forecasting current and future employment opportunities. The analysis identified disparities between technical and vocational education and labor market needs to inform the design of future interventions.

**Senegal, Improving Education Quality** (USAID, 2010–2014)

Based on a comprehensive analysis of the workforce and livelihoods development needs of Senegalese youth, RTI is helping local governments formulate new policies and design and implement demand-driven training programs in employability and entrepreneurship skills.

**United States, Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) Data Collection Program** (U.S. Department of Labor, 1997–2010)

O\*NET provides data that are valid, reliable, and current for over 800 occupations. RTI collected data from over 150,000 workers about knowledge, work activities, work context, and tasks required to perform their jobs. The data are used by job seekers, agencies, education institutions, employers, and public and private organizations.

**United States, Regional Innovation and Strategic Workforce Planning Services** (U.S. Department of Labor/West Piedmont Workforce, 2008–2009)

For 17 counties in Virginia and North Carolina, RTI developed a workforce strategic plan that assessed workforce, economic development, and education system assets. We recommended strategies and an organizational framework to implement aggressive and creative solutions for youth and job seekers, incumbent workers and employers, local and regional leadership, and relevant community organizations.

**Zimbabwe, Economic Opportunity for Adolescent Orphans (SHAZ!)**

(University of California–San Francisco, NICHD, 2008–2010)

SHAZ! empowered adolescent girls to avoid sexually risky behaviors and evade HIV infection, by providing them with improved economic opportunities. RTI also studied the impact of pairing life-skills training with an economic intervention, such as a micro-grant, on the economic status of HIV-positive participants.

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### More Information

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