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Sri Lanka Accelerated Skills Acquisition Program (ASAP)

**Sylvia Ellison, Creative Associates International, Inc.
Jean-Pierre Isbendjian, International Youth Foundation
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CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL

Accelerated Skills Acquisition Program (ASAP)

Implemented by:

**Creative Associates
International, Inc.**

**International Youth
Foundation**

Christian Children's Fund



CCF-Sri Lanka



International Youth Foundation®



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I. Scope and Background

- \$3 mil. 2 year USAID funded activity -- Creative Associates (prime), IYF and CCF
- Target: School Leavers (15-25 years) in conflict-areas
- Increase workforce readiness in conflict-affected areas to support availability of adaptive workforce





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ASAP Objectives

- 1. Increase preparedness of school leavers for the work place**
- 2. Disseminate models of best practices**
- 3. Establish linkages between training providers and employer**
- 3. Small Grants**



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Curriculum: Programming around Skills Gaps

- Demand-driven programming based on surveys
- Youth:
 - 53% prefer public sector employment
 - More women prefer public sector employment than men.
 - Education is key obstacle to finding employment, not lack of specific skills (e.g. English).





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Skills Gaps cont'd



- Private Sector
 - Private sector belief that education credentials determine employment – little value in voc. training certification. No analysis of skills or way to measure skills.
 - Soft-skills (e.g. work attitude, communication) most needed by employees
 - English language and Communication Technology skills in highest demand



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II. ASAP Curriculum Development Process

- Survey employers on skills gaps
- Review existing curricula
- Curriculum priorities developed with private and public sectors
- A focus on thematic integration across lessons
- Regular review of curriculum and feedback from trainers and employers



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Challenges to Implementation

- Employability training inadequate, poor quality of trainers and access difficult
- Limited/poor cooperation between private and public sectors
- Aversion to private sector with preference for public sector employment
- Few employment and partnership options due to conflict and a culture of fear, mistrust.
- Host government mistrust of donors and NGOs



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Lessons Learned

- Train near where target audience lives and educate parents (gender and choice of options)
- Develop flexible tools to be used in a variety of contexts
- Market classroom-focused approaches to private sector
- Grants to a diverse group – Tamil, Sinhalese, East, Central
- Cross regional support promotes opportunities for employment and increased trust
- Soft-Skills sell – when done well



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Break Out Session

ASAP Curriculum Review
Career Success Skills Activity
Discussion