



# Implementation Lessons from Honduras 'Mi Primero Empleo'

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# The program - Background

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- Honduran youth are at high risk
  - Limited access to and low quality of secondary education
  - Large % adolescent 15-19 live in extreme poverty
  - Less schooling than national average and high fertility
  - Underemployment and unemployment rates twice the national average
  - High proportion belongs to gangs
  
- Few programs address low education attendance and attainment among youth over 15
  - Secondary education available to <35% of all youth
  - No training programs to improve skills/employability



# The program – Type of program

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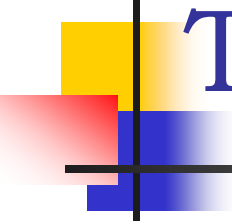
- Youth training employment program to promote labor market insertion of poor urban youth who have abandoned the conventional education systems
- Integrated approach to provide
  - Specific job training;
  - Internship directly linked to training;
  - Support for job search after training/internship;
  - Orientation for life and work skills
- Pilot as part of a nutrition and SP WB project



# The program – Details

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- 3-4 months training by private/public centers



# The program – Target population

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- Youth aged 15-19 (other programs exist for other age groups)
- Living in selected marginalized urban areas (Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula)
- Enrolled in a program of alternative formal education (key requirement)



# Impact evaluation – Main Hypotheses

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- Participation improves labor market outcomes (employment, salaries, employment quality)
- Participation decreases participation in risky behaviors (e.g. consumption of alcohol, drugs and tobacco)



# Impact evaluation – Identification Strategy

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- Call for applications from interested youth. Youth express a preference for courses
- Excess demand for courses expected
- A lottery to determine the assignment of training



# Impact evaluation – Implementation of baseline

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Registration process consists of 3 modules

## 1. Registration card:

- Qns on socio-economic status and to determine eligibility
- Applicant expresses interest in different courses
- Applicant receives input as to which courses appropriate

## 2. Baseline socio economic characteristics

- Administered by an interviewer from consultancy firm
- 20 minutes

## 3. Risky behavior module

- Self-administered by the applicant with use of audio- or computer assisted technology





## A few data

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Number of training spots?	1629
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Number of expected applicants?	3258
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Number of applicant in 1 <sup>st</sup> round?	693
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Figuring out what went wrong?	Priceless
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# Unexpected facts

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- Low number of applications
- Low take up rate: 32% of those who filled the registration form did enroll in the courses
- 40% of those interviewed for the baseline enrolled in the program (256)



# Why did this happen?

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- Communication strategy not very effective
- Transportation issues
- Registration available on weekdays only
- Community leaders not sufficiently involved



# Lessons learned

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- Requirement of enrollment in alternative education strict
- Conflicting needs between evaluation requirements and ensuring large participation
- Basic implementation standards not place (i.e. basic MIS system in place, delays in starting of program)



# What to do

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- Before-after analysis with existing baseline
- Control group those who answered the baseline but did not enroll in any course

Problems: low representativeness & hard to track



# What to do

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- Follow-up survey for youth who did take the courses. Compare across courses attended and socio-economic backgrounds.

Problem: no control group



# Current Plan

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- Go back and do a new baseline
- Make sure to address the issues in lessons learned
- Think of possible Plan B in terms of control group