



Diageo Expands Commitment to Growing Youth Employment and Skills in Colombia

Learning for Life™ is a global initiative implemented by Diageo to transform the lives of young adults by enhancing their employment opportunities through skills-based training programs. Since its inception in 2008, Learning for Life™ has reached over 100,000 individuals across 35 countries.

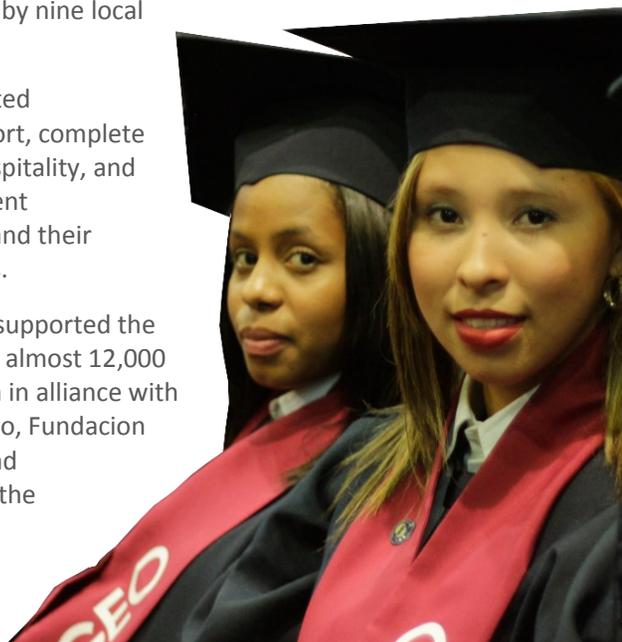
In Colombia, Learning for Life™ has formed an alliance with Agribusiness Systems International (ASI) to bring training programs to disadvantaged Afro-Colombian and indigenous young adults. The alliance works with the government of the city of Cali and the Valle Family Welfare Fund, making it a model of a strong Public-Private Partnership.

In 2016, the first phase of the program promoted the economic inclusion of 200 individuals in Barranquilla and Cartagena. Participants took part in tailored trainings and were placed in formal jobs in the hospitality and tourism industries. The second phase of the program will be implemented from late 2016 until early 2018. It will expand the experience to another 470 individuals in Bogota, Cali, Cartagena, and Barranquilla, who are victims of Colombia’s internal conflict.

On November 18, the second phase of the alliance was launched with a public event in Cali. It was attended by local public officials, private sector representatives, and grassroots organizations. The event was covered by nine local and national media outlets.

Over the next eighteen months, selected candidates will receive personal support, complete technical trainings on tourism and hospitality, and be enrolled in formal jobs. A subsequent monitoring stage will help graduates and their families to adapt to their new realities.

Since 2011, ACDI/VOCA and ASI have supported the tailored training and job placement of almost 12,000 disadvantaged individuals in Colombia in alliance with various donors including USAID, Diageo, Fundacion Plan, the cities of Cali, Barranquilla, and Cartagena, the Ministry of Labor, and the Colombian Agency for International Cooperation and Social Prosperity.



Meet Jordany

Jordany, 20, was one of the few Afro-Colombian students in his community to finish high school. After he graduated, he spent three years moving between odd jobs and working part-time at his father’s grocery store in order to make ends meet. When he learned about the opportunity to receive technical training through Learning for Life™, Jordany wasn’t sure that it was the right program for him. Despite his hesitation, he decided to enroll in the retail and sales program in Cali.

As the weeks of training passed, Jordany became one of the most active students in the program. He successfully completed both his academic and practical trainings, passing his exams with flying colors.

Jordany now works as a sales representative at a multinational retail company. He says that the skills he developed during job training have helped him to excel in his position. Because of his experiences, Jordany is now making plans to go back to school to become a professional accountant.

“This program changed my life for good; now my goals and my expectations are different. The living conditions of my family are better and the future is brighter.”

—2016 Graduate of the Employment Program