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## **NEW ALLIANCE TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO MULTIPLY EDUCATIONAL AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN ASIA/MIDDLE EAST**

### ***USAID Awards \$11 Million to IYF for Innovative Initiative***

*Baltimore, Maryland:* Six countries – representing more than 300 million young people under the age of 24 -- will benefit from a new alliance to be led by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to adequately prepare these youth to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. In Egypt, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan and the Philippines, the new *Education and Employment Alliance* will tap the innovation and resources of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to ensure young people receive the appropriate education and training to find gainful employment.

Leading with a start-up grant of US\$11 million, and leveraging the rich experience it has gained through its Global Development Alliance, USAID is building an extensive network with IYF. Because of its expertise in forging multi-sector, regional partnerships, IYF is serving as the global secretariat of the Alliance, providing overall support in the six countries.

“Education systems need innovative approaches brought to the table by new partners,” said William S. Reese, IYF President and CEO. “Companies thrive on innovation and can provide fresh insight. They also depend on having an educated workforce and educated consumers. That is what the Alliance will develop, working in partnership with companies, educators, non-profits, and policy-makers to provide opportunities for employment.”

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Both USAID and IYF recognize that the “business as usual” approach is not working. Many education systems fail to adequately prepare youth for the workplace. Youth may drop out of school, or even if they stay in, the skills acquired are outmoded or too limited to qualify them for decent paying, formal sector employment. According to the International Labor Organization, the unemployment rates of working-age youth are often double the level of the adult population.

“Youth in these countries are the next generation of employees, policy makers, and community leaders. The way they are educated will drive their countries’ future growth and place in the global economy,” said Mark Ward, Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Asia Near East Bureau, USAID. “USAID understands the importance of investing in economic growth and integration into the world economy. That is why USAID and its partners have launched the *Education and Employment Alliance*.”

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#### **About the International Youth Foundation**

The International Youth Foundation (IYF) is dedicated to supporting programs that improve the conditions and prospects for young people where they live, learn, work, and play. Since its founding in 1990, IYF has worked with hundreds of companies, foundations, and non-governmental organizations to scale up existing programs and build long-term strategic partnerships. Currently operating in close to 70 countries and territories, IYF and its partners have helped millions of young people gain the skills, training and opportunities critical to their success. More information on IYF can be found at [www.iyfnet.org](http://www.iyfnet.org).

#### **About the International Agency for International Development**

The U.S. Agency for International Development administers the U.S. foreign assistance program providing economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 80 countries worldwide. More information on USAID can be found at [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov).