

THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN THE GREENING ECONOMY

This handout draws from Centering Youth in Green Workforce Development: An Action Guide and the Analysis of Global Youth-Led Climate Initiatives: Summary of Findings. Chemonics International and Unbounded Associates developed both these resources to help international development organizations better center youth in their green workforce initiatives and support young people

in building skills and finding jobs in a green, just transition. The Action Guide is based on insights from consultations with 16 young people from around the world, as well as project staff and youth participants from 10 Chemonics-implemented projects. The analysis examined the current state of 50 youth-led climate initiatives.



By 2030, it is estimated that the transition to a greener economy will add 60 million new jobs globally. This will lead to changes in the job landscape across sectors as new, more green jobs are created, and less nature-friendly jobs are replaced, transformed, or removed.

THREE AREAS WITH HIGH POTENTIAL FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN GREEN JOBS



CSA Climate-Smart Agriculture

Climate-smart innovations in agriculture include increasing food production for a growing population, using climate-resilient growing techniques, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Examples include:

- Regenerative agriculture
- Hydroponics
- Agri-photovoltaics
- Crop insurance
- CSA advisory services



NCS Natural Climate Solutions

NCS balance efforts to protect, sustainably manage, and restore ecosystems while uplifting local communities and increasing climate resilience. Examples include:

- Ecotourism
- Indigenous forest management
- Green infrastructure
- Mangrove and coastal restoration
- Carbon financing (REDD+ projects)



Youth entrepreneurship

Across the world, youth innovators are pushing the envelope on green entrepreneurship, starting and developing enterprises that benefit people and the planet alike. To tackle climate and sustainability issues in new ways, they bring skills such as:

- Strategic thinking
- Communication
- Future planning
- Imagination
- Passion

Skills to Better Position Youth in a Just, Green Transition



ADVOCACY / COMMUNICATION

Skills that help young people participate in advocacy processes, often through strategic communication efforts



CLIMATE LITERACY

Science-based facts equipping young people to better understand and address climate change



POLITICAL AGENCY

Skills that enable young people to engage in political processes



LEADERSHIP

Positioning young people as leaders in their mission and activities



COALITION BUILDING / CREATING NETWORKS

Accessing, creating, or participating in collective groups and activities

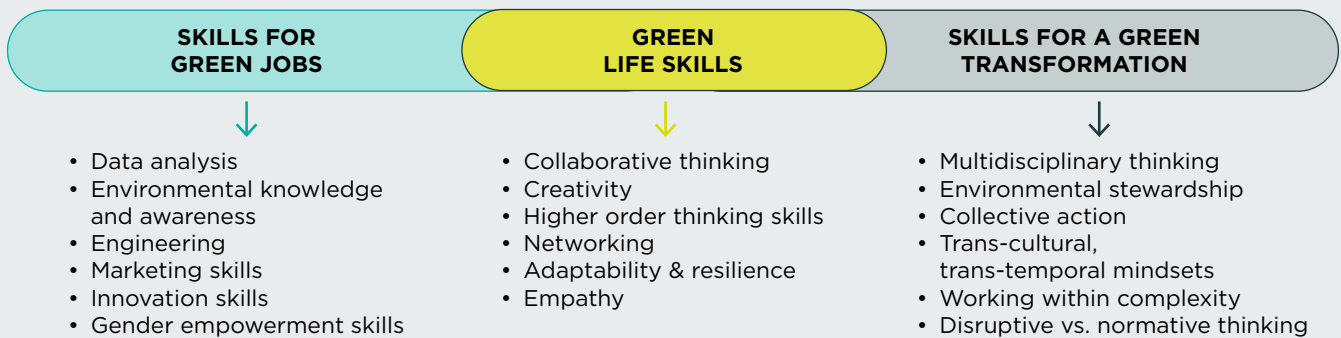


PRIORITIZING INDIGENOUS / MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Engaging these groups, especially youth in these communities, as agents of change and accommodating their rights in a green transition

SUPPORTING YOUTH IN THE GREENING ECONOMY

For youth to adapt to the greening economy, lead the green transformation, and combat the many barriers they face in finding green jobs, they will need a breadth of green skills. An illustrative list of green skills can be found below.



CHALLENGES AND ENABLING FACTORS FOR YOUTH IN A GREEN ECONOMY

Barriers to Finding Decent Green Jobs

Youth face several barriers when it comes to accessing green jobs. These include barriers related to lack of access to information, training, and resources for finding and obtaining green jobs, as well as lack of access to markets, finance, and supportive mechanisms and policies for helping them succeed in green jobs.

How do youth recommend combating these barriers?

- Increase awareness of green jobs through social networks, early exposure, and political participation
- Build coalitions and engage youth collectively in policy- and decision-making
- Engage with private sector & local community-based organizations to align capacity building initiatives with market needs
- Train youth in practical skills such as business and financial management
- Integrate gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches in education and training to promote gender equality in access to information and opportunities

Enabling Factors for Successful Youth-Led Climate Initiatives



Non-governmental partnerships
Collaboration with organizations or institutions



Political partnerships
Collaboration with governments



Crowd-sourced financial support
Funding via individual donations



Institutional financial support
Funding via traditional funding entities



People power
Initiatives that hinge on mass mobilization conducting nonviolent direct action

HOW CAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS BETTER SUPPORT YOUTH IN A GREEN TRANSITION?

1

Start with and adapt to youth needs and perspectives

2

Fund youth and youth-led organizations more directly

3

Prioritize issues of environmental sustainability, justice, and inclusion into projects from the start

4

Collaboration and partnership for long-term success