

POSTA JOVEN

Strengthening youth leadership skills

THE CHALLENGE

Following the Argentinean economic crisis in 2002, 60% of Argentine youth now live in poverty, 22.5% do not attend school, and 26.5% are unemployed. However, from the point of view of “resilience,” many of these socially and economically vulnerable youth show great potential. If given opportunities to develop, these youth could generate positive social change in their communities.

THE PROGRAM

The *Posta Joven* program enables disadvantaged youth, ages 17 to 24, in four regions of Argentina to contribute to their own development and the betterment of their communities. The program trains youth leaders in each location in life and leadership skills. These leaders return to their communities, and with help from local partner organizations, provide art and communications workshops to youth from their neighborhoods. Additionally, select youth receive small grants to implement community service projects.



Besides improving the livelihood of participating youth, the program seeks to create regional networks of local youth-serving organizations in each of the four target locations, where up until now such organizations worked in isolation. *Fundación SES* strongly believes that the organizations will benefit greatly by networking with each other, for instance in the areas of good practice sharing and fundraising.

OUTCOMES

Through this program, youth in four regions of Argentina are expected to increase their participation in community service work, with a subset of youth leaders continuing to develop their leadership and life skills. Specific targeted life skills include communication, cooperation, teamwork, and creative thinking. Additionally, *SES* will have helped establish youth development networks in each of the four locations in Argentina.

THE PARTNER

Fundación SES is a private, nonprofit organization established in 1999, whose mission is to promote the social inclusion of youth living in poverty. *SES* was founded by a group of highly motivated individuals who saw the need for an organization to take national leadership in transforming the way society interacts with its young people. *SES* is dedicated to promoting integrated, community-based youth development projects that involve diverse stakeholders. It does so by identifying and strengthening the capacity of leading nongovernmental, youth-serving organizations in 20 communities throughout the country.



RESULTS TO DATE

The findings from a 2006 Brandeis University Outcomes Measurement study of the program were positive. Eighty-seven percent of sampled youth indicated that the program helped change their ideas about the future, and all youth said they would recommend the program to other young people. Seventy-three percent of participants felt that the adults involved in the program helped them become stronger and taught them how to manage difficult situations. Additional data related to outcomes measurement will be available in early 2008.

PROGRAM: *Posta Joven*
PARTNER: *Fundación Sustentabilidad, Educación, Solidaridad (SES)*
PERIOD: 1 September 2004 – 31 March 2008
LOCATION: Greater Buenos Aires, Patagonia, Northeast and Central Argentina
REACH : 5,400 youth, ages 17-24
MODEL: Creative self-expression, youth leadership