



Dominican Republic At-Risk Youth Initiative Alerta Joven

Annual Report 2013-2014
By Entrena SRL



PROYECTO ALERTA JOVEN



2013/2014

Cooperative Agreement
AID 517-A-12-00002

Entrena Annual Report
October 2013 - September 2014

Prepared for
Ms. Elisane Alemar - United States Agency for International
Development (USAID)/ Dominican Republic

Prepared by
ENTRENA SRL
Plaza Progreso Center Offices 601-506
Av. Lope de Vega 13, Ensanche Naco
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

ENTRENA SRL is a company incorporated in the Dominican Republic in 1982 specializing in technical assistance, social development training and education. For over 30 years, ENTRENA has provided innovative, culturally appropriate and sustainable solutions for a diversity of clients from the private sector, NGOs, governments and educational institutions. The author's views expressed in this publications do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. Executive Summary.....	5
II. Recap of Alerta Joven.....	6
III. Alerta Joven in Numbers.....	7
IV. The Faces and Background of our Youth.....	10
V. Goals and Results to Date.....	15
IR 1: Youth protection policy improved in practice.....	15
IR 1.1 Youth stakeholders empowered to influence policy decisions.....	15
IR 1.2 Implementing agencies understand and comply with youth legal framework.....	15
IR 1.3 Documented youth Increased.....	16
IR 2: Opportunities for youth to be productive citizens increased.....	17
IR 2.1 Formal and alternative opportunities increased.....	17
IR 2.2 Access to quality health prevention and care services improved.....	20
IR 2.3 Employment for youth increased.....	23
IR 3: Integrated youth system developed	26
3.1 A comprehensive information system implemented.....	26
3.2 Multi-disciplinary groups efficiently coordinating and implementing innovative solutions to reduce crime and gang activities.....	27
3.3 Public-private partnerships (PPPs) enhanced to support and advocate for vulnerable youth and children.....	27
PPPS Integrating Private Sector and Universities.....	28
PPPS Integrating Dominican Governmental Organizations.....	29
PPPS Integrating International Development Organizations.....	31
VI. Going forward - The Challenges.....	31
Web Platform and Information System.....	31
Partner Organizations.....	32
Working with Our Donor.....	32
Working with the Dominican Government.....	32
Sustainability.....	33
VII. Attachments.....	33
Attachment 1 – Geographic distribution	
Attachment 2 – Results Framework	

- Attachment 3 – Indicators and Results as of September 2014
- Attachment 4 – Total of 20 Implementing Partner Profiles
- Attachment 5 – Success Story
- Attachment 6 – Financial Summaries
- Attachment 7 – Special Events and Activities in 2014
 - Attachment 7.1 – February 2014 Dissemination of Results
 - Attachment 7.2 – Quantum Learning © Teacher and Facilitator Training
 - Attachment 7.3 – Espacio para Crecer (EpC)
 - Attachment 7.4 – June 2014 SuperCamp for EpC Students
 - Attachment 7.5 – July 2014 SuperCamp for Youth in Conflict with the Law
 - Attachment 7.6 – July 2014 Business Competition and Self Employment
 - Attachment 7.7 – A Ganar Employment Insertion Model
 - Attachment 7.8 – NEO (New Employment Opportunities) Dominican Republic
 - Attachment 7.9 – International Youth Day
 - Attachment 7.10 – Alerta Joven Partners
 - Attachment 7.11 – Community Based Crime Prevention Models
 - Attachment 7.12 – Research and Micro Studies of At-Risk Youth
 - Attachment 7.13 – Institutional Strengthening Activities
 - Attachment 7.14 – Cicatelli Training for Health Component
 - Attachment 7.15 – ProFamilia Year 3 Health Goals for Alerta Joven

- Acronyms.....34
- Spanish Terms.....35

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As of September 30, 2014, Cooperative Agreement No. AID-A-12-0002 entitled “Dominican Republic At-Risk Youth Initiative,” coined in Spanish as “Alerta Joven” between USAID and Entrena, reached its two-year anniversary. The total time of actual implementation is 27 months since the award was officially signed on July 5, 2012.

Alerta Joven is an ambitious initiative aiming to reduce levels of crime and violence through integrated and multi-disciplinary activities that provide increased opportunities in education, employment insertion, and health for youth with risk factors caused by marginalization and disenfranchisement. The initiative includes policy issues, information systems, and partnerships to positively impact the capability of our youth to become productive citizens.

Entrena is a local Dominican organization that was awarded the agreement after an open and competitive bidding process. In our proposal, we indicated that we would “hit the ground running” and incorporate the best-proven practices in the DR for working with vulnerable youth. After two years, we believe we have accomplished both objectives and are well on our way to completing our targets.

After two years, Alerta Joven has grown from an original grouping of four organizations (Entrena as prime with IDDI, ProFamilia, and RTI) to a total of 26 partner organizations, with more on the way. Multiple private public-partnerships have been established as Alerta Joven continues to create niches within the government, private sector, civil society and international organizations. Alerta Joven has been successfully branded within Dominican society, whose citizens anxiously await solutions for everyday crime and violence.

Year 2 was characterized by expansion and consolidation. To date, out of a Year 2 overall target population of 34,660, Alerta Joven has a total of 19,701 participating youth registered for 56 % of the targeted figure for the year. Our budget execution is at 27 %. All established intermediate results have action plans and activities in order to reach their goals. Impacting activities such as the conference to disseminate results, youth employment competition and fairs, and specialized “SuperCamps” for incarcerated youth were launched.

Undoubtedly, Alerta Joven faces challenges. Acquiring the quality control from our partners, making the information and tracking systems functional, up to date, and easy to use, and creating the base for long-term sustainability are a few examples. But what is unique and exciting about Alerta Joven are the possibilities it generates due to its creativity and multi-faceted approach. Dominicans embrace Alerta Joven, offer ideas, and are enthusiastic participants.

We hope you enjoy this second annual report. We have purposely kept the narratives short and the numbers easy to understand. We start by recapping Alerta Joven, summarize the numbers, present the faces of our youth, review the results, and examine the challenges. The attachments describe each partner organization, present the detailed indicators and results, and review the most important activities of the year. But most importantly, we hope the report transmits the enthusiasm and commitment of our youth. Despite all their conditions of risk, and being surrounded by crime and violence, they are hopeful and only want that one chance...and Alerta Joven is committed to giving them that chance.

II. RECAP OF ALERTA JOVEN

The name Alerta Joven was selected from a competition of participating youth in September 2012. The author is Genesis Sosa from the *barrio* of Los Minas in northeastern Santo Domingo. The name stresses that Dominican youth need to be alert – on the lookout – to not cave under the pressures of crime and violence in their communities, but rather to make the best of the opportunities that become available to them.

The purpose of Alerta Joven is to create a sustainable, multidisciplinary safety net for at-risk youth implemented to prevent crime. This safety net is a back-up support network where a young person who may be a first offender, deserted from school, or a teenage mother can come into *confianza* or confidence to rediscover hope, and connect with practical solutions and opportunities to improve and move on with their lives. Crime is prevented because conditions of risk are significantly ameliorated when youth have viable alternatives they can access to improve their educational, employability, health, and legal status.

The project has identified different risk conditions where the highest include the following: 59.5% participants with STI risks, 52% participants with labor risk (under exploitative labor conditions or with low incomes), 36.7% with pregnancy risk, and 35.6% at risk for criminal activity¹. Alerta Joven operates primarily in urban settings in seven provinces that make up the “Duarte Corridor.” The target population is distributed into two major age groupings – 12 to 17 years and 18 to 24 years with equality of gender. The prime organization is Entrena, a Dominican organization, along with 26 partner organizations, of which 23 are local Dominican, two international, and one of mixed Dominican/international origin. The total budget, including cost share, is \$ 23,626,630, and the project duration is five years, ending in July 2017.

Alerta Joven will produce three major results:

1. Improve the Youth Protection Policy in Practice – This includes empowering youth stakeholders to participate in policy decisions, making sure that all agencies understand and comply with the legal framework for youth in the DR, and increasing the documentation of at-risk youth.
2. Create opportunities for at-risk youth to become productive citizens are increased through education, employment insertion, and health services.
3. Develop an integrated youth system incorporating a state-of-the-art information system, innovative solutions to reduce crime through multi-disciplinary groups, and the creation of public-private partnerships for support and advocacy.

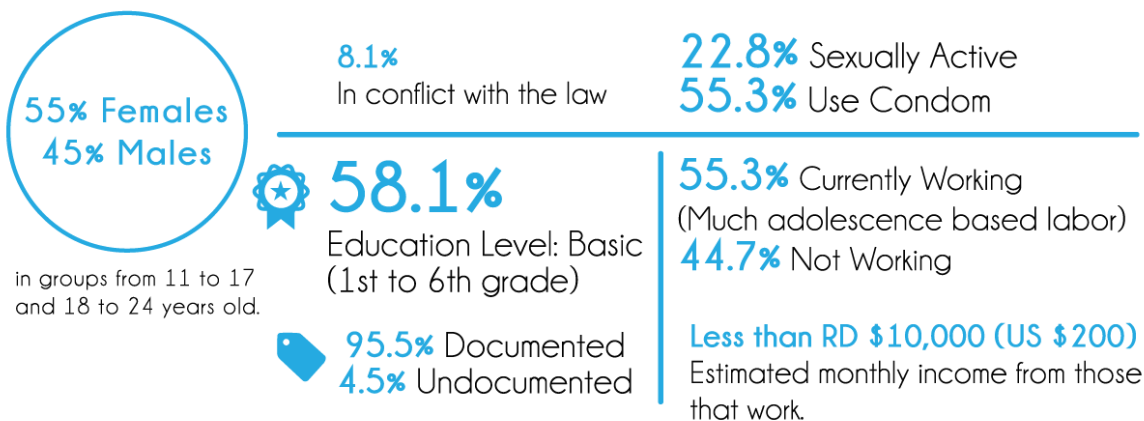
The geographic distribution of Alerta Joven activities is in Attachment 1, and the detailed results framework for the project can be found in Attachment 2.

Alerta Joven has a commitment to long-term sustainability once funding from USAID ends, and based upon the experience and opportunities during the first two years, is currently evaluating the final strategy and mechanism that gives us the best shot at reaching the goal of sustainability.

¹ According to the web platform report “Vulnerability Risk Scale”

III. ALERTA JOVEN IN NUMBERS

At the two year mark, Alerta Joven has reached 35% of the targeted population of 85,000, operational spending is at 38% of total budget of 23mm, and 21 sub-agreements are in operation.



Education Results

- 1,001** Participants in risk of abandoning school completed transitional education program (Espacios para Crecer).
- 62.6%** Received promotion to the next grade in public schools.
- 5,060** Participated in school retention programs at 88 schools.
- 193** Teachers received Quantum Learning teacher training in accelerated learning methodologies.
- 208** Non-literate at risk youth learned how to read and write.
- 56** EPC's operating in 10 municipalities.
- 11.4%** Participants were re-inserted at school.



Documentation

- 1,507** participants were identified without documentation.
- 37.8%** received direct services by the project, which result in **14.7%** who successfully obtain their documentation.

Health Results

17 Peer to peer networks formed with more than 4,000 multiplicadores or youth multipliers in 10 municipalities.

33,809 Received HIV prevention programs.

3,473 Youth friendly health services provided in 7 clinics and 688 services for health care.

1,887 Participants with HIV test done and results delivered.

23% of participants have completed the HIV and STD prevention program.

600 Small businesses provided 1 hour per week for benefit 312 participants working

273 Participants from the Most At Risk Populations (MARP) have been reached over the year. 68% are female commercial sex workers (CSW).

22.8% of sexually active youth identified in YPS and 62.3% of this participants use a condom or other prevention methods. 65.9% of the males and 57.9% of the females who report being sexually active is using a modern contraceptive method.

Employment for Youth Increased

34% of participants select technical careers related to beauty, technology and local handicrafts.

4,995 participants receiving Vo-Ed training. Of those, 64.9% completed technical training/soft skills

281 participants present their new business ideas in the Business Plan Contests organized by Entrena and IDDI.

514 participants received a entrepreneurship training program, which result in:

- * 8% receive microcredit
- * 8% opened their own microenterprises
- * 80% are currently in development of business plans

16.9% received a better or new employment after the technical training session from Alerta Joven.



The curriculum offered by Alerta Joven includes **31** technical courses. **213** technical sessions offered in more than **50** barrios.

Empowerment of Youth Stakeholders to Influence Policy Decisions

- First national forum on Public Policy with follow up strategy.
- Creation of two operational municipal youth committees as per Youth Law 49-00.
- Adaptation for improved application of Youth Law 49-00.
- 1,639 Participants received training for stakeholders in the implementation of legal framework for youth.

Substantial Networking, Resource Leveraging and Collaborative Agreements.

20

Public Private Partnerships were enhanced to support and advocate for vulnerable youth.

20 agreements signed by partner organizations for improve the policy practice in their municipalities.

A comprehensive information system developed.

- Database and tracking system is 70% in development. Currently 19,701, cases registered in database.

- A full youth service being developed with counterpart founding from IDB.

- A revised and completed manual, Como Trabajar, de Forma Participativa, en la Prevención de la Violencia a Nivel Local, was delivered and field tested in Santo Domingo Oeste in selected communities.

- As part of the Pilot Plan, Participacion Ciudadana has developed a folder with information materials and a systematized database of organizations and institutions involved in the process has been completed. These entities include governmental and business institutions (27), schools and student organizations (19), community organizations and neighborhood and grassroots groups (10), and civil society organizations (30).

3 SuperCamps for 143 participants.

79 Of SuperCamps participants were youth in juvenile detention facilities.

367 Youth trained in the conflict mediation program as a peer to peer strategy for violence and crime prevention.

300 Talks (charlas) promoting culture of peace.

IV. THE FACES AND BACKGROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH

The Dominican Republic is a middle-income country with an impressive average growth rate of 5.5% between 1991 and 2013^{2[2]}. With an economy fueled by tourism, mining, free zones for goods and services, and remittances from the large Dominican diaspora abroad, the outlook for sustained growth is bright. The major problem is the unequal distribution of growth. Like most urban areas in the DR, Santo Domingo and major cities are surrounded by rings of misery. Many of these *barrios* emerged after the assassination of the dictator Trujillo in 1961 and also as the result of rural to urban migration. This trend still continues. This is where the youth of Alerta Joven survive.



Illustration: Youth during a Chemical Products class in the community Padre Granero, Puerto Plata.

Living in these conditions means you are a survivor. You are marginalized and disenfranchised. Your access to formal and reliable public services, such as education, health, decent housing, water, sewage, and electricity, is limited. Your escape routes are extremely challenging. In education, graduating from high school is a farfetched possibility; graduating from college is a dream. Plus, what you have witnessed from peers indicates that improved education does not necessarily translate into improved income. Obtaining a decent job in the formal sector of the economy is a long shot; and once employers know where you live, they will pass over you. You know the easier shorter routes are wrong but nevertheless produce money – micro-trafficking, prostitution, gangs, etc. or getting on a *yola* headed to Puerto Rico.

Recent Alerta Joven supported studies with the Attorney General Office show that those who take the easy but wrong route have similar characteristics – they began having sex around 13 years of age, 57.3% dropped out of school before completing 8th grade, 71.3 % lived alone with their mother, and only 47% had seen their father every day in the last year. The study surveyed youth currently in detention centers and in conflict with the law⁽³⁾.

Alerta Joven identifies and works with those youth in high-risk situations who have not yet taken the wrong path but could easily do so. Alerta Joven develops their self-esteem, encourages them

² According to the World Bank, document “Dominican Republic: Overall performance”. <http://www.bancomundial.org/es/country/dominicanrepublic/overview>

³ October 2014. Public Minister, UNIBE, Alerta Joven Project. Self- perception of causal factors for crime in adolescents in conflict with the law.

to discover their talents and potential, and gives them access to educational, employment, and health opportunities.

The following paragraphs are brief stories of our youth participants – each one different and from various areas of the country – but each one trusting that Alerta Joven can make a difference in their lives.

Robinson Andrés, 13 years – Children International in Boca Chica



Robinson was born and raised in La Caleta, the poor community all airline passengers see just before landing from the north in the Las Americas airport just east of Boca Chica. Growing up as one of seven children in a poor household, Robinson had to do what he could to help support his family. For many years, he accompanied his mother to the beach every day, where they sold *yaniqueque*, a Dominican snack made out of a fried dough patty, to local and foreign beachgoers.

Because of a problem with his birth certificate, he was not able to enroll in the formal school system until he was about nine years old. Robinson was referred to the program Espacios para Crecer (EpC), run by Project Alerta Joven/Children International, about two years ago. A new young man has blossomed as a result. Not only has his academic performance improved significantly, but Robinson’s whole lifestyle has changed. Robinson attends the EpC each morning and his regular school each afternoon without missing a day, and motivates his classmates to do the same.

Alondra – 20 Years – ProFamilia in San Francisco de Macorís

Alondra (pseudonym) was born on May 29, 1996 in one of the communities that Alerta Joven serves in San Francisco de Macoris.

In infancy and childhood, Alondra tells us that she started having problems with her mother, who brutally abused her both physically and verbally. At the age of five, her mother abandoned her and went to a resort town in the Dominican Republic, leaving Alondra and her three younger siblings in the hands of her grandmother, who did not have the financial resources to sustain the family. At age nine, her mother took Alondra back to live with her, and she started working hard cleaning a business that sells alcoholic beverages.

“In a fit of rage, my mother burned all my clothes and hands, and hit me so much that they had to take me to the hospital. She said all kinds of terrible things about me and everyone made fun of me. I tried to slit my wrists because I did not want to live anymore ... until a teacher from Profamilia approached me with a proposal on the Alerta Joven program”, she says.

“In Alerta Joven, I started to see life differently. I began to change, to achieve my successes, and received lectures to change the way I expressed myself and treated others. I just finished a diploma in Leadership, am continuing with my studies, and have been an outstanding student twice. I want to be a civil engineer. I have dreams ... if it was not for the project, I would never have given myself the opportunity to get to be who I am,” says Alondra.

Sory Esther, 17 years, PROFAMILIA



Her parents failed to obtain her birth certificate, creating difficulties for school registration. Also, Sory was physically and psychologically abused. Through Alerta Joven, she received help with her documentation and has worked to help other adolescents that have gone through similar experiences. Sory is currently working on finishing high school, and has plans to attend a university in the future.

“My life has been a very special experience because, despite all the situations that I have had, I try to live each day with enthusiasm and the desire to fight,” Sory says.

Yohanna Cruz Liriano, 16years – COIN in Sosua, North Coast



Yohanna is a young lady from Villa Liberación, a poor neighborhood in the beachside area of Sosua on the northern Dominican coast. Being one of the four children of a poor, single mother, her family simply did not have the resources to help further her education. In addition, with little to no job opportunities in her neighborhood, Yohanna felt the temptation to get involved in the life of gangs and violence lived by many of her peers.

One day, she was sitting outside her house when two members of Alerta Joven/COIN stopped to talk to her about the project. In that first conversation, Yohanna immediately recognized that Alerta Joven could be a window of opportunity for her future. She was able to develop new skills through technical courses on English and acrylic nails; and now, empowered by her newly-learned skills, she plans to open her own beauty center.

Luis Felipe Lantigua, 19 years – IDDI in Puerto Plata

This young man, from the community of Playa Oeste in Puerto Plata, was enrolled in the IDDI Alerta Joven program and took a course in the creation and management of Micro Enterprises. There, he learned the skills he needed to help him win a loan through a business plan competition, and later for launching his own business in electricity.

Before entering Alerta Joven, Luis was not enrolled in school, but now he says that “thanks to the motivation [he] was offered, [he] decided to complete his studies and plans to go to college.” Additionally, Luis Felipe has become a young mediator and now communicates the value of forging a culture of peace and human rights to other young people.

Eladio Pérez, 21 years and Jorge Jiménez, 23 years – IDDI Santo in Domingo

Eladio and Jorge are two young residents of the tough gang and drug infested Capotillo *barrio* in Santo Domingo. They met in the middle of one of the usual fights so common in their community, and began a friendship that has grown over the years. After having the opportunity to participate in a short film, they decided to make an audiovisual production, even without the knowledge and resources they needed. Then, they re-enrolled in school and are now taking technical classes, creating “Producciones Tú Futuro,” an initiative of audiovisual production.



Through Alerta Joven/IDDI, Eladio and Jorge presented their business plan during an Alerta Joven Self Employment Fair, winning first place in business innovation, opening up new opportunities for them to reach their dreams.

José Alberto Pérez, 21 years – IDDI in Santo Domingo



José Alberto comes from the riverside *barrio* of Gualey, next to the Ozama river in Santo Domingo. He learned about Alerta Joven through an IDDI youth multiplier, and benefitted from a course on telephone wiring and networks in the program of workforce development.

Before entering the project, José Alberto realized he had no goals in life. “At a young age I already had many failures in life. At fifteen, I was part of a gang, used to sell drugs, broke windows in cars and, at seventeen, I was getting into a lot of trouble. But, in Alerta Joven, I found people who helped me make good decisions with my life”, he says.

“If others could make it, why can’t I?” affirms José Alberto with enthusiasm.

Julia, 21 years – CEPROSH in Puerto Plata

Julia (pseudonym) was born and raised in Puerto Plata. Like many other teenagers, Julia decided to start having sex when she was around fifteen years old, and began smoking marijuana at seventeen. She became more and more carefree and gave no thought to the consequences of her actions.

One day, she found out she was pregnant. She immediately knew she wanted to keep her baby, but realized that meant she needed to make many changes in her life to allow her child to grow up in a healthier environment. During this time, Julia found CEPROSH, a partner organization of the Alerta Joven project. She found out about the program from a family member, and thoroughly enjoyed the activities and programs the organization had to offer.

Julia now has a healthy baby girl and has traded many of her former unhealthy habits and lifestyles for ones that are better for her and her child.

Hamlet Hernández, 23 years old – IDDI in Santo Domingo



Hamlet, also from the *barrio* of Gualey in Santo Domingo, tells us that before Alerta Joven, his life was a mess. He was involved in gangs and had been removed from school.

He discovered Alerta Joven through an IDDI youth multiplier and currently participates in vocational training to become a bartender. He affirms that this opportunity has helped him to have new goals and aspirations.

Cynthia - 19 Years – IDDI in Santo Domingo

Cynthia (pseudonym) was always the daredevil adventurer in her family. As a girl, this allowed her to be constantly entertained, curious, and eager to try new things. Once she got older, Cynthia's curiosity led to some poor choices. She decided she was ready to grow up once she was thirteen years old. She began having sex, then, in the next few years, started staying out late with friends. Cynthia became a heavy drinker and acquired an aggressive attitude towards others. She was no longer the free and innocent child she once was.

Soon after Cynthia turned sixteen, she found out she was pregnant. She had to drop out of school to be able to find some way of supporting her baby. Cynthia needed help. In her city of Santo Domingo, Cynthia had a friend who recommended she attend an organization that would assist her. This organization was IDDI Santo Domingo, a partner organization of Alerta Joven.

IDDI/Alerta Joven has done so much for Cynthia, who is nineteen years old, that she never plans on leaving. Through the program, she received training on entrepreneurship and how to become a beautician, among many other things. This training allowed her to develop the skills she needed to open up a manicure and pedicure salon right in her home. Now, she is able to be with her son and has some money to help support her family. Aside from assisting her professionally, Alerta Joven also helped her gain confidence in herself, and she no longer treats others aggressively. She has stopped drinking heavily and staying out late with friends, and is very excited about the adventures life will bring in the next few years.

Starlin Javier Lebrón Gómez, 21 years – ACOPRO in Santo Domingo

This young man, a resident in El Cachon, one of the neighborhoods with high levels of crime in the area of Sabana Perdida in northern Santo Domingo, was invited to join Alerta Joven. The lack of confidence he had in himself and in others was noticeable at the start. Starlin confessed that he had a desire to overcome his fears and social isolation.

After participating in Alerta Joven activities through ACOPRO, Starlin has become part of the Youth Network of Care, Rights and Duties. He has discovered his niche and is now an active participant, changing for the better and discovering his potential.

Junior Alexander Castillo Reyes, 13years – IDDI in Puerto Plata

Junior Alexander participates in the Espacios para Crecer (EpC) program with Alerta Joven/IDDI in the community of Nuevo Renacer, Puerto Plata. Before joining EpC, Junior did not like going to school, had misconduct problems and did not complete homework or exercises. Since joining the Alerta Joven program, his grades have improved and he was promoted to another grade.

“With the guidance and values they have taught me, the companionship and respect, I'm different now and motivated to continue my studies” he tells us.

V. GOALS AND RESULTS TO DATE

This section of the report provides a summarized overview of the results of Alerta Joven as of the end of year 2. These data are organized by the project's three major intermediate results and their three main outcomes. Each one has a brief introductory narrative, graphs where available portraying indicators and results, and an analysis of the results. More detailed results and indicator performance can be found in Attachment 3 Matrix of Indicators and Results.

IR 1 – Improvement of Youth Protection Policy

The gap between laws and their actual implementation is significant in the DR, and the youth sector is no exception. Alerta Joven provides support for youth stakeholders to become more engaged in the formulation of the policies which affect them, works with organizations for improved understanding and compliance with the legal framework affecting youth, and provides guidance and support for improved documentation of at-risk youth.

IR1.1 – Empowerment by Youth Stakeholders to Influence Policy – During year 2, Alerta Joven continued to follow up on the results of the September 2013 National Youth Forum. As part of an agreement with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a follow up report was issued with three major recommendations:

- Adapt Youth Law 49-00 to current legislation, modify four articles dealing with education, health, labor and youth participation, and create a national youth strategy for 2014-15 through a consensus-based document to be submitted to the Dominican congress.

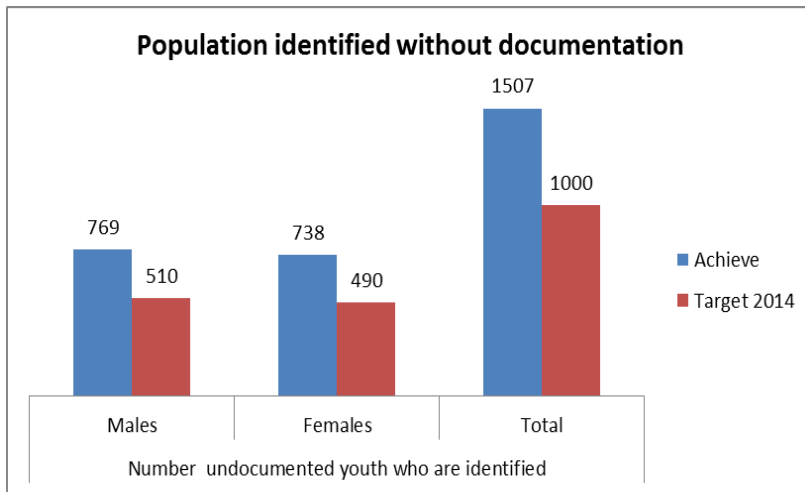
Additional empowerment actions included the creation of 22 municipal youth councils in Santiago that conform one provincial youth council and the call by the President of ANJE (Young Business Leaders Association in the DR) to focus efforts on the “Ley de Primer Empleo” or first job legislation.

One major weakness we face in this area is the institutional debility and politicization of the Ministry of Youth (with the exception of Santiago), which is the GODR agency that should take the leadership role.

IR1.2 - Institutional Understanding/Compliance with Legal Framework for Youth – Year 2 activities included more than 75 training activities for 20 partner organizations in youth legal framework (the compendium of laws and regulations focused on young people) using the Alerta Joven supported animated and updated pedagogical presentation of Law 49-00.

Plans for Year 3 include expansion and strengthening of youth councils in different regions. In Boca Chica, partners will implement a network of youth councils and the creation of a youth leadership school. In Santiago partners will be training municipal authorities, civic leaders, and law officials in the youth legal framework.

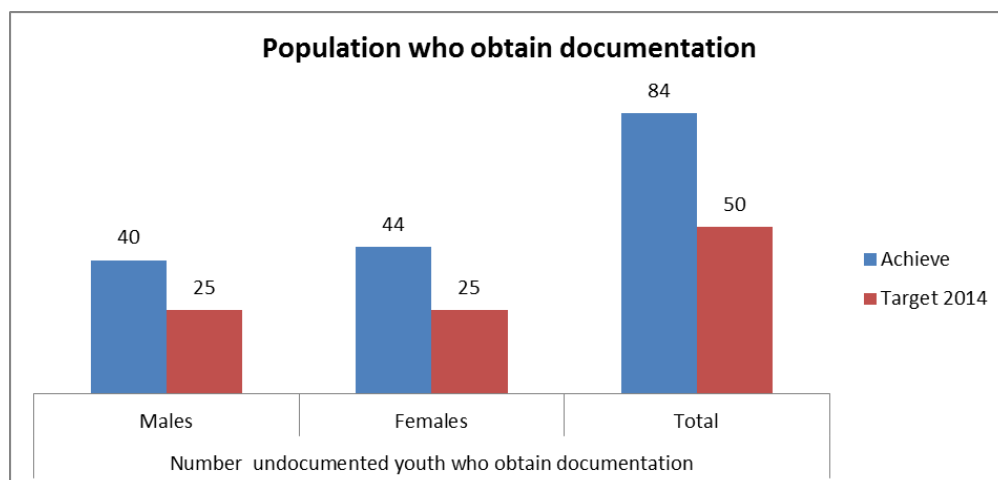
IR 1.3 – Increased Documentation of Youth – Year 2 activities closely followed the outcome and impact of the DR Constitutional Court Ruling No. 168-13 regarding nationality status for persons born in the DR during different periods of the past century, whose legal and identity status is considered conflictive. The ruling directly impacts a significant population of persons of Haitian descent. As of 9/30/14, Alerta Joven has identified 1,507 cases with issues of documentation, of which a significant amount are related to this ruling.



Given the explosive political and ultra-nationalistic fallout from the ruling, Alerta Joven partners have taking steps to correct documentation issues for at-risk youth not affected by the ruling, such as birth certificates, notary corrections, school certification, and identity corrections. A total of 571 cases are being processed, which is 38% of the total identified.

Plans for the next year include a continuation of these steps and training for our partners in the established protocol for registration of youth affected by the decision. However, we need to let this process progress before becoming more proactive in this issue. Alerta Joven is keenly aware that the at-risk youth population of Haitian descent born in the DR (who do not speak Creole or have ever been to Haiti) continues to be disenfranchised due to documentation issues, and the potential for delinquent and violent activities is exacerbated.

For year 2, the project identified more participants than the expected target. The 50% increase over and above the target is probably related to the consequences of the implementation of the new constitutional protocol, and the strategy of identifying participants with this need within schools. 51% of the participants affected are males.



Additionally, the results obtained in the documentation process surpassed the target planned by 68%. A total of 84 participants obtained their documentation for the first time; 52% of them were females.

An analysis of this documentation indicator reveals the following:

- Youth stakeholders are being incorporated into the formulation of public policies. We expect this process to continue despite the institutional constraints of the Ministry of Youth. The first employment legislation remains a priority.
- The platform for having our partner organizations plus all stakeholders to understand the current body of legislation, which makes up the legal framework for working with youth, has been created. We expect more youth to better understand this through the user friendly version of Law 49-00 developed by Alerta Joven.
- We have the correct strategy and are on the right path for proper documentation. The DR Constitutional Court Ruling No. 168-13, regardless of its controversial nature, has generated an established protocol for documentation through the corresponding governmental organizations. We also expect an increase in youth documented as more numbers of youth participate in educational and employment insertion activities where documentation is required.

IR 2 – Increase of Opportunities for Youth to Become Productive Citizens

Creating viable access and linkage for at-risk youth to employment, educational, and health services is critical for helping them to continue on with their lives, distance themselves from crime, and become productive citizens and help others in their community to escape from marginalization and potential crime.

IR 2.1 – Formal and alternative education opportunities increased

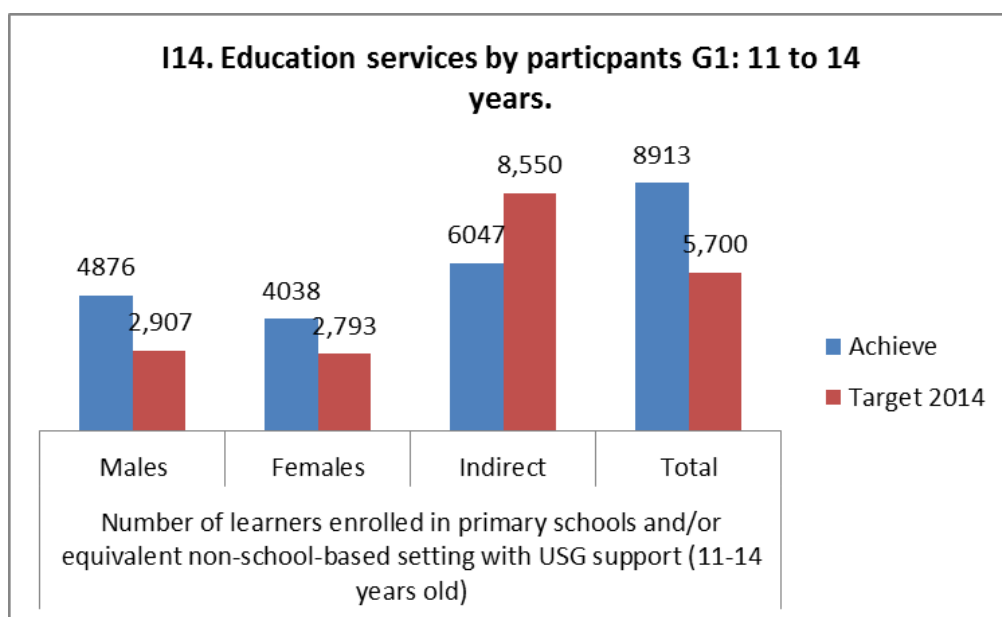
The following section summarizes the Alerta Joven educational component. For detailed information and data, please see Attachments Nos. 3, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5.

There is a direct link between dropping out of school and becoming engaged in delinquency. As previous statistics indicated from a survey of youth currently in conflict with the law, the average age of initiation in criminal activity was 14 years, and 57 % had dropped out of school by eighth grade.

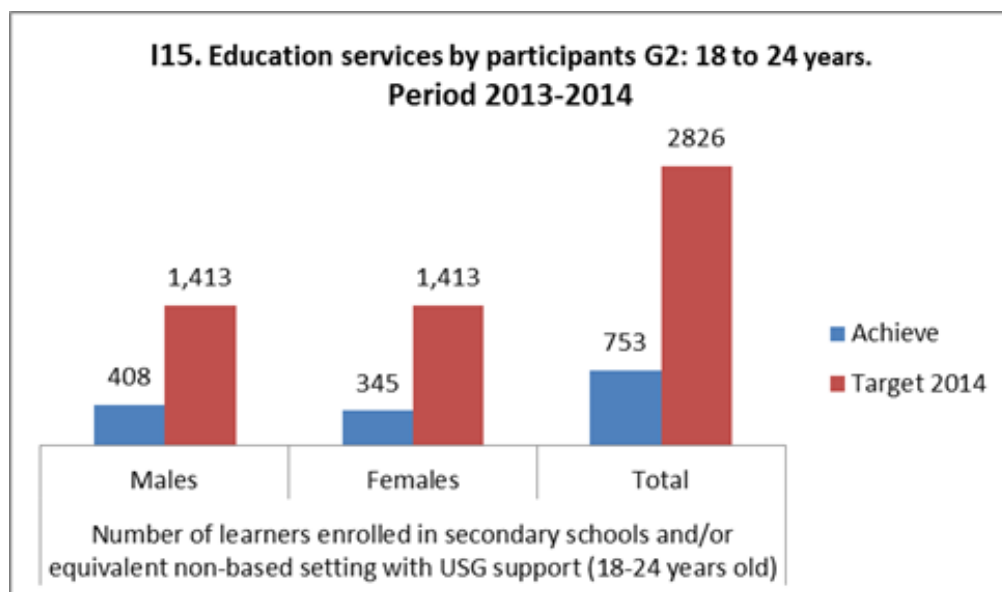
Getting back into school, staying in school, and advancing grades at normal academic rates to avoid over aging in the classroom is critical. Alerta Joven works specifically with school retention (those in risk of dropping out) and reinsertion (those already having dropped out and needing to be mainstreamed back in).

The major tool for achieving this is the transitional educational model entitled Espacios para Crecer (EpC) which integrates accelerated learning methodology with content modules directly in line with Dominican public education requirements. Additional tools include Education Ministry programs focused on academic leveling such as EBA (up to grade 6) and PREPARA (up to grade 12). Several project partners have alternative programs.

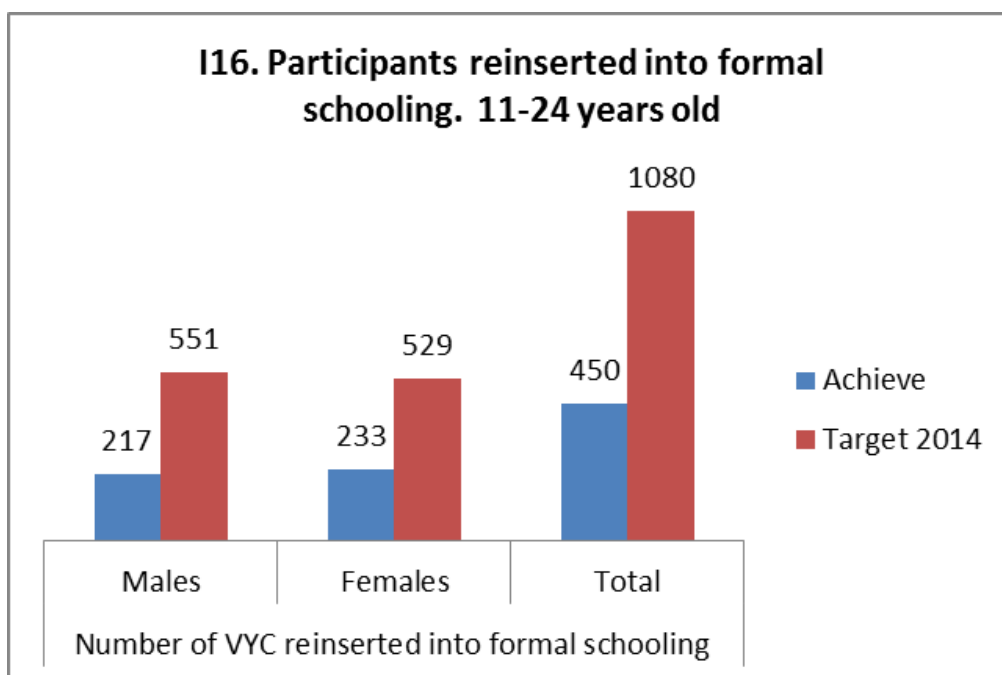
Project indicators for the educational component as of 9/30/14 are the following:



Over 56% of the target for this year was achieved. This result was due to the diversity of services for school retention, re-insertion, academic leveling and the adult education programs. 54.7% of the participants were males.



26.6% of the target for this service was achieved. The population of 18-24 years is more interested in job insertion programs than formal education services. Most of them are participants with economic responsibilities.



41.6% of these targeted participants returned to school after participating in the motivation processes carried out by partner organizations, which includes visits to their families and the schools identified in their area as part of the insertion program.

An analysis of these education indicators reveals the following:

- The theme of re-insertion should be reassessed due to several issues. Many public schools have students that are registered on the books but never attend. In other cases, parents try to register their children, but school directors may refuse entrance since they are considered troublemakers. The biggest challenge is locating this population that falls through the cracks.
- The EpC model is effective, but adjustments may still be needed for the adolescent population from 11-14 years. As in the case with EpCs, regardless of country or age grouping, quality control is necessary and is only achieved through constant training and on-site coaching.
- Even though the 18-24 year-old population is more focused on surviving economically than continuing their education, we do have an increasing number of cases where improved jobs or self-employment increase self-esteem and the desire to finish high school and beyond.

IR 2.2 – Improved Access to Quality Health Prevention and Care

The following section summarizes the Alerta Joven educational component. For detailed information and data, please see Attachments 3, 7.14 and 7.15.

Our at-risk youth population in the DR is frequently exposed to unhealthy lifestyles. A combination of early initiation in sexual activity, unprotected sex, and the difficulty in accessing direct health services that are youth-friendly and caring are major obstacles.

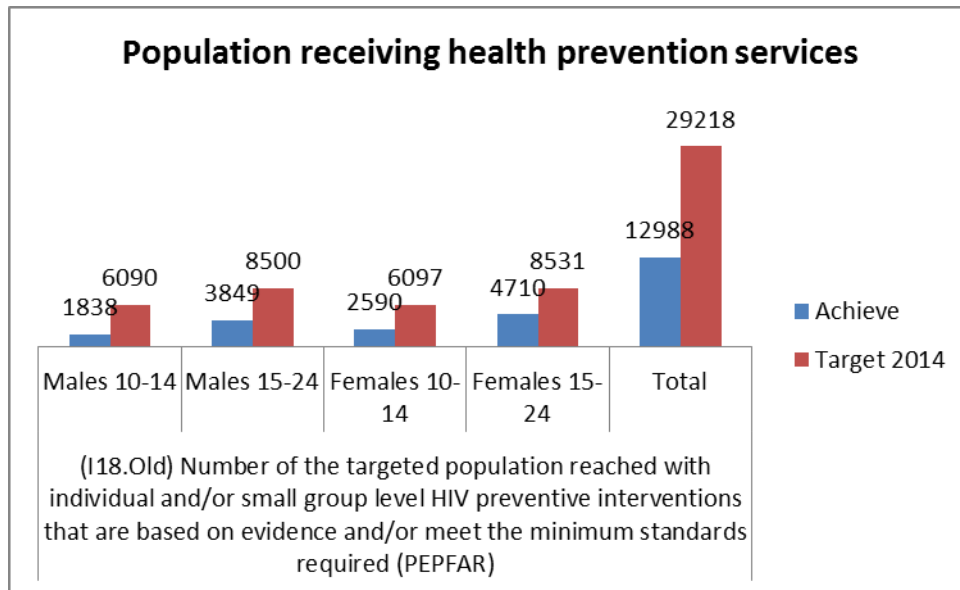
According to ENDESA 2013, the adolescent pregnancy rate in the DR is 20.5 %, one of the highest in Latin America. Alerta Joven-supported studies among youth in risk conditions indicate the average age of initiation of sexual activities for males is 16.5 years and, for females, before 18 years old. The median age of the first sexual intercourse continues to decline and the percentage of women having their first sexual intercourse before 18 years is increasing.

Staying healthy, remaining abstinent until a later age, using protection when having sex, not getting pregnant at an early age, and avoiding abusive relationships are important. Achieving these health goals are important for our target population since they enhance the possibility of youth moving forward with their education and employment.

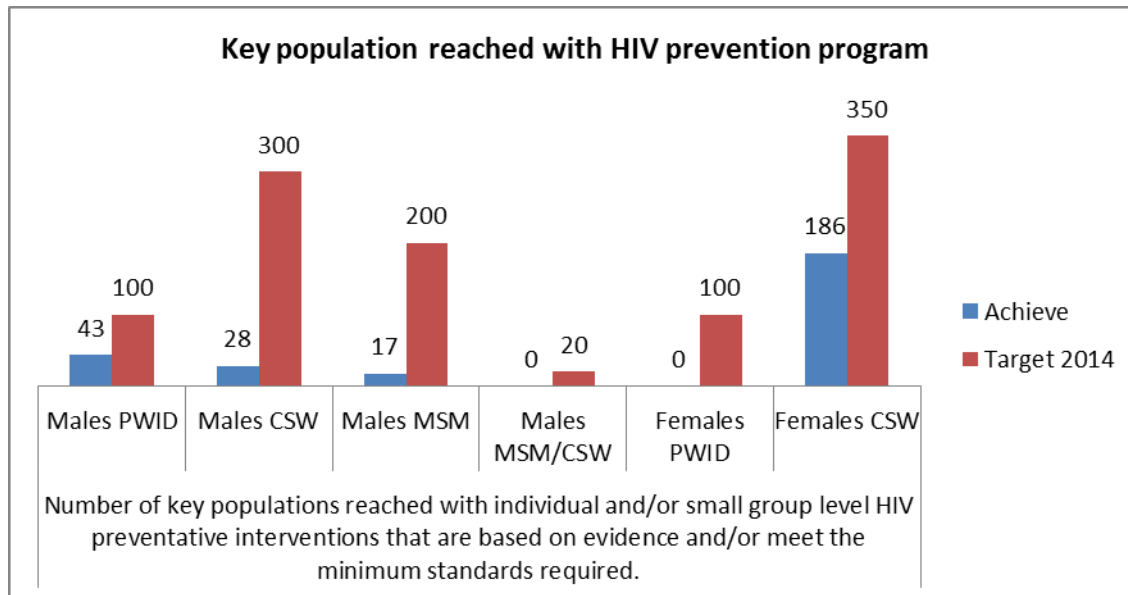
The Alerta Joven health component is a combination of HIV education and prevention programs and, to a lesser degree, direct health services. The At-Risk Youth's health programs are related to prevention. Individual and small group HIV prevention interventions are types of prevention methods the program is targeting. Other important areas are STIs, teenage pregnancy and second pregnancy prevention interventions. The major tools used are:

- Peer-to-peer strategy, workshops, and facilitator networking.
- *Charlas* or talks at schools and public places where youth concentrate.
- Clinical and counseling services (including HIV test).

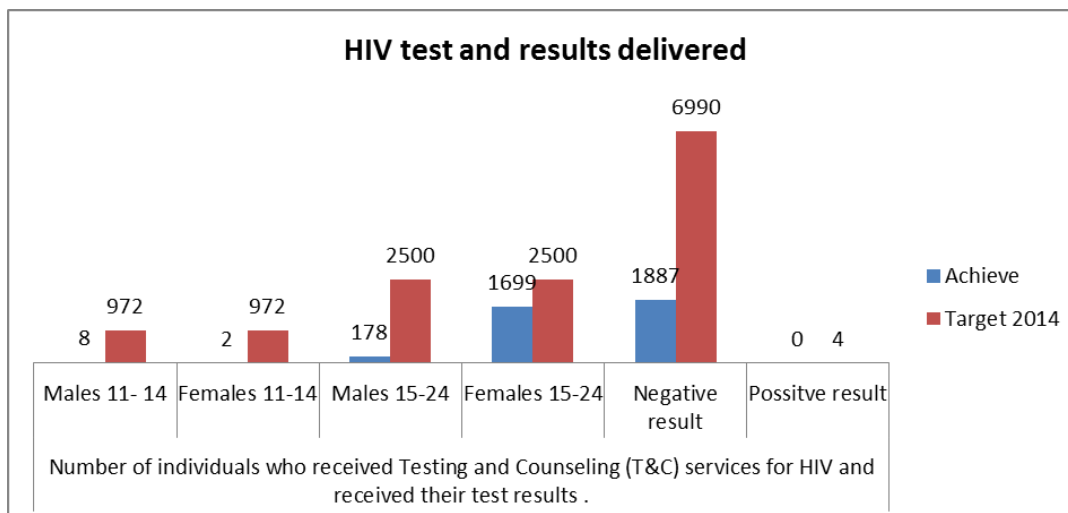
Project indicators for the health component as of 9/30/14 are the following:



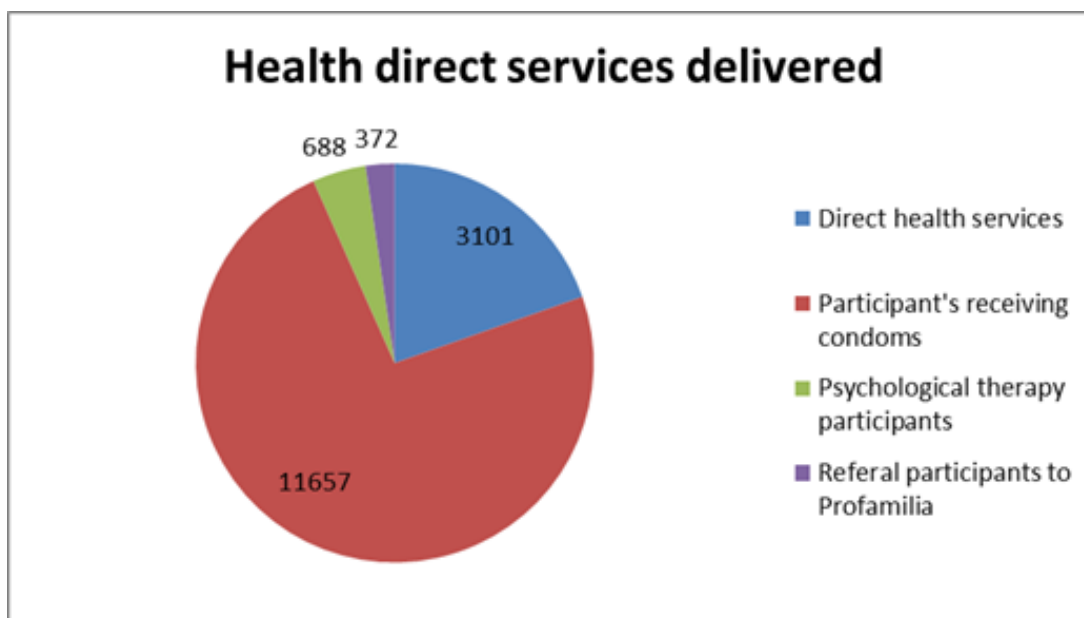
44.4% of the target of the year was achieved. The females are the principal population participating in this program constituting 56.2% of the total. Of the total 44.4% participating, 21.5% had completed all seven health theme components of PEPFAR.



25.6% of the targeted MARP population participated in the HIV prevention programs. 17.3% belong to the group of female commercial sex workers. The project achieves more than 50% of the target focus on participants in drug use and commercial sex workers.



27% of the target population received HIV test services. By the end of year 2, the project had received donations for HIV tests by external sources outside of the project.



Analyses of these health indicators reveal the following:

- Through a participant survey of Alerta Joven, as of March 2014 when participants were first registered in the project, an important percentage of youth had never received information about HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), prevention of pregnancy, or health services. One third had not received information about STIs (33.3%) or pregnancy prevention (31.1%), and a lesser percentage (26.9%) had received no orientation about HIV/AIDS.

- Alerta Joven provides channels for working with the target populations, thereby enhancing the replication of acquired health knowledge in their community environment, and closing the information gap while fostering prevention among the at-risk youth in their environment.
- Armed with the results and information during the first two years, we have begun to systematize the health interventions and standardize a single document for these preventive interventions, anchored by compliance with minimal PEPFAR requirements.
- As part of the strengthening of this model of health intervention, and with the assistance of CAI Global (CICATELLI, INC.), we are integrating innovative strategies and interventions that not only strengthen the health component, but also provide added educational value to the theme of prevention of violence.

IR 2.3 – Increase of Employment for Youth

The following section summarizes the Alerta Joven employment component. For detailed information and data, please see Attachments Nos. 3, 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8.

Generating income is critical for our participating youth; a combination of survival and contributing to the family pool. As of 9/30/14, 55.3% of our registered youth reported that they were working. We can logically assume that the majority of this work is more likely adolescence-based labor in the informal sector within their *barrios*.

The Alerta Joven strategy for the employment component is job skills training linked to life skills that lead to a job within the formal sector of the Dominican economy. We want to avoid creating more employment within the informal sector of the economy. This by itself is a challenge since Dominican economists generally estimate that 60-70% of the Dominican economy is informal. If we increase the informality, we only replicate inter-generational poverty.

Another important aspect of our employment strategy is entrepreneurship and self-employment fueled by access to specialized micro-credit and funding for youth. Given the limitations of job availability for our youth within the formal sector, owning a business is a viable alternative, and these services can be linked to the formal sector.

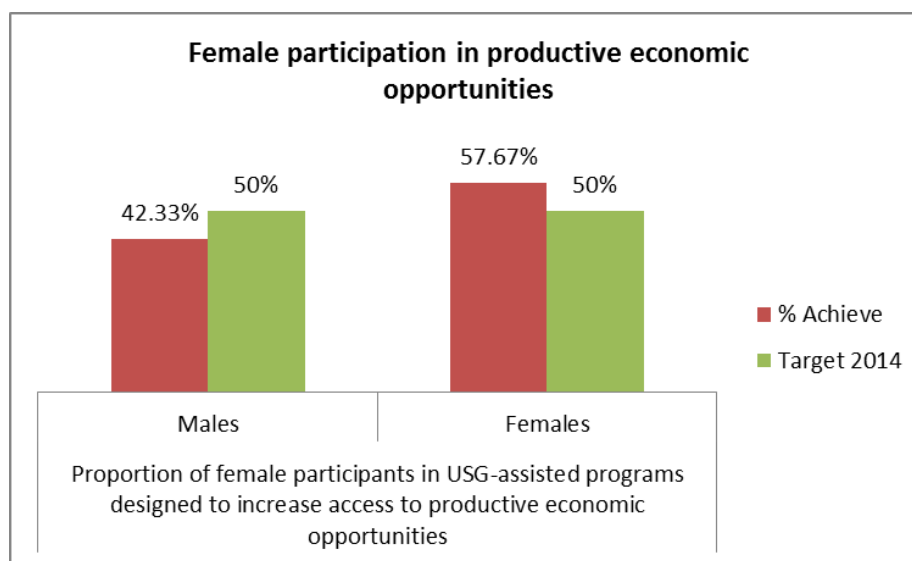
We also recognize that life skills are just as important (and in some cases more important) than simple job or vocational training. Repeatedly, we hear from employers of their need for employees who know teamwork and service to the client, can receive feedback, show up on time, and are proactive and solution oriented. Many state “Send me a young person with these skills and I will take care of the specific technical training for the job”.

Alerta Joven uses several tools for the employment strategy:

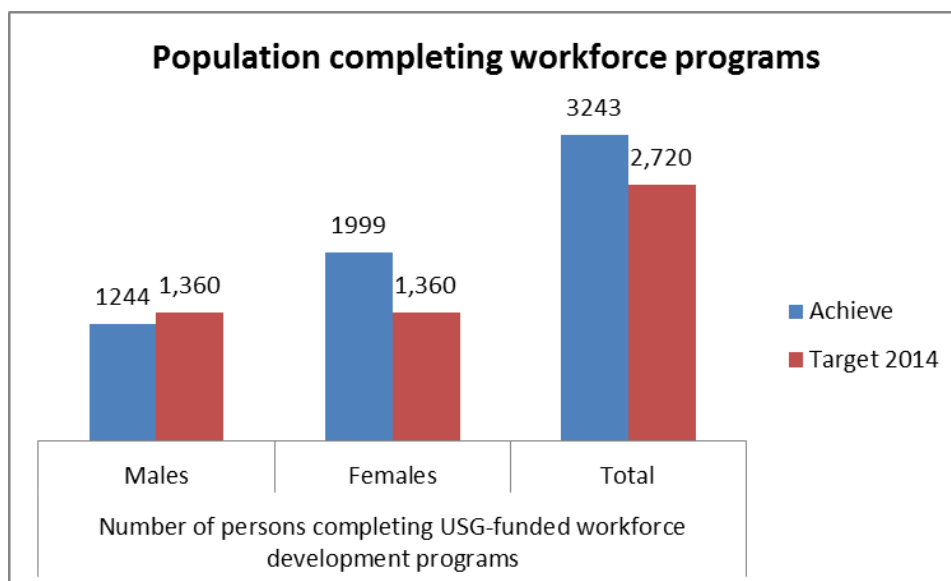
- Vocational training through GODR services such as INFOTEP coordinated locally by partner organizations.
- Training in self-employment and entrepreneurship using models from INFOTEP such as the training course *Emprende Ahora* as well as *La Compañía* from Junior Achievement.
- Increased access to micro-credit for youth entrepreneurs.
- Analysis and classification of the needs of emerging economic growth sectors in the DR.
- Direct implementation of proven employment insertion programs, such as A Ganar.
- Direct partnerships with Dominican private sector businesses and multi-sectorial initiatives, such as NEO (New Employment Opportunities).

Without a doubt, employment for at-risk youth is perhaps the biggest challenge Alerta Joven faces, much more difficult than the educational or health components. If landing a decent first job is difficult for middle class youth in the DR, imagine the hurdles faced by poor, marginalized youth. Training is easy; getting that job is a different ballgame. Entrena is directly taking a lead role in this area given its network with the private sector, since the majority of our partner organizations in Santiago and Puerto Plata are weak in the employment component. Additionally, the recent integration of new partners such as DREAM project and Junior Achievement with proven experience in employment insertion will be a valuable asset.

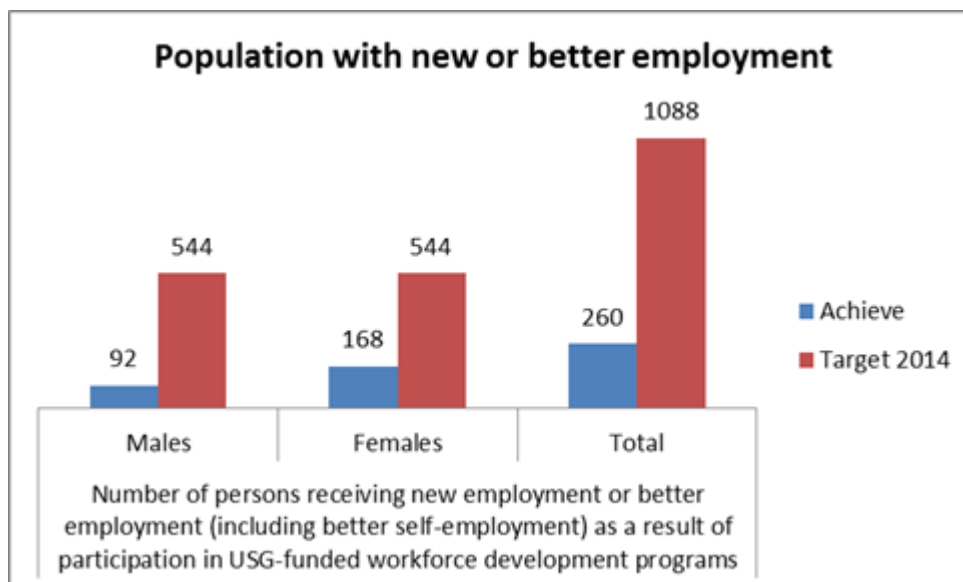
Project indicators for the employment component as of 9/30/14 are the following:



The project is promoting and generating access for female participation in economic opportunities. 57.67% of the participants in vocational training and entrepreneurship programs are females. Additionally, females complete the trainings programs more often than males (61.6%).



55.3% of the participants were working at the moment of the baseline survey, most of them in the informal sector. 23.8% obtained new employment or improved the condition of their current work, 15.4% of these participants are females.



An analysis of these employment indicators reveals the following:

- Obtaining first time employment in the formal sector is a significant challenge. The numbers for the first two years are low given the startup of the project. We expect large increases during year 3 when the NEO-DR, CAPEX, DREAM, and JADOM activities commence.
- We need to engage the private sector more aggressively. The anticipated partnership with Young, Rubicam, and Damaris-MediaVest should attract important players.

- Given the positive experiences with the self-employment fairs and competitions during year 2, and the training in the Chilean model in the forthcoming months, we also expect an upsurge in this component during year 3.

IR 3 – Development of Integrated Youth System

Alerta Joven expects to integrate a state-of-the-art information and tracking system, model community based crime prevention committees, and public-private partnerships as part of the overall safety net for our at-risk youth.

IR 3.1 – Implementation of Comprehensive Information System

The project information and communications technology (ICT) team collaborated closely with the Entrena team, the RTI staff located in the Dominican Republic and MediaGroup to ensure timely project deliverables and quality of the delivered modules in the last year. The ICT team successfully released scheduled system and database components. The team also resolved data integrity and system performance issues. We designed and implemented cost-effective in-house data integration and reporting solutions. The following major changes and ICT activities were conducted during the year:

- The registration and survey forms were released in October 2013, when case managers and data entry members began entering data. At the end of the reporting period, we had 19,558 registration forms and 15,036 survey forms entered.
- Resolved data entry issues in timely fashion to ensure efficient and reliable data entry process.
- Implemented automated programs to resolve data integrity issues, such as missing or “bad” data, and thus improve the quality of the data.
- Improved data entry user interfaces by making them more user-friendly to increase productivity of the data entry personnel.
- Successfully resolved website performance issues by tuning the Amazon Web Services configuration and adding an additional volume to the production server.
- RTI hired MediaGroup, a Dominican Republic locally based web design company, to redesign the *Alerta Joven* website. MediaGroup changed the look and feel of the existing web content. MediaGroup, together with ICT staff, successfully transitioned the new design from our development environment to the production website.

The M&E team continues to play a major role in supporting activities related to the web-based data system actively exchanging ideas and suggestions with the Research Computing Division (RCD) team in order to implement improvements in the operation and design of the data collection processes, and the participant list and attendance form. Through this interaction, several malfunctions detected by the partner organizations were resolved.

The principal challenge, and where we need to focus on, is to improve the data quality and contribute to a data backlog. The IT team has made great strides this year. Besides what is already

accomplished, we still need to complete the task of all functionalities and performance of the web, and run in its full capacity for the use it was planned: tracking system, baseline, results and impact analysis. The report functions will be especially important for validation purposes, and we look forward to being able to develop independent reports to make our monitoring efforts more efficient.

IR 3.2 – Innovative Solutions by Multi-Disciplinary Groups to Reduce Crime

Impactful, innovative, and sustainable solutions for crime reduction must be community based and forged by local stakeholders. At the end of year 2, Alerta Joven had developed three paths of action.

The first was the creation of a Municipal Plan for the Prevention of Violence in the municipality of Western Santo Domingo. Using a successful model from the USAID project in El Salvador piloted by partner RTI, a workshop was held in October 2013 with 15 government and 22 civil society participants to contextualize and adapt to the reality of Dominican *barrios* and institutions. The local organization, Participación Ciudadana, given their experiences with the Casas Comunitarias de Justicia in the geographic area of Herrera, was then sub-contracted to carry out the implementation process. Currently, a total of 86 organizations constitute this committee which has produced a diagnostic of youth violence in the zone. Plans for year 3 include the institutional strengthening of the committee and implementation of Phase 1 of the plan. Additional information on this initiative is in Attachment 7.11.

The second thrust is through the Youth Mediation program implemented by our largest partner IDDI in Santo Domingo and Puerto Plata. This program uses a peer-to-peer approach where youth intervene in conflicts with each other using dialogue instruments to foster a culture of peace. More than 367 mediators have been trained to date and have provided over 300 presentations and interventions. An important component of this program is its relationship with the local District Attorney office, which coordinates with the IDDI mediators to implement alternative community service programs instead of incarcerating first time offenders of minor offense. In May 2014, these youth multipliers were recognized in a public ceremony during the signing of an agreement between IDDI, Alerta Joven, and the National Attorney General office.

The third path of action involves community-based activities, such as sporting and cultural events, awareness workshops, and networking by partner organizations, which provide an outlet for youth and ameliorate the possibility of violence. As of year 2, a total of 12,637 youth had participated in these activities.

IR 3.3 – Support and Advocacy by Public-Private Partnerships (PPPS) for Vulnerable Youth and Children

Alerta Joven continues to develop partnerships with the private sector, Dominican government, and international organizations. These partnerships create different anchors for long-term sustainability in addition to supporting and advocating for at-risk youth. At the end of Year 2, the following partnerships are operating or in the development stage:

PPPS Integrating Private Sector and Universities



MediaVest – As part of the largest PR and marketing firm in the DR, **Young Rubicam, and Damaris**, MediaVest will become the prime social marketing force behind Alerta Joven. Through an initial engagement with the Ministry of Youth and the Chilean Cooperation, and later direct support to the July 2014 youth employment fair using their commercial youth network, MediaVest is currently engaged in joint planning with Alerta Joven for a national social marketing and branding campaign. The alliance with MediaVest will bring in a number of their large corporate clients, key governmental and political leaders, and provide significant cost shares. This will be one of the most significant PPPS for Alerta Joven.



The **Banco de Reservas** and their foundation **Fundación BanReserva** provided financial support to the youth employment fair for prizes for the best businesses, and are discussing with Alerta Joven how to create a specialized micro-credit fund for at-risk youth to support entrepreneurship and self-employment. This governmental bank is the largest in the DR and the current administration is focused on expanding the bank's social commitment. Alerta Joven has a significant niche here.



Banco ADEMI is the first Dominican finance organization designed to channel micro-credit to small business. In conjunction with the **Asociación de Ahorros y Crédito de La Vega (ALVR)** and partner organization UCNE, they will provide credit access to the first round of at-risk youth entrepreneurs trained in the Chilean cooperation model.



The **Grupo Ramos**, famous for the large one-stop malls called **La Sirena**, is the largest single employer in the geographic zone covered by Alerta Joven. As a result of a sub-agreement to be signed with Junior Achievement (JADOM), this business group will provide access for at-risk youth to first time employment and internships.



CAPEX (Centro de Innovación y Capacitación Profesional) is the training arm of the Free Zone Industrial Park in Santiago and the Association of Free Zone Businesses in Santiago. CAPEX and Alerta Joven have reached an agreement starting in November 2014 whereby CAPEX will provide first time employment and internships to a target population of 1000 youth in the three most sought after technical skills – industrial diesel mechanics, accounting assistants, and warehouse assistants.



The largest privately owned Dominican bank, **Banco Popular Dominicano**, has credit programs with several implementing partners and is a co-sponsor and cost share provider of the 2014 EDUCA sponsored APRENDO event to be focused on youth and employment.



MLB (Major League Baseball) has provided baseball T-shirts to at-risk youth in conflict with the law who participated in two recent studies, and will act as a channel through its Baseball Tomorrow Fund to develop a proposal for the construction of playing fields in the youth detention centers.



UNIBE (Universidad Iberoamericana República Dominicana) and **INTEC** (Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo) are two Dominican universities that carried out research on perceptions of causes of delinquency by adolescents and their neurocognitive profiles. All participants were ages 12-18 currently in conflict with the law and incarcerated in youth detention centers. INTEC is also exploring a mentoring program of its students for Alerta Joven at-risk youth. For more information, see Attachment 7.12.



Both the **Fundación Inicia**, the nonprofit arm of the wealthiest business consortium in the DR and **EDUCA**, the business sector advocacy NGO for education, have partnerships with Entrena in the **NEO (New Employment Opportunities)**. The NEO receives financing from the IDB (Inter-American Development Bank) with the major goal of improving the quality of the human resource capability and employability levels of 32, 000 youth in the DR. The role of EDUCA is to coordinate the activities and provide technical support to the different organizations and components that make up NEO-DR. The role of Fundación Inicia provides financing for the development of detailed technical profiles for the emerging economic sectors of the Dominican economy. Entrena will assist with these profiles as well as the development of the “go to” youth friendly webpage. Other partners include the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labor, and Ministry of the Presidency Special Programs (DIGEPEP), National Technical and Professional Training Institute, Ministry of Youth, Business Initiative for Technical Education (IEET), Fundación Sur Futuro, the private Company Implementos y Maquinarias CxA (IMCA) and municipal youth councils. For more information, see Attachment 7.8.



PPPS Integrating Dominican Governmental Organizations



MEPyD (Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Development) – The corresponding governmental ministry for foreign development assistance in the DR, Alerta Joven, maintains constant communication with the MEPyD. We coordinate directly with the office of the Vice-Minister for International Cooperation, keep them informed of all activities, and coordinate through them with other ministries as necessary.



MINERD (Ministry of Education) – A significant component of Alerta Joven is focused on education with retention and reinsertion programs. Alerta Joven has involved MINERD staff in a variety of activities including training, research, and coordination with local school districts. As of 9/30/14, we are finalizing the details of an agreement to be signed with the Department of Community Participation to strengthen our different interventions. At the request of the MINERD teacher-training institute (INAFOCAM) QL, Entrena has also independently carried out training for new teachers.



Ministry of Youth – Alerta Joven works with the Ministry of Youth in the areas of public policy and legal framework for youth. As a result of this alliance, the first “user friendly” didactic guide for understanding the General Youth Law 49-00 was developed, as well as the first national guide for youth entrepreneurship.



Ministry of Labor – This ministry provides financing for at-risk youth participants to cover travel costs during the training course on entrepreneurship using the methodology piloted by the Chilean cooperation. It has also collaborated in the development of the first national guide for youth entrepreneurship.



Ministry of Public Health – This alliance is through an agreement with the Department for the Control of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and AIDS (DIGECITTSS) which will provide Alerta Joven with technical support and facilitate materials for training in the prevention workshops developed by the project, including registration and informed consent of youth for HIV testing.



MIC – (Ministry of Industry and Commerce) – This alliance covers collaboration in the development of the first national guide for youth entrepreneurship. MIC will also be responsible for the *Hackaton* event during the week of entrepreneurship.



INFOTEP – (National Technical and Professional Training Institute) – A major contributor of Alerta Joven programs, INFOTEP provides the bulk of technical skill and entrepreneurship training through our partners. They will also provide the facilitators to be trained in the Chilean model of self-employment who, in turn, will train our youth participants in this model. INFOTEP has also collaborated with the development of the first national guide for youth entrepreneurship.

PPPS Integrating International Development Organizations



Agencia Internacional de Cooperación Chilena-AGCI (Chilean International Cooperation Agency) and the Fondo de Solidaridad e Inversión Social de Chile

– FOSIS (Chilean Social Investment and Solidarity Fund). The AGCI is the institutional liaison agency with the DR, and FOSIS is the technical counterpart for the Alerta Joven project. Their role is to train certified instructors from INFOTEP who will then train 1,284 at-risk youth participants from Boca Chica

through Alerta Joven partner Caminantes, and in San Francisco de Macoris through partner UCNE.



United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

- Alerta Joven has received significant support from the UNFPA, which supported follow up studies, recommendations, and a road map for future actions for the first National Youth Forum celebrated in September 2013. UNFPA additionally provided support, and was an

active participant in, the National Youth Day activities carried out in August 2014, will underwrite printing costs for the youth entrepreneurship guide, and spearhead a campaign to reduce adolescent pregnancies.



Inter-American Development Bank

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) – The bank through its FOMIN department provides the external financing for the NEO-DR alliance of which Alerta Joven is a member.

VI. GOING FORWARD – THE CHALLENGES

Our focus is to convert challenges into opportunities. After two years, Alerta Joven can now clearly identify the challenges we need to tackle. These include the web platform and tracking system, diversity of our implementing partners, working with our donor USAID, working with the Dominican government, and fostering long-term sustainability. Here is an analysis of these five challenges:

Web Platform and Information System

We currently are not where we want to be with IR 3.1 Implementation of Comprehensive Information System. What we envision as a final product is an information system that not only measures indicators, but is able to track each Alerta Joven participant and measure the impact. For example, if Maria Perez from the *barrio* Capotillo in Santo Domingo entered IDDI's Alerta Joven program at the age of 13, we want to track Maria's development over a five year period – what courses she took, whether or not she got a job, if she stay in school, if she became pregnant or not, if she avoided conflict with the law, etc. If we can collect this type of data, we can show evidence-based results and have an instrument that provides value for long-term sustainability. There are several issues with this particular challenge:

- We are seeing that the technology for the system may be too complex and burdensome. Part of this is due to the original plan to have the tracking system within the web site. Potential solutions – Separate the tracking system from the web site, identify more user friendly technology, and manage the entire web platform locally.
- The majority of our partner organizations do not have the institutional culture of M&E and data collection. This presents a lag in terms of actual participants and those registered in the system, and also affects the quality of the information. Solutions currently being implemented – more training for partners, additional funds to bolster their data collection capacity, and sub-contracting outside technicians to accelerate the registration process within the system.

Partner Organizations

Alerta Joven to date has a total of 26 implementing partners with several more slated for the future. Their selection was a combination of open competition, limited competition, and direct invitation. Each sub-agreement has been vetted and approved by USAID. The performance by partners through direct invitation has been superior to those through open competition. As witnessed in the year 2 Alerta Joven convention, all partners understand the results of Alerta Joven and the need to provide improved quality in all services (See Attachment 7.10). However, within this large family, there is a multiplicity of weaknesses and strengths. Entrena invests an extraordinary amount of time backstopping a small number of partners. During the first two years, we also invested staff and resources in institutional strengthening (See Attachment 7.13). Solutions currently being implemented – Entrena picks up the slack where necessary, especially in employment insertion, carefully allocates remaining sub-agreement funds to address weaknesses, shares best practices by stronger partners, and if necessary, weeds out the partners whose performance is subpar.

Working with Our Donor

We would be amiss if not mentioning working with our donor USAID has been challenging. Alerta Joven is a large cooperative agreement, Entrena is a relatively small Dominican company, and most of the funds are in local currency. The number of procedures, protocols, contractual issues, milestones, approvals and concurrences can be overwhelming. However, at the end of year 2, we have learned how to manage. Having stated this, we also recognize that the support and dedication by all USAID staff that, one way or another, intersect with Alerta Joven has been excellent.

Working with the Dominican Government

The fact that we have signed agreements with seven governmental ministries attests to the cross cutting themes and approaches of Alerta Joven. Within the government, there are many “mini governments” at national, regional, and local levels with competing interests. We need to be open and inclusive to all but develop solid working relationships with those who demonstrate reciprocity in resources, presence, and commitment. We also need to be politically acute and aware of the shifting interests and scenarios. Solutions currently being implemented – Following up on meetings with the Ministry of the Presidency; continuing coordination with Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development; deepening a productive relationship with the National

Attorney General office; strengthening recently renewed ties with the Ministry of Education; and following up on existing agreements with remaining ministries.

Sustainability

The model for long-term sustainability proposed in the Alerta Joven program description is an eventual co-financing mechanism with financial support from the government and private sector, but with operational autonomy. This continues to be the model, but how we get there has been tempered by our experience during the first two years. Alerta Joven undoubtedly has a clear competitive niche – solutions for at-risk youth who are one step away from potential delinquency and violence, which is the number one issue for Dominican society today. Yet we are aware that any relationship with the Dominican government, especially one that has financial support underpinnings, can easily disappear in one decree. The challenges posed by the political need for the government to be an implementer of activities versus an enabler of actions by society seem unlikely to change. Solutions currently being implemented are

- Strong networking and social marketing campaign directed by Media Vest focused on both private and public sectors.
- Extensive mentoring presence where young Dominican professionals will directly assist at-risk youth.
- Direct actions with the Presidency so the current President can include Alerta Joven in his Sunday surprise visits.
- Determine the possibility of a potential sustainable co-financing mechanism within the operational structure of the National Attorney General office.
- Strengthen current ties with multilateral donors such as IDB and the UN to channel more funding to at-risk youth issues.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

This Year 2 Report has a wealth of information that further details and describes the scope and impact of our interventions, and provides detailed indicators and results, profiles of our implementing partners, and most important activities during the year.

Acronyms

ACOPRO- Acción Comunitaria por el Progreso, Inc.
AGCI- Chilean International Cooperation Agency
AIDS-Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ALVR- Asociación de Ahorros y Crédito de La Vega
ANJE- Young Business Leaders Association in the DR
CAI Global- Ciatelli Inc.
CAPEX- Innovation and Professional Training Center
CEFASA – Centro de Formación, Acción Social y Agraria
CEPROSH- Centro de Promoción y Solidaridad Humana, Inc.
COIN- Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral, Inc.
CONEP- Consejo Nacional de la Empresa Privada
COP-Chief of Party
CSA- Community Service Alliance
CSW-Commercial sex worker
CVPC- Crime Violence Prevention Committee
DIGECITTSS- Department for the Control of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and AIDS
DIGEPEP- Ministry of the Presidency Special Programs
DN-National District
DR-Dominican Republic
DREAM- Dominican Republic Education & Mentoring Project
EBA- Accelerated Basic Education
EDUCA- Acción por la Educación
EpC- Espacios para Crecer
ENDESA- Health and Demographic National Survey
FOMIN – Fondo Multilateral de Inversiones
FOSIS- Chilean Social Investment and Solidarity Fund
GODR- Dominica Republic Government
HIV-Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT-Information and Communications Technology
IDB- Inter-American Development Bank
IDDI – Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral
IEET- Business Initiative for Technical Education
IMCA- Implements & Machinery Company
INAFOCAM- Ministry of Education Teacher Training Institute
INFOTEP- National Technical and Professional Training Institute
INTEC- Technological Institute of Santo Domingo
IR- Intermediate Result
IT- Information Technology
JADOM- Junior Achievement

M&E- Monitoring & Evaluation
MARP-Most At-risk Population
MEPyD- Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Development
MI- Motivational interviewing
MIC- Ministry of Industry and Commerce
MINERD- Ministry of Education
MLB- Major League Baseball
MOSCTHA-Movimiento Socio Cultural para los Trabajadores Haitianos Incorporados
NEO-DR- New Employment Opportunities-Dominican Republic
NGO-Non-governmental organization
PC- Participación Ciudadana
PEPFAR- President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PPPS- Public-Private Partnerships
PREPARA- Ministry of Education High School Program for Out of School Students
QLN- Quantum Learning Network
RCD- Research Computing Division
RD-Dominican Peso
RTI- Research Triangle Institute
STI- Sexually Transmitted Infection
TTM- Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change
UCNE- Universidad Católica Nordestana
UN- United Nations
UNIBE- Universidad Iberoamericana República Dominicana
UNFPA- United Nations Population Fund
USAID- United States Agency for International Development
USDOL- United States Department of Labor
VAK – Visual, Auditory Kinesthetic
YPS- Youth Participant Survey

Spanish Terms:

“Barrio” - Refers to urban slum areas in the Dominican Republic. These are the areas targeted in the Alerta Joven project.

“Charlas”- Refers to informal speaking presentations led by community leaders or trained specialists in a conversational style.

“Colmadones” - A neighborhood corner store, or small grocery store where people frequently gather.

“Confianza”- Refers to having “trust in” an individual or entity due to these having proved themselves. Once you have "confianza" in an individual or entity, one can be completely honest and open with these.

“Yola” - Refers to a shoddily constructed small boat containing more people than what is advisable. The boats are usually used to immigrate illegally into the United States from the Dominican Republic.