The three Balkan programs profiled here have been supported by EQUIP3/Youth Trust consortium member the International Youth Foundation (IYF) through its partner, the Balkan Children and Youth Foundation. USAID provides funding to IYF to support programs such as these. The program run by the Youth Development Trust (YDT) in South Africa is part of “Make a Connection,” a global initiative of IYF and the Nokia Corporation. Currently, USAID is funding adaptations of the program to new locations and sectors, including to new provinces in South Africa, and to Rwanda and Malawi. This process also draws on the experience of another USAID-funded youth employment program, “entra 21,” which prepares youth in Latin America and the Caribbean for the 21st century workplace.
THE CHALLENGE

- Will I be able to find a job?
- Will I be able to stay in my country?
- How can I give back to my community?
- Who is responsible for my future?
4 DIFFERENT APPROACHES

- Romania
  “A Career Dream,” Center Education 2000+ (CEDU)
- Bulgaria
  Junior Achievement Bulgaria
- Albania
  Gjirokastra Youth Center
- South Africa
  “Make a Connection,” Youth Development Trust (YDT)
Romania

“A Career Dream,” Center Education 2000+ (CEDU)
Bulgaria
Junior Achievement Bulgaria
Albania
Gjirokastra Youth Center
South Africa
Make a Connection/
Youth Development Trust
Of particular relevance to the Balkans and South Africa:

- Taking personal responsibility
- Youth entrepreneurship
- Beyond business
- Inter-sectoral partnering
- Community service
A FEW KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Of general applicability:

- Interactive teaching methods and peer-to-peer learning
- Engaging youth in program design, implementation and evaluation
- Learning by doing
- In-school and out-of-school youth
- Contextualization
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Scaling up
- Community involvement and support
SOME CRITICAL COMPONENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL YE PROGRAM

- clear selection criteria/contract and code of conduct
- training in both life skills and work skills
- focus on both the traditional job market and entrepreneurship
- development of attitudes and behaviors appropriate to the workplace
- opportunity to practice skills
- opportunity to practice civic responsibility
- direct contact between youth and potential employers
- development of an active alumni network
SOME CRITICAL COMPONENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL YOUTH PROGRAM

- access to micro-credit loans especially designed for youth
- mentoring program
- advocacy work by program staff at the local and national level
- networking to promote job placement to improve enabling environment
- networking/negotiation by program staff to promote job placement
- job placement program
- tracking system to monitor job placement, retention and vertical mobility
WHERE NEXT?

- International action
- Regional initiatives
- National level steps
- Local and community action

A Comprehensive Multi-tiered Approach
That Involves Government, Business and Civil Society Actors at All Levels
An Alliance For Action
Eslirt Tushe has opened his own business as a mechanic in Gjirokastra, Albania.
MEETING THIS CHALLENGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Graduates of the Make a Connection program in South Africa have opened their own franchise operation. YDT’s overall placement rate has increased from 65% to 74%.