



TOTAL REACH
1,019 Former
Young offenders
75 Coaches
58 Families
745 Children in
communities

Unlocking their Potential (UP) Project Learning Brief

Project Description

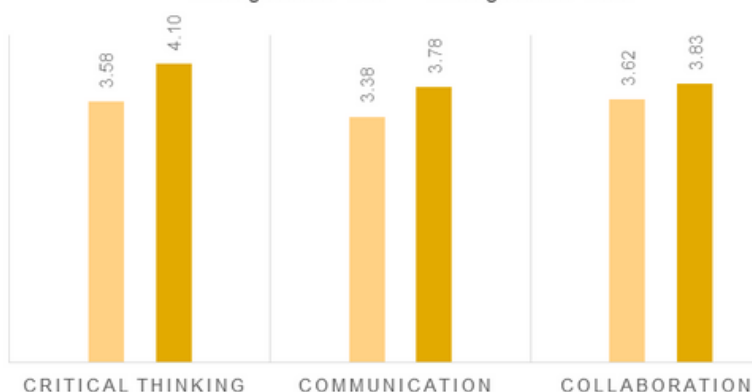
The UP Project was a 3-year project (2021-2023) aimed at enhancing life skills and bolstering employability among former young offenders in Thailand to prevent them from reoffending within the first year of their release from the 4 Juvenile Vocational Training Centres.

Right To Play Thailand focused on:

- (i) improving life skills that support young people's readiness for employment or entrepreneurship
- (ii) increasing access to work opportunities
- (iii) building supportive networks for economic opportunities and social inclusion in the community

LIFE SKILLS

■ Average Score - Pre ■ Average Score - Post



KEY RESULTS & LEARNINGS

Outcome 1: Enhanced Life Skills

1 Improved Life Skills for Employment and Entrepreneurship

The project supported life skills improvement through 169 training sessions for 710 former young offenders. These training sessions were focused on critical thinking, decision making, communication and collaboration skills.

76.22% of youth had improved knowledge of life skills after training.

2 Putting new skills into real-life practice and situations

Through experiential learning and practical engagement such as the simulated youth markets and the real life experience of selling products at a local market, the youth participants have improved their confidence and interpersonal skills while honing in the different life skills that are crucial for work environments and entrepreneurial journeys.

KEY RESULTS & LEARNINGS

Outcome 2: Increased access to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people

- 1 In addition to job readiness, vocational and entrepreneurial workshops, a group of 73 young former offenders were chosen to receive comprehensive mentoring support. This support included the creation of personalized career plans and assistance in securing personal funds or seed money for potential business endeavors. **100 %** of youth who received funding support obtained employment or started their own business.
- 2 **91%** of youth who started their own business and **92%** of youth who secured employment did not reoffend after their first year of release.

Findings from Focus Group Discussions demonstrate:



Increased readiness and confidence for employment

Around **36%** of the youth from the focus group expressed a keen interest in working in local companies. Many of these young individuals said that they were ready to start working.

1

2

Have a future plan to start working in local companies

Youth have detailed and diverse strategies they intend to use achieve their goals after they are released.

3

Tangible support to increase youth opportunities and workplace confidence.

Support for young people is required after they are released, such as funds for housing and food expenditures during job searches or job-specific equipment.



Readiness and confidence in entrepreneurship

5



4

A notable **43%** of youth have plans to start businesses based on their interests, occupational skills, business aptitude, or experiences from family enterprises.



Planning for the future: Launching their own businesses

Young people have various goals when it comes to starting their own businesses. Broadly, their ambitions can be classified into two categories: 1) starting a new business and 2) contributing to the family's existing business. When these young people leave the training center, they are prepared and equipped to carry out their plans.

6

Additional support to bolster opportunities for young individuals' confidence in starting their businesses.

Young individuals need both tangible support such as seed money to start their business but intangible support is crucial for youth to succeed and feel prepared such as encouragement and advice from teachers, staff, and family members.

KEY RESULTS & LEARNINGS

- 1 There were challenges faced in building a economic network with the private sector. Only **8%** of young people have successfully secured jobs within the **13** private sector partnerships built by RTP.
- 2 Through workshops and counselling sessions with parents of youth, **25%** of young offenders' parents actively supported their child's reintegration and their career prospects after release.
- 3 RTP supported youth-led community service and volunteering events and as a result, **61%** of community members had increased positive perceptions of formerly incarcerated youth.



Outcome 3: Increased supportive networks for economic opportunity and social inclusion in the community

Sustainability

- 1 RTP strengthened the skills of Juvenile Training Centre staff, enabling them to facilitate training sessions and activities for young offenders beyond the project.
- 2 Activity Manuals were co-created with Juvenile Training Centre Staff to support continuous skill development for young offenders.
- 3 Juvenile Training Centres were equipped with resources like barista and hairdressing tools to facilitate ongoing vocational training that aligns with the aspirations of the youth.
- 4 RTP established relationships with local businesses and small enterprises to assist in providing training and apprenticeship opportunities for young offenders.

Recommendations

- 1 Expand life skills training to focus on supporting youth to develop their resilience and coping mechanism skills, bolstering their capacity to sustain employment and pursue lasting careers.
- 2 Conduct an in-depth assessment of young people's occupational needs to ensure they can reach their goals.
- 3 Engage successful individuals or role models who have shared similar experiences to join the support network, offering continuous assistance and guidance.
- 4 Provide comprehensive counselling services and long-term monitoring to track and support the progress of at-risk youth in their careers and path to success.