

Shaqodoon: Somalia Youth Livelihood Program

Learning transforms lives.
EDC transforms learning.



My Story: Abdifatah



Abdifatah Hassan Warsame, now 24, was only in the second grade when militias captured his home town of Galkayo and his life was changed forever. "My father was shot dead in his shop and his assets looted. We were left with nothing." Abdifatah

recalls. The young man and his family were forced to live on charity.

With no formal education, he had limited options, and with the responsibility of providing for his mother and six siblings, he joined the local militia to earn \$50 a month. "I hated it, but had no other alternative; it was a bleak and hopeless situation. I remained with the militia for years, and it was while I was still with them that I heard about the Shaqodoon skill training program." Shaqodoon, funded by the United States Agency for International Development and implemented by Education Development Center, has helped prepare over 1,800 young men and women like Abdifatah for better livelihood opportunities.

Abdifatah enrolled in refrigeration and cooling system training, and today feels ready to venture out and earn a living using the new skills he acquired. "Five months ago, I didn't have a clue what a cooling system was and now I can trouble-shoot refrigerators, compressors or freezers, and comfortably repair them all. I'm very happy and satisfied with all I have learned."

Impact

Shaqodoon: Transforming Young Lives

The Somalia Youth Livelihoods Program (SYLP), known as Shaqodoon, or job seeker, in Somali, was created to provide Somali youth with greater access to training, internships, work and self-employment opportunities.

As a result of Shaqodoon's efforts:

- **1,885** Somali youth have received technical skills and work readiness training.
- **92%** of youth that completed training have received access to greater livelihood opportunities through jobs, internships or self-employment.
- **55** NGOs have increased their capacity to provide youth with relevant training to increase their livelihood opportunities.





Over 1,000 Somali youth have found new opportunities using technology, often their own mobile phones.

Background

Somalia has been engulfed in turmoil since 1991 at the outbreak of the Civil War and there has been no central government control over most of the country's territory since then.

The prolonged unrest has had a devastating impact on Somalia's economy and the Somali people at large. Somalia lacks natural resources and faces significant development challenges. Thousands of Somalis have fled and sought refuge in other countries. The most vulnerable in this tragedy have been women, children, and youth.

The burden of poverty falls heavily on youth, who lack education and employment opportunities. Faced with these challenges, Somali youth are at a major risk of oppression, unemployment, and low wages and as a result induction into illegally armed groups and terrorist organizations.

Through its Somali Youth Livelihoods Program, EDC seeks to productively engage youth to contribute to the economic development and security of Somalia as well as to engage and prepare them for their roles in the world of work and society.

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Innovation

Using technology to increase access to livelihoods

An essential component of Shaqodoon is InfoMatch, an SMS-, web- and voice-based application that links young people and employers. Shaqodoon's InfoMatch system is changing lives across Somaliland, South Central Somalia and Puntland by giving youth and employers key information over their mobile phones.

The system provides youth with up-to-date information on opportunities such as jobs, internships, and short courses posted by potential employers. Youth enroll themselves and create mini-CVs through the application. They can then search posted opportunities using their cell phones and be matched with an opportunity by SMS, on line or by calling a toll free number to an automated opportunity match service. Employers can search the database for a potential employee with the right set of skills for a job.

To date, Shaqodoon InfoMatch has:

- 245 business registered.
- 2,048 user accounts created.
- Over 1,500 job resumes stored in the database.
- 1,117 youth matched with opportunities.