

A Ganar

Teaching the skills needed to enter the workforce through soccer and other team sports to disadvantaged youth across the Americas

To fight the problem of youth unemployment in Latin America and the Caribbean through the empowerment of young people through sport.



- Location** 19 countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean
- Organisation** Partners of the Americas
- Start-end date** 2005 - ongoing
- Target group** Young people aged between 16 and 24 years old
- Reach** Over 14,000 disadvantaged young people have participated in the A Ganar programme to date
- Partners** Local businesses, government institutions, NGOs and non-profit organisations
- Key facts** Approximately 69% of young people who start the programme have completed the full 7 - 9 months and graduated. 67% of these found jobs in the following weeks or months. Over 1,300 participants returned to formal education after completing the programme and almost 200 have started their own business within the nine months following graduation.
- For inspiration** www.partners.net/ganar

Summary

A Ganar is a youth workforce development program built upon the premise that soccer and team sports can serve as effective tools for social and economic development. The idea is to use team sports as a platform to teach disadvantaged youth the skills and the behaviours required to find employment. Participants learn six core skills sought by employers namely teamwork, discipline, communication, respect, a focus on results, and a continual seek for self-improvement. A Ganar helps young people to transform lessons from sports-based field and classroom activities into market-driven skills and attitudes. Those skills enable participants to find jobs, re-enter the formal education system or to launch their own business.

Keys to success

Phased approach

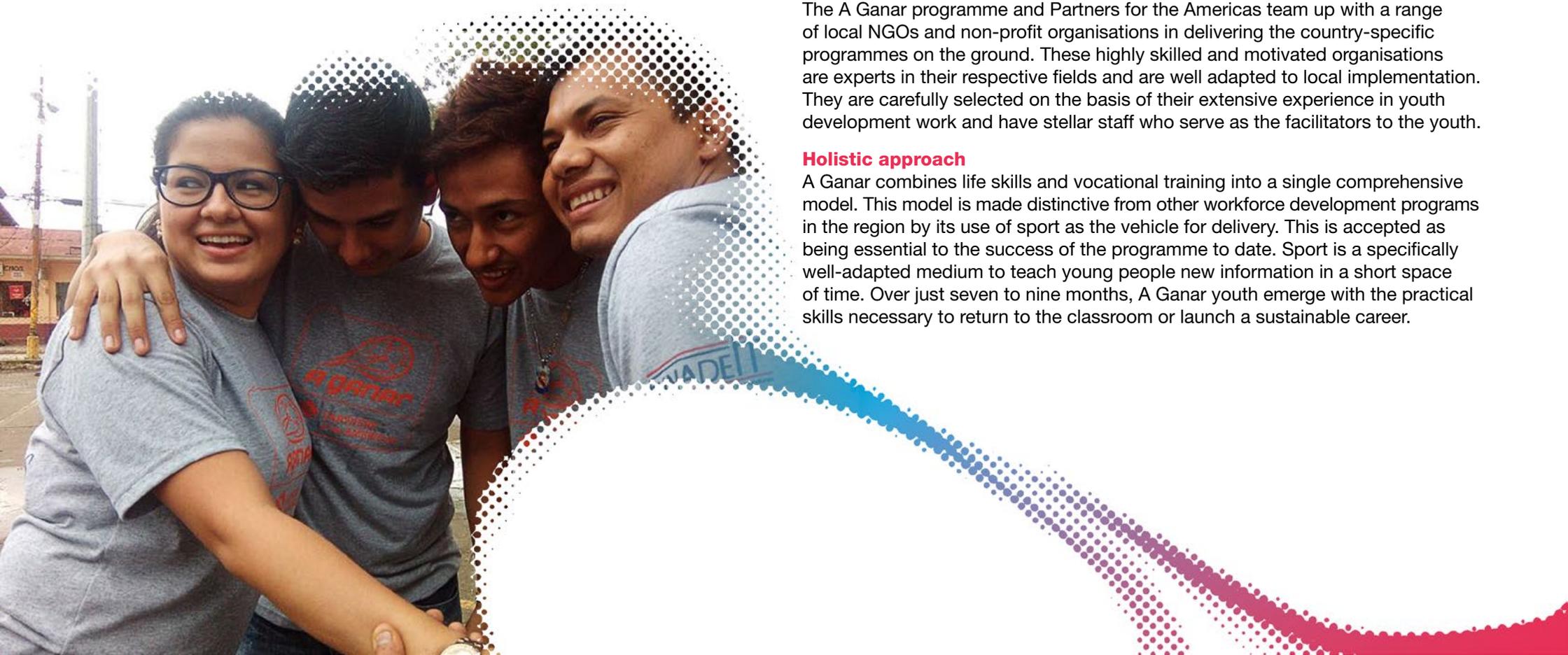
A Ganar has 4 distinct phases through which participants must go through to complete the programme. During Phase 1, they participate in sports-based employability training led by local facilitators. Each activity follows a sport-life-work progression, beginning around the familiar theme of sport and connecting it to everyday life experiences. In Phase 2, they take part of market-driven vocational training, applying the newfound sport-based employability skills. Phase 3 sees youth obtain internships with local businesses. In Phase 4, youth participate in locally adapted follow-up activities and alumni networking, including workshops, one-on-one sessions and developing strategies for job placement.

Local delivery

The A Ganar programme and Partners for the Americas team up with a range of local NGOs and non-profit organisations in delivering the country-specific programmes on the ground. These highly skilled and motivated organisations are experts in their respective fields and are well adapted to local implementation. They are carefully selected on the basis of their extensive experience in youth development work and have stellar staff who serve as the facilitators to the youth.

Holistic approach

A Ganar combines life skills and vocational training into a single comprehensive model. This model is made distinctive from other workforce development programs in the region by its use of sport as the vehicle for delivery. This is accepted as being essential to the success of the programme to date. Sport is a specifically well-adapted medium to teach young people new information in a short space of time. Over just seven to nine months, A Ganar youth emerge with the practical skills necessary to return to the classroom or launch a sustainable career.



Sport for All objectives

Support active societies

A Ganar places sport at the centre of its strategy to build a healthier society. The unique active learning methodology adopted means that sports participation is the focus of all learning undertaken by the participants. Regular sport and activity provides a clear structure and stability to participants. A Ganar extends this to the stability that school, a job, strong social networks or a safe community can provide for participants. Many of the youth targeted are vulnerable to gang violence and lack the opportunities and support needed to break the cycle of poverty. The medium of sport and physical activity is helping to build a more secure and sustainable society in the region.

Improve public health and well-being

The problem of youth unemployment in Latin America and the Caribbean is significant. It is estimated that half of young people aged between 15 and 24 are not attending school and nearly 20% of these are unemployed. The curriculum is specifically focused on the skills sought by employers. This helps to generate opportunities for participants to forge a successful career and a path to a brighter future.

How is the programme communicated?

The programme adopts a wide range of communication channels. The Partners of the Americas' website and social media pages carry information about the overall A Ganar programme. Each country-specific programme has its own Facebook and Twitter pages. The local coordinating and implementing organizations also maintain their own Facebook pages as well advertising their programmes locally through advertisements and flyers). Further communication efforts regularly take place via email, press releases, and on-site communication by program staff.

How is the programme evaluated?

The success of A Ganar is tracked on three levels: improvement in the six core skills, graduation rates, and positive engagement. The core skills are measured through tracking sheets which monitor individual's progress through each of the four programme phases. A facilitator evaluates each core skill per individual and conversations between the facilitator and the youth in question are considered valuable learning tools. To graduate from the program, youths must complete all three phases. After graduation, country coordinators and facilitators stay in touch with graduates for nine months, tracking their employment status on a quarterly basis. Positive engagement is defined as finding a job, going back to school, or starting a business within nine months of graduation. Coordinators on the country and regional level analyze the data from each group to identify environmental challenges and program improvements for the next cycle.

“Before starting A Ganar [...] all I thought about was becoming the gang leader, but I always thought that somewhere inside of me was a good person [...] I want to thank the A Ganar program with all of my heart. I feel good now, thanks to you. I stopped being such a slacker and feel like a real barber.”

A Ganar participant – San Pedro Sula (Honduras)





Join the sporting society!

Globally, 1 in 4 adults is not active enough and more than 80% of the world's adolescent population is insufficiently physically active (World Health Organization). Let's reverse the trend and get moving.



Promote sport and physical activity

Recent changes in leisure and work practices, diet and a host of other trends has led to an increasingly sedentary lifestyle amongst the world's population. Sport for all programmes aim to promote sport and physical activity to mitigate the negative effects associated with these developments.



Improve public health and well-being

Sport and physical activity plays an important role in making societies healthier, happier and safer into the future. Successful sport for all projects help to stimulate these common benefits across entire communities.



Support active societies

Active societies involve many stakeholders such as parents, coaches, schools, local clubs, sports organisations, event organisers and grassroots activities, to name but a few. They can all be hugely influential in promoting healthier lifestyles within a community. Programmes that support and reinforce their efforts are vital for the encouragement and promotion of active societies around the world.



Provide equal access to sport

Every member within a community should have equal opportunity to live an active and healthy lifestyle. Effective grassroots programmes place a heavy emphasis on ensuring that all of their participants can enjoy this opportunity regardless of physical condition, race, gender, social conditions, geographical location or otherwise.



Foster Olympic legacy

The Olympic Games provide a source of inspiration and a vibrant expression of the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. This unique power can energise communities to develop projects enabling and inspiring people to become and stay physically active into the future.

Become a key player in your community

A useful platform has been designed for organisations across the Olympic Movement that are managing Sport for All programmes, providing them with the knowledge, understanding and tools needed to improve existing programmes worldwide, as well as to create new ones.

Get inspired by more than 45 projects around the world

Learn more about best practices with our toolkit

Create your project based on proven academic research and experience of organisations

Share your experience and lead the way to inspire more projects

Connect with a vast network fueled by inspired partners

Find more information

- Sports and Active Society Programmes
- A Guide to Implementation
- www.olympic.org
- activesociety@olympic.org