

# Bawsala

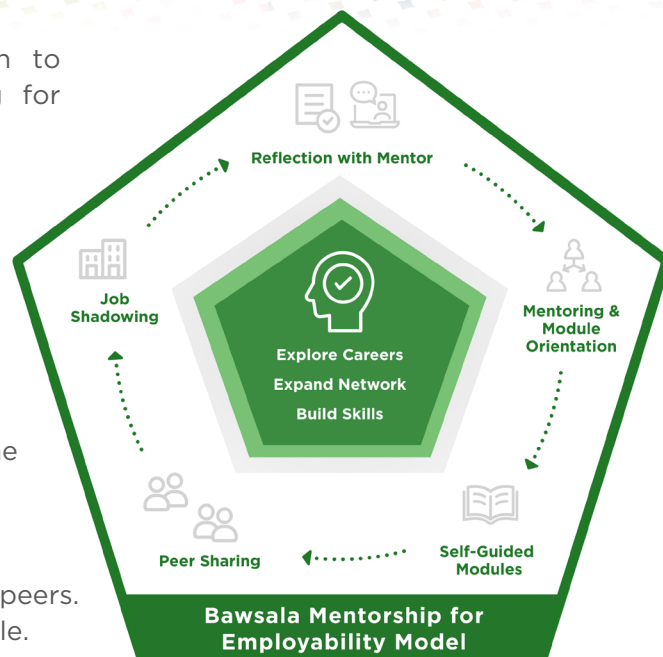
## Career Mentorship Program



The **Bawsala Career Mentorship Program** is an approach to youth workforce development created by World Learning for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Bawsala (بوصلة) means *compass* in Arabic. In our program, several mentors who are usually adults working in a variety of industries, each serve as a kind of “compass” for a group of young people, helping to give them direction and orient them in their career plans.

Together, each mentor and group of young mentees study a sequence of modules. Mentors meet regularly in person or online with their groups to introduce each module, and in between meetings, mentees have individual exercises to work on. Other practical activities are also encouraged, such as informational interviews, job shadowing, internships, and sharing advice with peers. These activities connect in a cycle that repeats with each module.



### Bawsala in Action

World Learning has implemented Bawsala with more than 10 different cohorts of youth in Iraq and Algeria. Recent data shows strong outcomes for participants:

# 98%

improved their job search knowledge, soft skills, or professional behaviors

# 2x

more Bawsala alumni were employed compared to peers in alternate programming

## Bawsala and Positive Youth Development

Bawsala is based on the **Positive Youth Development (PYD)** approach, which helps build youth assets, agency, contributions, and an enabling environment to achieve a vision of healthy, productive, and engaged youth.<sup>1</sup>

We build youth **assets** through experiential learning programs focusing on intrapersonal skills, social skills, communication, and entrepreneurship and job search skills. We use universal design for learning (UDL principles) to ensure all are included, and we assess skills using our WorkLinks Skills and Values (WLSVA) tool.

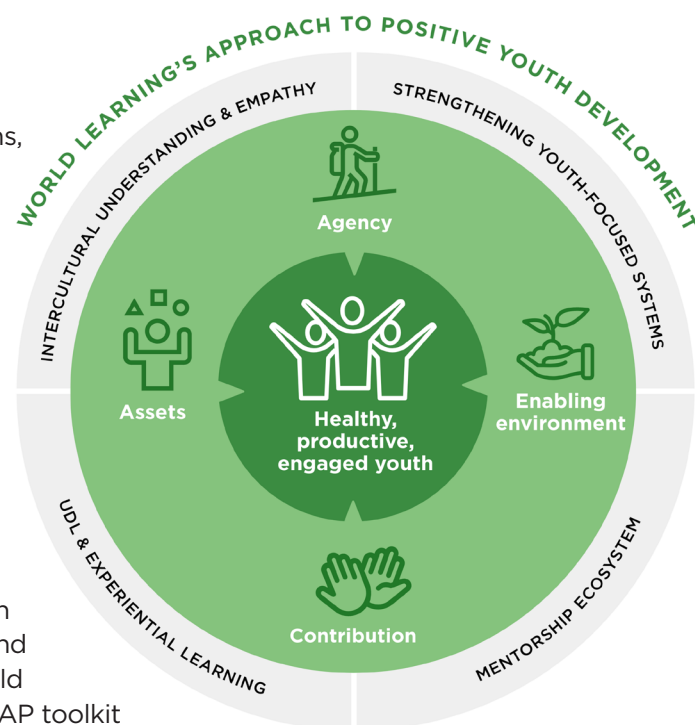
We place youth **agency** at the center of our work, ensuring youth have the skills and confidence to make decisions about their own lives and set their own goals. Youth-led activities and opportunities shape all programming, with an emphasis on interactions with decision-makers. To broaden youth's vision and forge collaborations among diverse youth, we intentionally build intercultural understanding and empathy and we apply the TAAP toolkit to empower people who have historically been marginalized.

Youth **contributions** are valued and elevated as participants use their skills and engage with public and private sector leaders to make meaningful impact in their communities and through their work. To further spread program impact through youth contributions, we promote a broader culture of peer mentoring.

Finally, Bawsala builds an **enabling environment** for PYD by creating safe spaces that are youth-responsive, and by involving a growing circle of adults in supporting youth to achieve their career and life goals, with the goal of changing permanent systems and structures.

<sup>1</sup> USAID Youth Power Learning, 2017.

[Positive Youth Development Measurement Toolkit](#).



## Bawsala Employability and Soft Skills Curriculum

