



The 1990's were an economic roller coaster for Argentina, with soaring growth due to international investment usage that would prove fruitful for the short term. By the end of the decade, the Menem administration had instituted structural adjustment policies that eventually plummeted the economy. By 2001, the economy deteriorated so badly that the country suffered an absolute meltdown, with industrial infrastructure and agricultural markets on their knees, minimal social and public services available, and aggressive privatization that resulted in many Argentines unable to afford basic needs – such as water. More than 50 percent of the country lived below the poverty line – an astonishing statistic considering the apparent wealth of nation.

After 2 years of desperation, Argentina is beginning to stabilize its debt, reinvest into infrastructure, and boost agriculture profits. The growth is built upon incredible grassroots movements and leadership efforts that are producing jobs throughout many sectors. GDP has been growing exponentially. Despite all of this, there is still much room for improvement with Argentina's economic situation. A large population of the country could greatly benefit from increased financial opportunities.

FSD partners with organizations that provide economic opportunity to underserved populations. Volunteers and Interns contribute in the areas of mentoring cooperative members, teaching capacity building courses, bringing organizational skills, and networking/researching other local foundations for information sharing. These practices are showing strongly positive results and are in great need by local organizations.

Internship/Volunteer opportunities in micro-enterprise in Argentina include:

- Expand an FSD Eco-Tourism Project by holding educational meetings and distributing information regarding ecotourism possibilities for local agencies and interested community members. The aim is to increase vendor and consumer awareness, thus ensuring a more sustainable use of Argentina's vast natural resources and the reduction of environmental impact due to tourism.
- Provide consulting for an organization to more effectively manage and administer financial resources.
- Support a cooperative small business formed to support marginalized families. The co-op offers personnel for cleaning, but is expanding to masonry work, gardening, painting, plumbing, and electrical work through the help of future volunteers and interns.
- Support an organization's capacity building activities by providing at-risk youth and uneducated persons with resources and guidance to integrate with the working community and find employment. Assist trainings that inform adults about various micro business strategies and micro-credit opportunities.
- Work to improve production techniques for small and medium enterprises that support unemployed women and youth. For example, FSD volunteers and interns have assisted production and/or marketing of fruits and vegetables dehydrated by solar and Eolic energy. The programs aim to reduce poverty and unemployment.

For more opportunities in micro-enterprise in Argentina, visit our website or contact us directly.