

# Generation Unlimited Trust Fund

Consolidated Report



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Today's generation of young people is the largest in history, with 1.8 billion adolescents and youth aged 10–24 years worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Nearly 90 per cent of them are living in developing countries, where they make up a large proportion of the population.<sup>2</sup> Some 267 million young people aged 15–24 years are not in education, employment or training, and two thirds of them are girls and young women.<sup>3</sup>

Generation Unlimited (GenU) was devised to respond to the skilling and employment crises facing youth – which have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Never has there been a more critical time to (up)skill the world's 1.8 billion young people and connect them to employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities. The Generation Unlimited Trust Fund, established in December 2019 and hosted by the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, is a mechanism to catalyse impact for youth in countries and advance the GenU mission through Public-Private-Youth partnership.

Thanks to the generous support of the Government of the Netherlands, programmes are being implemented in Kenya, Niger and Bangladesh to embed twenty-first century skills, apprenticeship and mentorship opportunities in mainstream education systems, while also supporting out-of-school youth to gain transferable skills relevant for local labour markets.

In Kenya, mentorship training introduced to the national curriculum is helping to positively influence young people's career and life choices. Young people are being prepared for the future of work through further curriculum improvements, the acquisition of transferable skills, and career guidance, while 67 new partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders have opened the door to experiential learning opportunities across diverse sectors. With catalytic funding, Yoma's adaptation to the Kenyan context

continues: Strategic partnerships have been leveraged to extend the reach of Yoma, and effective youth engagement saw Yunitok registration surge from 500 to 76,000 users within a year.

Progress in Bangladesh has responded directly to the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. As the country's industries fast-track digital transformation to remain relevant and resilient, young people are being equipped with in-demand transferable skills. Ten courses developed to integrate such skills into the mainstream education system will benefit 29 million students. For out-of-school young people, the roll-out of the Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) commenced, thanks to a GenU-led collaboration. A new pilot will upskill ALP graduates to cope with the pandemic-induced job placement crisis.

In the Niger, where less than 5 per cent of schools are connected to the internet, digital skills acquisition is being improved through tablet computer-based learning for young people in and out of school. Meanwhile, real-time mapping of school connectivity is a critical first step towards connecting every school – and every young person – to the internet. Youth networks played an active part in adapting U-Report to the country context prior to its launch in 2021.

GenU programming in the three countries will continue to build upon the progress made in 2021. At the global level, the Generation Unlimited Strategy 2022–2025 will direct continued efforts to skill and connect the world's 1.8 billion young people to opportunity. There is a sharpened focus on achieving impact for the most disadvantaged, especially young women, and on digital and green skills and solutions. Expanding public-private-youth partnerships to fund and deliver scalable solutions for young people across the globe will be central to delivering this impact.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, 'Youth and the SDGs', [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/youth](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/youth), accessed 17 May 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the future of jobs*, ILO, 2020.







#### 4 Generation Unlimited

Our Time. Our Turn. Our Future

# PURPOSE

Today's generation of young people is the largest in history, with 1.8 billion adolescents and youth aged 10–24 years worldwide. Nearly 90 per cent of them are living in developing countries, where they make up a large proportion of the population. Some 267 million young people aged 15–24 years are not in education, employment or training, and two thirds of them are girls and young women. Of those young people who are employed, about 126 million remain in extreme or moderate poverty. The vast majority (96.8 per cent) of young workers in developing countries have jobs in the informal sector.

Young people today face many economic, social and cultural challenges. Education systems are outdated and fragmented. The types of skills needed in the labour market are changing. Technological innovation is making many jobs vulnerable to automation, and a large portion of job creation is driven by entrepreneurs and small businesses. Youth-led enterprises can trigger significant momentum for job creation for youth, since start-ups account for up to 50 per cent of newly created jobs, and young entrepreneurs primarily employ their peers. Yet such enterprises also face challenges. For example, two thirds of youth-led enterprises in South and Southeast Asia struggle to access business finance.

Generation Unlimited (GenU) was devised to respond to these challenges. Launched at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2018, this public-private-youth partnership aims to (up)skill the world's 1.8 billion young people and connect them with employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities. To achieve this, GenU brings together partners from different sectors with a shared agenda to transform education, work and entrepreneurial outcomes for young people in more than 50 countries. At the global level, we identify innovations that have the potential to address youth challenges across multiple countries – and build partnerships and secure investment to scale them. Youth are equal partners in this mission, and GenU is committed to harnessing their ability to drive purposeful action and help to create a better world.

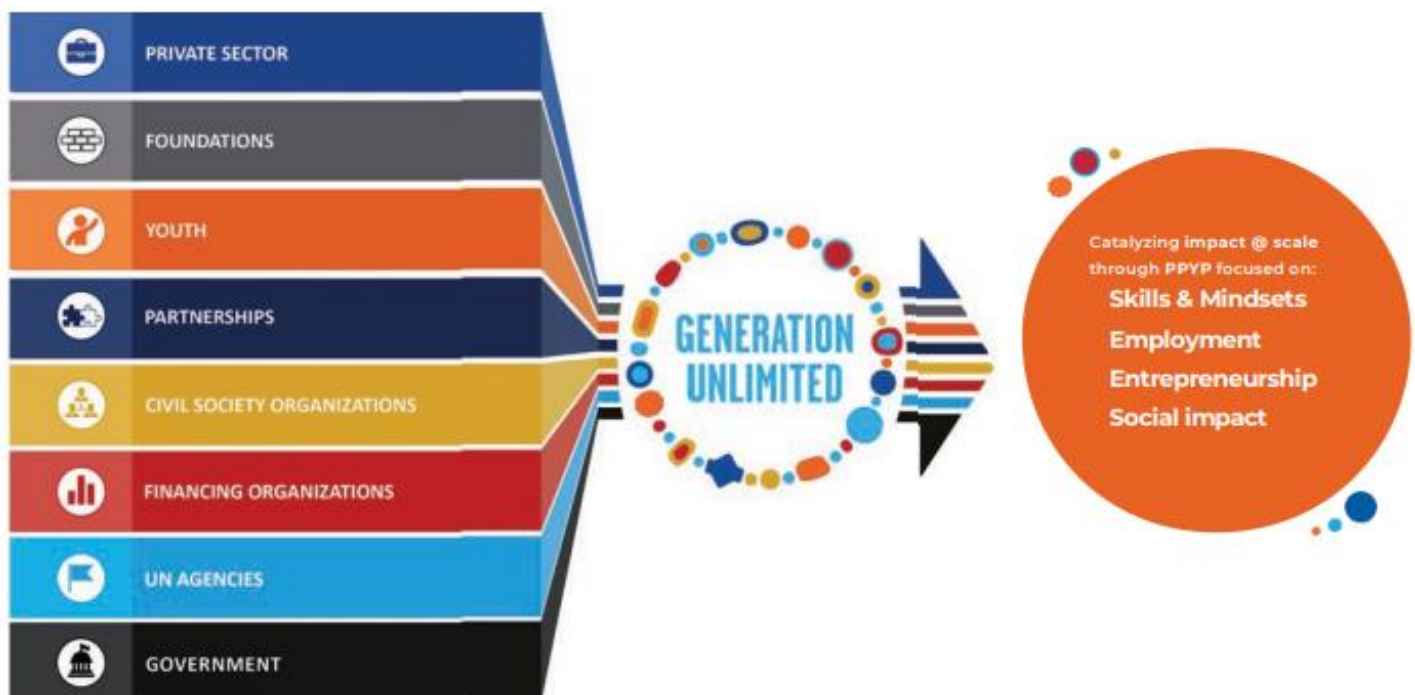


# PPYP

## GenU: World's First Public-Private-Youth Partnership (PPYP)

GenU skills young people and connects them to opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship and social impact, contributing towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To prepare young people for the world of work and active citizenship, GenU focuses on equipping young people with the skills and mindsets required for success and well-being, and connecting them to employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities, including through career guidance, job-tech, internships, volunteering, and apprenticeship programmes. As both education and work increasingly occupy the digital sphere, it is imperative that all young people – especially the most disadvantaged – can access the internet to make full use of the available education and employment solutions and opportunities.

Moving forward, in line with the Generation Unlimited Strategy 2022–2025, programmes will focus on the most disadvantaged young people. Special emphasis is placed on empowering the most marginalized, including young people with disabilities, young migrants and refugees, the poorest youth, and girls and young women. Programmes in all impact areas target cohorts that are at least 50 per cent female. Digital and green skills and solutions are emphasized to ensure that young people are fully prepared for the evolving world of work and can take urgent climate action to protect the planet for current and future generations.

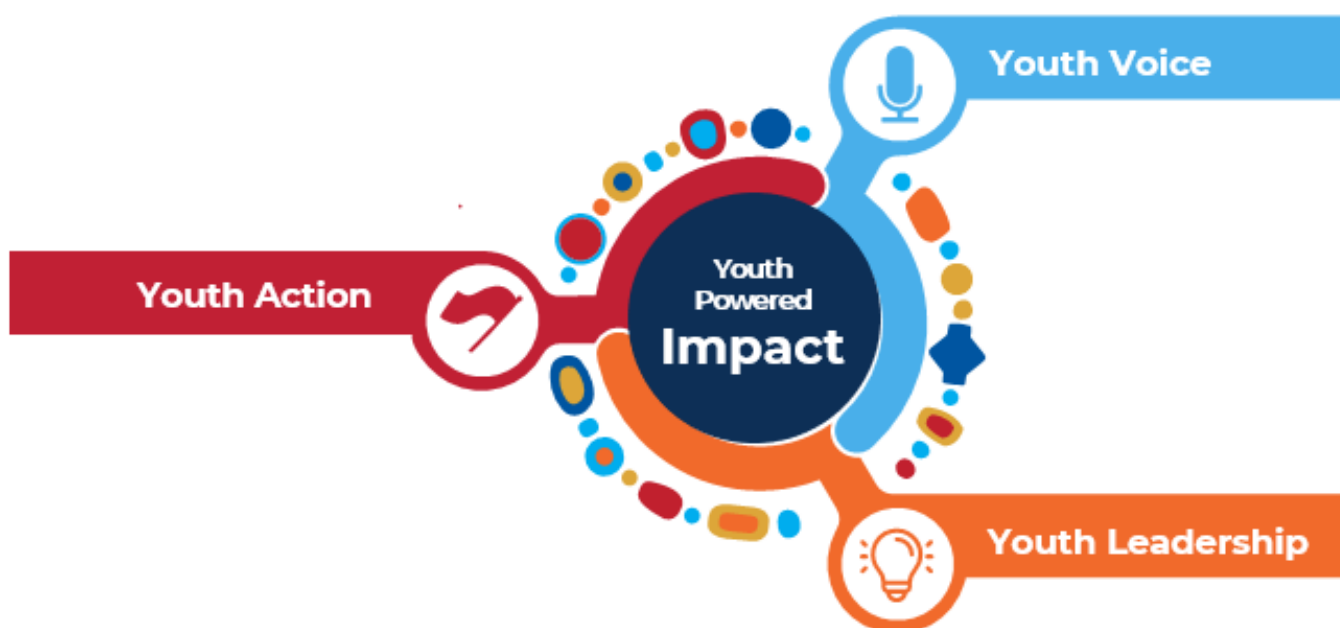




# YOUTH POWERED IMPACT

Young people are engaged as equal partners in GenU through the dynamic Young People's Action Team. Its more than 50 youth leaders and worldwide youth network guide the global partnership and serve as a sounding board for all that GenU does. Further, GenU constantly reviews and updates the ways in which the partnership engages and mobilizes youth, including by:

- elevating youth voices by enabling youth to self-organize as advocates and providing them with a platform to be heard (both online and offline) and to effect change in policy and programming
- supporting youth leadership via mentorship, training and access to resources, and youth participation in GenU governance and staffing at the global and local level
- fostering youth action by co-creating initiatives with young people, investing in youth-led solutions and partnering with youth-led organizations to advance the GenU mission.



# GenU TRUST FUND

The Generation Unlimited Trust Fund was established in 2019 to facilitate the scale-up of GenU initiatives in countries that provide skilling, employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities for young people in line with the GenU mission. The Trust Fund plays a key role in the GenU partnership as it catalyses in-country resources to help take programmes to scale. The United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office administers the Trust Fund and acts as its trustee.

The Generation Unlimited Board is the global partnership's primary oversight body. Chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Unilever, the Board comprises leaders from the United Nations, the World Bank, businesses, foundations and civil society organizations. It also includes a youth representative. Board duties include providing strategic direction, reviewing progress against priorities and assessing impact, monitoring the financial health of GenU and approving Trust Fund allocations.





# PROGRESS

The Government of the Netherlands has been a key supporter of GenU since its inception. It generously entered into a partnership agreement to support GenU programmes to skill, empower and prepare young people for the future of work through a contribution to the GenU Trust Fund of 10 million euros over a five-year period (2020–2024), with 50 per cent of this sum earmarked for programmes in Kenya and the Niger.

Given the severe and potentially long-term effects of the COVID-19 crisis on young people across the globe, GenU made the decision to focus efforts on digital learning and skilling to minimize the impact of mass school closures and equip young people for work in a pandemic and post-pandemic world. As such, the funding has benefited the following three selected programmes, each of which also contributes to the implementation of the Netherlands' Youth at Heart strategy: (1) Expanding Education, Skills Development, Employment and Engagement Opportunities for Young People, in Kenya; (2) Scaling Up of Apprenticeship and Transferable Skills, in Bangladesh; and (3) Connect My School, in the Niger.

Important progress has been made across all three countries despite some delays and adjustments caused by the difficult and unpredictable operating environment presented by COVID-19. Progress has been achieved in regard to programme development and partnership coordination as well as activities that could be implemented with no health risk. Implementing activities became easier as 2021 unfolded, as restrictions were lifted and with the acceptance of 'the new normal', in which daily life and work are able to continue alongside COVID-19. What follows is an outline of progress by country from 1 January to 31 December 2021, in line with the GenU Trust Fund reporting cycle.









Kenya has a population of nearly 18 million young people aged 10–24 years.



# KENYA

Kenya has a population of nearly 18 million young people aged 10–24 years.<sup>4</sup> In 2019, the country had 10.1 million primary school students (4.97 million girls and 5.1 million boys) but only 3.26 million secondary school students (1.64 million girls and 1.63 million boys).<sup>5</sup> Improving the transition rate to secondary education is critical and this goes hand in hand with ensuring a quality education that is both appropriate and useful, which is a key factor for enrolment and attendance. With 500,000 to 800,000 young people entering Kenya's job market each year,<sup>6</sup> the economy has been unable to provide enough employment opportunities, even with informal sector jobs included. Often, young people are turned away owing to their lack of experience. To ensure that Kenya's young people can meet the demands of twenty-first century jobs and stand out in a competitive labour market, they require strong academic qualifications, critical thinking, teamwork skills and proficiency in using technology.

In 2019, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics estimated unemployment at 19.2 per cent among youth aged 20–24 years, with young women constituting 64.5 per cent of the unemployed cohort.<sup>7</sup> As such, there is considerable pressure to drive job creation and the development of skills that match the needs of the labour market. Kenya's formal sector currently generates less than 20 per cent of the jobs required to absorb the country's labour force, which is growing at a rate of 2.9 per cent per annum. Slow structural transformation in production and the labour market has resulted in most workers being confined to low-earning jobs or the informal sector, which is characterized by low labour productivity and earnings, poor job security and no social protection. Moreover, the number of jobs in the informal sector is growing faster than in the formal sector, rising by 4 million compared with 60,000 since 2009, while the share of employment contributed by the formal economy has shrunk.<sup>8</sup> Given the magnitude of the problem, it is of critical importance to spur growth in the formal sector to

ensure that young women and men are engaged in productive employment. In line with Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 8, productive and decent work for young women and men is key to eradicating extreme poverty and social exclusion.

Under the leadership of the President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, GenU Kenya was established to respond to these challenges. The President, a GenU Leader since the launch of the global partnership in 2018, has been instrumental in driving progress for young people. The GenU Kenya Steering Committee is co-chaired by the Deputy Chief of Staff in the Executive Office of the President and the United Nations Resident Coordinator, and the GenU Kenya Secretariat is hosted by the Executive Office of the President.

GenU Kenya subscribes to the global GenU vision of ensuring that every young person aged 10–24 years is in education, employment or training by 2030. Findings from GenU Kenya focus group discussions that informed the development of the Kenya country investment agenda revealed that young people feel there is a mismatch between the skills they attained in school and those required in the job market. This mismatch highlights the importance of obtaining life skills and relevant technical skills to be able to access today's job market.

The Expanding Education, Skills Development, Employment and Engagement Opportunities for Young People programme aligns with the GenU Kenya priorities and the Kenya Youth Development Policy 2019, which recognize young people's potential to drive innovation and development in the country. Moreover, the Constitution of Kenya (art. 55) obliges the State to develop affirmative action programmes to ensure that youth can access relevant education and training as well as employment opportunities.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Kenya, Ministry of Education, *Basic Education Statistical Booklet 2019*, MOE, n.p., n.d. Available at: <[www.education.go.ke/images/Approved\\_Basic\\_Education\\_Statistical\\_Booklet\\_2019\\_approved\\_compressed.pdf](http://www.education.go.ke/images/Approved_Basic_Education_Statistical_Booklet_2019_approved_compressed.pdf)>

<sup>6</sup> Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, *2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census: Volume III – Distribution of population by age, sex and administrative units*, KNBS, Nairobi, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Kenya Law Reform Commission, 'Constitution of Kenya – 55. Youth', <[www.klrc.go.ke/index.php/constitution-of-kenya/113-chapter-four-the-bill-of-rights/part-3-specific-application-of-rights/221-55-youth](http://www.klrc.go.ke/index.php/constitution-of-kenya/113-chapter-four-the-bill-of-rights/part-3-specific-application-of-rights/221-55-youth)>, accessed 16 March 2022.

## 1 **Advancing the Community Service Learning Component of the Competency Based Curriculum**

In 2017, the Government of Kenya reformed the national curriculum and began to implement the new Competency Based Curriculum as part of its response to the challenges that young people face. The Community Service Learning component of the new curriculum plays a central role in preparing young people for the world of work by providing training opportunities for young people and helping them to acquire transferable life skills through mentorship and community service learning.

Building on progress made in 2020 on jointly developing the facilitator's guide and costed implementation plan for the mentorship policy with the Ministry of Education, GenU Kenya rolled out the mentorship programme in 57

secondary schools across 6 counties in January 2021. Nearly 8,800 learners (53 per cent adolescent girls) attended the mentorship training sessions, exceeding the target of 8,400 learners. These learners received training in life skills, child protection, career guidance, role modelling and community service learning. The training has given learners the knowledge, skills and attitude to positively influence their decisions in relation to career choice, peer pressure, drug and substance misuse, media influence, online safety, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

To drive support, sustainability and consistency of the mentorship training, 76 guidance teachers were trained as mentorship champions (against a target of training 60 champions). Six mentorship







coordination structures were constituted – one per county – with members drawn from the relevant Regional Directorate of Education, Teacher Service Commission, County Directorate of Education and County Children's Office and from the school administration, board and alumni of the participating schools. The coordinating group has been included in the school calendar and with this model will ensure ownership and sustainability of the programme as part of the school administration.

Additionally, and separate to the mentorship training, almost 6,000 learners from the 57 schools gained transferable skills, demonstrating the acquisition of skills in communication, peaceful conflict resolution and negotiation. Students in several schools also organized a community service activity to clean the environment around their school, clear vegetation and drain all stagnant water to reduce mosquito breeding grounds. Nearly 1,000 learners took part in Community Service Learning activities made possible by partnerships with various institutions, local businesses and other private sector actors. Learners visited arable, poultry, fish and pig farms and vehicle repair, carpentry and metal

workshops and participated in myriad activities linked to classroom learning. Seventy-five physics students received hands-on training in the mechanics of the hydraulic system at a vehicle repair workshop, and those interested in pursuing a career in car mechanics also received career guidance. When students requested and were given access to additional practical training after school and at the weekend, their enthusiasm was evident.

Partnership is a key component of implementing the Community Service Learning component of the new Competency Based Curriculum. In 2021, 67 partnerships were established with Kenya's private sector and other stakeholders to provide learners with experiential learning opportunities. This hands-on learning covered areas including physical sciences, humanities and social sciences, agriculture, veterinary medicine, the police force, performing arts, talent development, hospitality, banking, medicine, engineering, information and communication technology (ICT) and the informal sector.

## 2 Enabling creativity as a mindset and civically engaging youth in Kenya through the Yoma programme

The digital platform Yoma (Youth Agency Marketplace) provides a bridge for young entrepreneurs and youth in the labour market to learn skills that will help them to plan and carry out their work independently. This youth-driven online ecosystem uses artificial intelligence to match young people with individualized learning pathways, with impact tasks to positively contribute to their community, and with jobs based on their aspirations and psychometric profile. With catalytic funding from the GenU Trust Fund, the Yoma model is being adapted for the Kenyan context.

More than 7,000 young people (55 per cent of those who disclosed their gender were adolescent girls) were reached in Kenya in 2021 via Yoma, thanks to a range of strategic partnerships. For example, the youth networks of Kenya Scouts Association, I Choose Life – Africa and the National Youth Council were leveraged to introduce more young people to Yoma.

Such engagement with the platform has enabled youth to create trusted profiles of their skills and capabilities, gain access to personalized learning and training, conduct impact tasks for experiential learning, and receive digital tokens that incentivize further personal growth.

Key partnerships were formalized to engage young people with various relevant departments from the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, including the State Department for Youth Affairs; the Kenya National Innovation Agency; and the Youth Enterprise Development Fund. As well as collaborating with Kenya Scouts Association and I Choose Life, GenU Kenya also partnered on youth engagement with the Kenya Girl Guides Association, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

As part of adapting the Yoma model to the Kenyan context, youth engagement has been conducted chiefly through Yunitok, a platform based on U-Report. Yunitok now has over 76,000 registered users, up from just over 500 users a year ago.







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# BANGLADESH

Bangladesh's 45 million young people aged 10–24 years constitute nearly one third of the total population<sup>10</sup> As such, this group has significant potential to accelerate the country's social, political and economic growth. Every year, another 2 million young people join the workforce. Yet 85 to 90 per cent of the country's youth lack the essential education or skills required to match labour market needs – leading to high rates of unemployment and underemployment.<sup>11</sup> This skills mismatch also leads to widespread economic inactivity among youth. Thirty-two per cent of Bangladesh's youth population are not in education, employment or training, and young women make up the majority of this cohort.<sup>12</sup>

Given this context and the country's need to meet related Sustainable Development Goal targets by 2030, GenU Bangladesh was launched in February 2019. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, is a global GenU Champion and has made skills and employability for young people a priority agenda for the country. The GenU Bangladesh Steering Committee comprises senior officials of multiple

ministries; representatives of United Nations agencies; the presidents of 15 industry associations, collectively representing more than 500 national businesses; representatives of civil society organizations; and youth representatives. Its chair is the former Chief Coordinator for Sustainable Development Goal Affairs of the Prime Minister's Office and the Special Envoy of the Climate Vulnerable Forum Presidency.

A key focus of GenU Bangladesh is working with the Government of Bangladesh under the country's first sub-sector-wide approach for secondary education to support the curriculum, pedagogy, development of learning materials and assessment reform. A key component of this is the inclusion of skills for the future of work, helping to prepare young people to transition between education and employment. The Scaling Up of Apprenticeship and Transferable Skills programme has a major part to play in this regard.



<sup>10</sup> World Bank, 2019

<sup>11</sup> Just Job Network-UNICEF, 2017

<sup>12</sup> Labor Force Survey, 2016–2017

## 1 Preparing young people for the future of work by equipping them with skills that are in high demand, including digital and technological skills, through the mainstream education system

With the COVID-19 pandemic increasing the relevance of transferable skills, industries in Bangladesh have started to fast-track digital transformation to stay relevant in 'the new normal' and ensure resilience in the event of future outbreaks or disruptions. A focus on transferable and digital skills will enable youth to adapt to the dynamic post-pandemic labour market as industries of all sizes continue to embrace technology.

In light of this, GenU has supported the National Curriculum and Textbook Board to develop a comprehensive competency- and skills-based curriculum that integrates transferable skills into the mainstream education system. Such skills include adaptability; flexibility; digital, coding and technology skills; creativity and innovation; critical thinking; emotional intelligence; and leadership skills. Ten courses have been developed, which will reach more than 29 million students when rolled out. The prolonged school closures delayed the launch of the courses, which had been planned for 2021, but this will now take place in 2022. To support their implementation, a teacher's guide to the courses was printed and distributed to schools by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board in 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the school closures, the training modality was switched to online teacher training, and 200,000 teachers are in the process of being trained.





## 2 Improving and scaling up the Alternative Learning Programme components on apprenticeship and entrepreneurship, in both the formal and informal sectors, including targeting the most disadvantaged and marginalized young people with digital skills and skills for evolving trades

As of September 2021, the Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) is being rolled out through a GenU Bangladesh-led collaboration between BRAC, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). ALP is a proven best practice apprenticeship model for the most marginalized out-of-school young people. It is designed to bring these young people back onto the learning ladder and make connections to employment opportunities, and to enable them to become resilient, productive and active citizens.

The ALP model merges training in trade skills and foundational and transferable skills (digital skills, life skills, financial literacy skills, etc.) with on-the-job competency-based training by a master craftsman through a six-month apprenticeship. All training is standardized and linked to the National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework, and learners can obtain certification and enter pathways to further learning and skilling. Data show that ALP learners obtain jobs within six to seven months of joining the programme and that their income increases significantly over time. The data also show multiple positive socio-economic impacts of this intervention, especially on girls and young women.

In partnership with GenU Foundation Partner Aspire to Innovate (a2i), ALP implementation modalities were piloted through local government

structures and by partnering with local businesses in the informal sector. This was in line with scale-up options proposed in the draft National Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan, developed by GenU Bangladesh partners. A total of 3,100 young people were identified by the partners early in 2021, along with trades, master craftspeople and facilitators, and workplace/training venues for rolling out the training and apprenticeships. Due to the continued lockdowns necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, all activities in the field were postponed until the second quarter of 2022.

Alongside this work, another pilot was launched, this time to address the job placement crisis emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to an increased focus on entrepreneurship. This pilot sought to upskill ALP graduates to cope with the current market challenges and demands and to nurture their entrepreneurial mindset, thus increasing their motivation and opportunities to start their own business. The pilot included the 'new poor' youth group, who had been on track in their education and skills training prior to the pandemic but are now in trouble because of the impacts of COVID-19. The entrepreneurship pilot model was launched and discussed at the annual meeting of the GenU Youth Entrepreneurship Taskforce, chaired by GenU Foundation Partner BRAC and the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Modalities for strengthening the ecosystem for marginalized and vulnerable young entrepreneurs, especially young women, were also explored and alliances built between the GenU Bangladesh Steering Committee and Taskforce members, including the Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation and Small and Medium Enterprise Foundation.

Data and evidence generation plans were developed to collect data on the pilot and to make recommendations for a scale-up strategy following its completion. The findings will be used in the second quarter of 2022 to develop policy advice and a business case for potential private sector support, with the aim of building a strengthened apprenticeship system in Bangladesh, with a specific focus on young people not in education, employment or training.







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# THE NIGER

The Niger is Africa's youngest country, with the median age of the total population just 15.2 years. The country's adolescent and youth population (aged 10–24 years) numbers nearly 9 million.<sup>13</sup> Rapid population growth has created a high demand for public investments in education and health. For years, the country has ranked last in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index and, in a context of slow economic development, its young people are missing out on opportunities to reach their full potential.

Over 60 per cent of children in the Niger are out of school and less than 10 per cent of children reach the end of primary education proficient in literacy and numeracy. The high dropout rate combined with high youth unemployment demonstrates that the existing curriculum responds neither to the needs of young people nor the labour market. Further, data suggest that 69 per cent of youth aged 15–24 years are not in education, employment or training – among girls and young women only, the proportion increases to 78 per cent. Currently, less than 5 per cent of schools are connected to the internet, keeping digital skills acquisition out of the reach of most young people in the Niger.

In an effort to improve the situation for the Niger's young people, GenU Niger was established in 2020. Working with national government counterparts, partners (including in the private sector) and youth-led organizations, GenU aims to give the young people of the Niger a voice and the competencies and skills they need to become productive and engaged members of society. This has become even more important since 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic – combined with heightened conflicts triggered by a highly disputed election process – has exacerbated existing inequalities in education, skills and access to the labour market.

The Connect My School programme in the Niger aimed to bring tablet computer-based learning to 3,600 secondary school-age young people in its initial phase. Given the large number of out-of-school children in the Niger, the initiative has a particular focus on personal empowerment and

civic participation (including by digital means) to enable adolescents, especially girls, to have their voices heard on issues that affect them and their communities. The programme aims to equip classrooms and community centres with tablet computers (and internet connectivity, with the support of the Giga project), digitize the curriculum, train teachers and, ultimately, enable young people to continue their education and improve their literacy, numeracy and digital skills. The initial programme design was based on a study led by UNICEF on 'Nigerien Youth Aspirations'. This study provided important insights into young people's demand for and expectations of education and also informed the governance structure of GenU Niger, including how to create an enabling environment for youth engagement and ensure that interventions are designed to meet the distinct needs and constraints of adolescent girls.

Thus far, GenU Niger has brought tablet-based learning to 6,949 students (including 3,344 girls), equipping them with skills and competencies and exceeding the planned target. This project allowed young people to improve learning while also bridging the technology gap in remote areas. Following discussions with the Ministries in charge of education, and ANSI, a national vendor was identified to pre-load an application on the tablets that offers courses in core disciplines of the national curriculum and quizzes in the form of multiple-choice questions.

The program also implemented a pilot project involving youth over 15 years old in 10 schools in five regions of Niger, whereby each school was provided with tablets, projectors, and solar panels. The tablets included content validated by the Nigerien Ministry of Education. After the 10-week-pilot phase, students demonstrated a 16% gain in their scores, with young women scoring higher than their male peers. While many students in Niger drop out during the school year, particularly in the early years of secondary, those attending the tablet-based classes demonstrated steady attendance. Many schools also showed great initiative, using tablets for extracurricular activities such as language learning clubs.

<sup>13</sup> World Bank, 2019.



Due to the low rate of internet connectivity among schools in the Niger, Connect My School has supported elements of the Niger 2.0 Smart Villages project. In December 2021, geolocation data and information on the school infrastructure of 3,315 schools (1,326 in the Niamey region and 1,989 in the Tillabéri region) were collected and have since been maintained in a real-time map of school connectivity. Integration of these data within the real-time map is a critical first step towards connecting every school to the internet and providing the Niger's adolescents and youth with access to learning opportunities and skills development.

U-Report was launched in the Niger in 2021. The youth-led platform was adapted by youth networks in the country to provide the Niger's young people with meaningful opportunities to become empowered and act as agents of change in their communities. Starting with 12 youth, U-Report Niger has engaged 20,000 youth nationally through Short Message Service (SMS) and mobilized more than 100 young volunteers for U-Action by the end of 2021. U-Report Niger enables youth to strengthen their skills and become agents of change; encourages the responsible use of digital tools by young people and creates synergetic actions with other youth networks, while supporting their engagement in civic action.

On the occasion of World Youth Skills Day (15 July), 600 young people in the Niger registered for skills development and on International Youth Day (12 August), 200 of the country's young people registered for Idea Challenge 2021, on human and environmentally friendly food processing systems. The selected five solutions are being supported with mentorship and coaching by GenU Niger, working closely with the country's innovation hubs and the Ministry of Youth and Sports Development. Further, nearly 500 young people (34 per cent female) across the country's eight regions were trained on leadership, entrepreneurship, life and soft skills under GenU Niger and U-Report, in collaboration with the Junior Chamber International of Niger. These capacity-building sessions also provided an opportunity to create a social space for young people to meet and reflect on their aspirations and role in shaping the future of the country.

Overall, the programme activities implemented in the Niger in 2021 reached 59,182 young people. Collectively, the activities engaged 3,471 young people in community-based activities around education and skilling.









# CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

Even amidst the continued unpredictability and disruption of the COVID-19 crisis, GenU programmes in Kenya, Bangladesh and the Niger are leveraging public-private-youth partnership to improve young people's lives through skills development, employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities. Important progress has been achieved in embedding twenty-first century skills, apprenticeship and mentorship opportunities in mainstream education systems, while also supporting out-of-school youth to gain transferable skills relevant for local labour markets. Young people are being meaningfully engaged in programme design through extensive local youth networks, community-based youth centers and through platforms such as U-Report.

In Kenya, focus in 2022 will be on bringing the CSL and mentorship programme to more counties through the development of curriculum support materials, community engagement guidelines and assessment tools, and training of teachers and government partners in CSL implementation. In addition, Yoma will be further scaled up, and a continuum of youth-driven learning and skilling opportunities contextualized to the Kenyan youth ecosystem will be rolled out. The virtual platform will also provide access to mentorship, innovation challenges and training opportunities for youth. Support for and scaling of social innovations and adolescents' and young people's civic engagement will continue on Yunitok through information sharing, polls and community activities.

Building on progress in Bangladesh, young people, especially young women and those not in education, employment or training (NEET) in climate vulnerable areas of the country, will be

provided with entrepreneurship and business development training to set up their own enterprises, with a focus on climate-smart and digital entrepreneurship. In addition, the Young People's Action Team in Bangladesh, trainers and mentors from public and private sectors and youth-led organizations will co-facilitate and support the rollout of a social innovation challenge, with a focus on climate-related solutions, across all eight divisions of the country.

In the Niger, focus will be on expanding skilling and employment opportunities for young people, especially young women, through the Passport to Earning programme, which is being supported at the global level by Microsoft, Accenture and Dubai Cares, and will be adapted for the Niger context. It will provide young people aged 15-24 with free, world-class and job relevant skills training, and position them for job opportunities. Built on Microsoft's Community Training platform, it will offer online digitized curricula curated at the national level, with content provided by public and private sector partners, and will incorporate blended approaches of online and low-no-tech solutions to ensure reach to young people without connectivity.

At the global level, the Generation Unlimited Strategy 2022–2025 will direct continued efforts to skill and connect the world's 1.8 billion young people to opportunity. There will be a sharpened focus on achieving impact for the most disadvantaged, especially young women. Expanding public-private-youth partnerships to fund and deliver scalable solutions for young people across the globe will be central to delivering this impact, with support from the GenU Trust Fund.

# Appendix 1

## Articles





# BANGLADESH

With support from The Government of the Netherlands, Generation Unlimited is providing alternative skills acquisition pathways to the most disadvantaged out-of-school adolescents

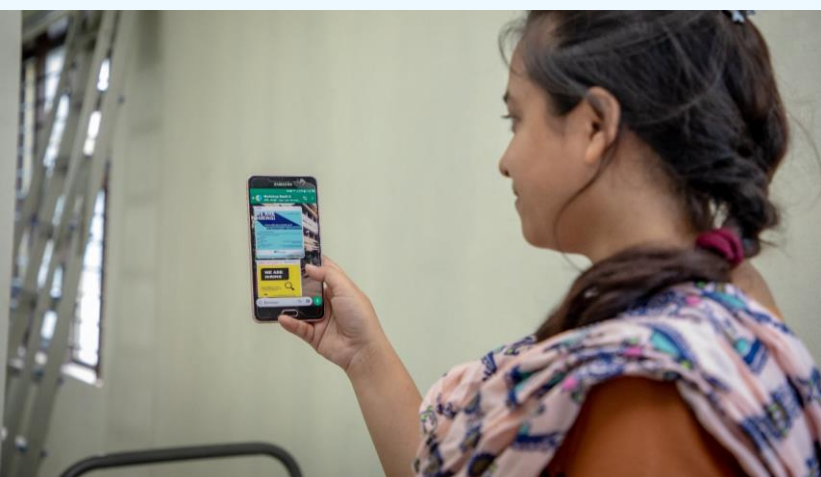
Bangladesh is home to one of the biggest and youngest working age populations in the world. Every year, more than 2 million young people enter the workforce. However, over 85 percent of youth lack the essential education or skills for the labour market, which leads to high unemployment and underemployment rates. Approximately 32 percent of the total youth population, the majority of which are young women, are not involved in education, employment and training (NEET).

Generation Unlimited (GenU) is a global Public-Private-Youth partnership with a mission to skill and connect the world's youth to employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities. To address the challenges faced by youth in Bangladesh and meet related SDG targets by 2030, GenU Bangladesh was launched in February 2019 with an ambitious goal of providing 17 million skilling, employment, entrepreneurship and engagement opportunities for youth. The national-level Steering Committee is chaired by the former Principal Secretary of the

Prime Minister and engages business leaders, major chambers of commerce and industry associations, representing some 4,000 businesses across the country, as well as multilateral and bilateral development partners, civil society, and youth organization representatives.

Under the GenU partnership, the Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) is being strengthened and scaled up with BRAC, UNICEF, ILO, a2i and private sector partners. The ALP is a proven best-practice apprenticeship model that provides training opportunities for the most marginalised young people, especially adolescent girls who are out of school and vulnerable to child marriage, and helps bring them back to the learning ladder and obtain the right skills for decent employment. The ALP model merges trade skills and foundational and transferable skills (for example, digital skills, life skills, and financial literacy skills), with on-the-job competency-based training through a six-month apprenticeship. Data shows that learners often obtain jobs within 6-7 months after they join the programme and with time, their income increases significantly. The impact is especially significant for girls and young women.

In 2021, the Alternative Learning Program (ALP) was enhanced in line with the draft National Apprenticeship Strategy and Action Plan developed with support from GenU. The apprenticeship and entrepreneurship components have been improved to target new and emerging sectors and trades with even stronger focus on high-demand transferable skills.



**"Skilling marginalized youth for the current and future labour market in Bangladesh"**





Courses have been digitized to minimize duration and face-to-face interaction, providing more opportunity to personalize learning and enable more flexibility for the most marginalized young people so that they can manage their learning time and shorten the time needed to gain skills and enter the job market.

Entrepreneurship training is now included to promote self-employment, which in the long run, can create new job opportunities. All training is standardized and linked to the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework, and learners can obtain certification and enter pathways for further learning and skilling. In addition, a career hub has been established to support young people on the pathway to finding jobs that interest them in the rapidly changing job market.

In 2021, the new and improved ALP began implementation through government, private sector and civil society organizations, targeting 3100 young people (50 percent girls) in 40 sub-districts, and data will be collected – including perspectives of young people - to inform further scale-up.

*"Families don't let the girls learn how to work. If I learn, other families might say, 'A girl from this family is learning how to work. What's wrong if my daughter learns it too?' That's why I am learning this trade. Other girls may see me as an example and join work. If I have a shop, other girls might come visit. They might say, 'There is a girl in this shop. Let's go see what she does.' If someone comes, I will teach them the skills."*  
*Dipali, an Apprentice in Shunamganj district, 2021.*

Moving forward, the entrepreneurship component of the ALP will be further enhanced to skill young people for the green and blue economies, including the agri-sector/AgriTech, FinTech, EdTech and ICT-based services and e-commerce.

By equipping young people, especially those most marginalized, with skills that match both their own aspirations and labour market needs, the ALP is making an important contribution to implementation of The Netherlands' Youth at Heart Strategy, and to the future of Bangladesh.







# NIGER

With support from the Government of the Netherlands, Generation Unlimited is advancing skills development for marginalised youth in Niger.

Globally, 29 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24 worldwide – around 346 million – are not online. Young people in Africa are the least connected. Around 60 per cent of the population aged 15-24 in Africa are not online, compared with 4 per cent of those in Europe.

Niger is Africa's youngest country and has been ranked last in UNDP's Human Development Index for years, and young people are missing out on opportunities to develop their full potential. The COVID-19 pandemic – combined with a new scale of conflicts triggered by a highly disputed election process - exacerbated existing inequities in education, skills and access to the labour market.

Generation Unlimited is a global Public-Private-Youth partnership with a mission to skill and connect the world's youth to employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities. To address the challenges for youth in Niger and meet related SDG targets by

2030, UNICEF Niger joined the Generation Unlimited (GenU) movement, working with national counterparts, the private sector and youth-led organizations, to give young Nigeriens a voice, competencies and skills they need for positive changes in their lives, their communities and country. This will contribute to a broader regional initiative, GenU Sahel, which was launched by the President of Niger and other leaders in November 2021, and aims to reach 100 million young people with skilling, employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities across the Sahel by 2030 through Public-Private-Youth Partnerships.

Under Generation Unlimited, the Connect My School programme in Niger is bringing tablet-based learning to secondary school aged young people, equipping young people with skills and competencies, while also bridging the technology gap in remote areas.

*"Young people can draw the smile on the faces of present generations and those of the future. We have an ability to turn threats into opportunities because for us where there is a problem there is necessarily a solution."*

Aichatou Issa Hama



**"Connect My School programme helping Niger youth obtain skills for success"**

Connect My school started as a pilot in ten schools, and demonstrated increases in marks, especially for girls, and improvements in attendance. The Ministries of Primary and Secondary Education were keen to roll-out the project further, given the impact of COVID-19 and insecurity on school closures and the demand for digital learning from both schools and communities. With funding from The Netherlands through the Generation Unlimited Trust Fund, the innovative initiative was expanded to nine lower secondary schools and youth centers to reach young people who are in school, as well as out-of-school youth with the support of volunteer teachers in partnership with the Ministry of Youth. The National Agency for Information Society (ANSI) agreed to host the project and co-chair GenU Niger's Steering Committee together with UNICEF and private sector representatives, including Mobile Network Operators, for greater alignment and coordination of partners' efforts.

So far, more than 6,949 (3,344) have been reached in school settings and 4,351 children have been identified (2,263 girls) for tablet-based learning through Alternative Learning Centers. Furthermore, a one-week summer 'learning camp' was organized in partnership with the Scouts movement and the Ministry of Youth which brought together over 400 youth (50% girls) from all eight regions as well as Scout representatives from nine neighbouring countries. 498 young people were trained in leadership and entrepreneurship, life and soft

skills leveraging U-Report and in collaboration with the Junior Chamber International of Niger (JCI) in the eight regions of Niger. These capacity building sessions were also an opportunity to create a social space to meet and reflect about their aspirations and role in shaping the future of the country. Particular focus is being placed on empowering girls by addressing perceptions that perpetuate discrimination, including by positively engaging boys and men.

The Ministry of Education and ANSI, with support from UNICEF, have developed a methodology to collect baseline data for the project to assess students on a core set of competencies in French, Math and life skills and ensure these are aligned with international standards, and technical specifications of the tablets and equipment for the Niger context were improved based on new feedback from teachers and young people. The Scouts are supporting young people's engagement and sustained participation in the project for both those who are in school and out of school – especially for girls. An agreement has also been reached with Airtel to amplify youth voices through U-Report. Today, there are over 8,000 U-Reporters on the platform, engaging on issues such as girls' education and entrepreneurship. Across the country, offline and online through SMS, telegram, and Twitter, many of these young people have voiced their concerns on issues and challenges they face, coming together to build a positive movement for change.



I hope to see young leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, who have no limits and no fear of taking initiatives. I hope to see young Nigeriens employed and/or employable with all the necessary skills required by employers. A youth aware that the future, and the future of the country depends on its actions of the present

- **Nafissatou Souley**, 22







The programme also complements the Smart Villages Project and Giga in Niger, which are implemented as part of the GenU partnership and aim to digitally connect all of Niger's 15,000 administrative villages to one another and to digital services. Moving forward, the government and partners are establishing Community Centres for Digitalization, which will enable a more diverse and larger community of youth to be reached, including those who are out-of-school. To date, two community centers in Niamey and Diffa have been set up by ANSI to create a place for learning and acquiring knowledge, access to information and co-creation around digital technology. This approach will build on the investments already made by UNICEF in Vocational Training Centers.



The Connect my School project in Niger is contributing to implementation of The Netherlands' Youth at Heart Strategy and is an important investment in transforming education and skilling in Niger, especially for the most marginalized young people.

**Training session of 40 young Nigeriens from all regions of Niger in soft skills and Dialogue session with the Dutch Embassy representatives**





# KENYA

## Enabling creativity as a mindset and civically engaging young people through the African Youth Marketplace (YOMA)

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In Kenya, fifteen percent of youth aged 15-35 years are not in education, employment, and training (NEET), with young women more affected due to gender specific constraints. Unemployment and underemployment are highest in the country among this age group. Youth in Kenya often struggle with the transition from learning to work, due to a mismatch between their skills and labour market needs and limited work experience.

Generation Unlimited is a global Public-Private-Youth partnership with a mission to skill and connect the world's youth to employment, entrepreneurship and social impact opportunities. To address the challenges faced by youth in Kenya and meet related SDG targets by 2030, GenU Kenya was launched in 2019 by President Uhuru Kenyatta who is a global GenU Leader. Under his leadership and through public-private-youth partnerships, GenU is working to advance skills development, entrepreneurship and employment opportunities for 30 million young people (including 15 million young women) by 2030.

A key GenU initiative in the country is Yoma, a digital youth (Yo) marketplace (ma), enabling youth to build and transform their futures by actively engaging in social impact tasks linked to the SDGs, improve their skills, build their profiles and obtain employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. At the same time, Yoma will offer the opportunity for organizations (non-profit organizations, corporate actors, academic institutions, and more) to get in touch with youth to provide their support and services and tap the potential of young people. As youth engage in the opportunities offered by Yoma, the skills they acquire through completion of tasks and learning is recorded on a verifiable digital CV with trusted credentials using Blockchain technology. Yoma is being further contextualized so that young people's efforts are rewarded and incentivized with digital currency which can be spent in the Yoma marketplace to purchase services and goods from local vendors to further boost their career development.

Yoma was conceptualized during a human centered design process with youth and is the direct result of their feedback to place youth at the center of the platform (not organizations) and surround them with opportunities.



**“Online hub helps youth in Kenya boost their employability”**



Yoma brings together the Kenyan Government, UNICEF NGOs, private sector partners, foundations, education providers, social impact investors and, very importantly: young people themselves. In addition, Yunitok (Youth Unite & Talk!) – the Kenyan version of U-Report, a free social monitoring tool that amplifies young people's voices in policy and program development and improves civic engagement – was recently launched and is already engaging over 76,000 young people. Under GenU, it will also be scaled up and leveraged as a key tool to engage additional young people on Yoma.

*"Through the YOMA platform, I learnt about business planning and financial management. This has helped boost and strengthen my business by knowing how to communicate, target and sell to my customers translating to increased profits and knowing and addressing my customer needs." Benezer Mwangi*

As a result of this Private-Public-Youth-Partnership, 200,000 youth in Kenya will benefit with the generous contribution from the Government of the Netherlands to the GenU Trust Fund, which is also helping to advance the implementation of the Netherlands' Youth at Heart Strategy in Kenya.



**Young people enrolled in Yoma and Yunitok engaging in social impact tasks**



Our Time.  
Our Turn.  
Our Future.



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