

Generation Unlimited Trust Fund

2023

Consolidated Report





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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, and they face an unprecedented number of challenges to their wellbeing. 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. A staggering 60% of young people are projected to lack essential skills by 2030. The long-term impacts of this skills and employment crisis threaten to ripple through our economies, communities, and societies, deepening inequality and locking young people out of the opportunities they need to build a better life. At the same time, the twin digital and green transitions present significant opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship, and for harnessing young people's creativity and passion to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation. While young people are 25% of the world's population, they are 100% of its future and their ambition, passion & ingenuity will fuel solutions to the world's biggest problems.

Generation Unlimited (GenU) – the world's first global Public-Private-Youth partnership - was created to ensure young people, especially young women have skills, tools and resources to have sustainable livelihoods and contribute to circular economies. 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 a Public-Private-Youth partnership.

Thanks to the generous support of the Government of the Netherlands and Foundation Botnar, programmes are being implemented in Kenya and Niger with public, private and youth partners to teach twenty-first century skills while also supporting young green entrepreneurs and agripreneurs in their quest to help their communities and our world mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The programmes supported by the MPTF achieve targets and impact for young people on various levels of the results hierarchy including skilling/ re-skilling and upskilling young people, establishing learning to earning pathways, ensuring livelihood outcomes including employment and entrepreneurship, youth empowerment as well as indirect impact within communities of these young people impacted.

Across all programmes approx. 59,000 youths receive training in various fields, including digital skills, agribusiness, and entrepreneurial activities. For example, Yoma supports 29,417 Youths to Gain digital skills through the Yoma digital livelihood program in Africa or 10,000 young people are trained in food systems through the EKYAN program in Kenya. More than 1.5 million youth are being reached with vital information, engagement opportunities, and access to skill development resources. For example, 766,080 Girls receive vital information through HPV vaccine rollout facilitated by Yoma in Nigeria. Additionally, young people are actively engaged in various activities, including online challenges, environmental programs, and work experience opportunities. For example, 2,580 Youths Participated in online challenges through Yoma. Establishing livelihoods is another key component of the BeGreen and EKYAN programmes. For example, in KENYA EKYAN supports at least 4,000 youth to incubate their business and establish a livelihood as agripreneur. In terms of indirect

impact, the 365 young green entrepreneurs that will be supported through BeGreen, will create at least 2,000 jobs and generate \$6.8 million revenue.

In Kenya the EKYAN programme (Engaging Kenyan Youth in Agriculture & Nutrition) aims to provide young people, with a particular focus on young women, with skills for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in agribusiness, while building regenerative agriculture models that promote circular economies in predominantly rural areas. Leveraging schools and digital infrastructure, the programme aims to improve the perception and engagement of young people in agriculture and contribute towards improving economic livelihoods, food systems and nutritional status. The pilot will train more than 10,000 young people on food systems and will support more than 4,000 youth agripreneurs to incubate businesses and earn a decent livelihood. Through these activities more than 50,000 farmers will be supported to improve their economic livelihoods in a sustainable and climate-smart manner. A comprehensive assessment process with close engagement of the Kenyan county government was carried out in order to select school centers of excellence and satellite schools which will be leveraged for demo plots and training of farmers and young people which will be led by youth agripreneurs.

Scouting of youth agripreneurs has taken place and selected agripreneurs will be provided with digital tools and commence training and mentorship in April 2024. Additionally, a user discovery process was carried out in order to engage communities and test potential business models in the agripreneurship space in preparation of bootcamps for young people not in employment, education, or training (NEET) who will be trained through bootcamps on select locally relevant agri-business models and launch agriculture-focused and/or related businesses, such as local honey production, production of organic fertilizers and pesticides, tree nurseries, selling of local vegetables, and more. Alongside an evidence-based skills curriculum, the bootcamps targeting primarily out of school young women will facilitate interactive hands-on learning coupled with mentorship from a trained youth mentor. Youth mentors were recruited and onboarded and the first six weeks bootcamp will commence in quarter two in 2024. This innovative pilot programme is made possible through partnership with the governments of Kenya and the Netherlands as well as a private sector company. It was co-created with UNICEF Kenya Country Office the implementing partners Kuza and Educate!, Generation Unlimited, and young people.

In Niger, with funding received in Q4 2022, partnerships and initial planning activities were initiated to develop and roll out

Passport to Earning (P2E). P2E is a GenU global programme, catalyzed by like-minded partners, that provides young people aged 15-24 with free, world-class and job relevant skills training, and positions them for job opportunities. Built on Microsoft's Community Training platform, it offers online digitized curricula curated at the national level, with content provided by public and private sector partners. While partnerships with Government and action plans were developed, the Coup d'etat and instability which ensued hampered implementation. Assessments conducted by the Country Office and partners clearly identifying the continued need for the programme, efforts to identify new partners and implementation plan have been made. Pending a final formal no-cost extension approval, the P2E programme still aims to establish the platform in Niger, certify 3,000 young people, connect at least 400 young people to internship opportunities and, as a demand creation strategy, provide 20,000 young people with career counselling sessions. This is part of a wider continuing skilling to employment effort in Niger which also has support from partners including Canada, Denmark and Germany.

Funding was also used for BeGreen, a green entrepreneurship pilot focused on tackling the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion programme implemented in collaboration with the Tony Elumelu Foundation. Building

on successful initiatives like GenU's imaGen Ventures and Yoma, and the Tony Elumelu Foundation's entrepreneurship programme, BeGreen empowers green entrepreneurs through training, seed funding, mentorship, access to networks and financing. The BeGreen waste management pilot in Kenya, is focused on the problems of waste accumulation and environmental pollution. The Netherlands is supporting additional BeGreen pilots in Nigeria, South Africa, and Senegal. The Tony Elumelu Foundation is also funding additional green entrepreneurs in Nigeria. BeGreen was launched on International Youth Day 2023 (12 August) and a multi-faceted application drive including online and offline activations (particularly targeting also most marginalized young people) commenced in August 2023. Out of the 7,000 applications received across all countries, about 4,000 young aspiring entrepreneurs completed the business training which was the first part of the comprehensive BeGreen training programme and concluded in February 2024. The second part, the in-depth gender-responsive green/waste management training takes place in quarter two of 2024. Training participants will also submit a green business plan which- will be the basis for shortlisting for participation in pitching events scheduled for June/July 2024. Across the four countries, 485 aspiring green entrepreneurs (120 waste entrepreneurs in Kenya) and thereof at least 50% will receive \$5,000 in seed funding. The provision of more than \$2.4 million in seed funding aims

to support entrepreneurs in generating \$6.8 million revenue and creating at least 2,000 jobs within two years. The pilots in the four countries will generate valuable insights that will inform the scaling of the initiative.

Finally, Yoma continued to focus on empowering youth, especially women, aged 16-24 globally by offering social impact tasks and learning-to-earning opportunities, building verifiable digital CVs and providing platform currency rewards. Operating in six African nations since late 2022, alongside Trinidad & Tobago and the Philippines, it has enabled 465,980 individuals to access learning, impact, job and entrepreneurial opportunities. Over 10 providers like Atingi and Accenture offer 149 learning or impact opportunities, resulting in 13,000 certificates enhancing employability. Three pathways have been designed: a digital livelihood programme in Africa, connecting youth globally through ambassadors, and promoting skills for the green economy. In Africa, 29,417 youths have gained digital skills. Globally, 2,580 youths collaborated through online challenges, and in South Africa and Nigeria, Green Yoma trains youths in environmental skills like water quality monitoring. Yoma's operational team, incubated under RLabs since March 2023, has collaborated with Ernst & Young and the University of St. Gallen for governance and sustainability.

Purpose

Generation Unlimited/ Background





Nearly 90 per cent of them are living in developing countries, where they make up a large proportion of the population. One in four young people have NEET status, with young women twice as likely as young men to be in NEET, reversing 15 years of progress due to the global pandemic. 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 such as artificial intelligence is making many jobs vulnerable to automation, and a large portion of job creation is driven by entrepreneurs and small businesses.

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 89 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.



Public-Private-Youth Partnership (PPYP)

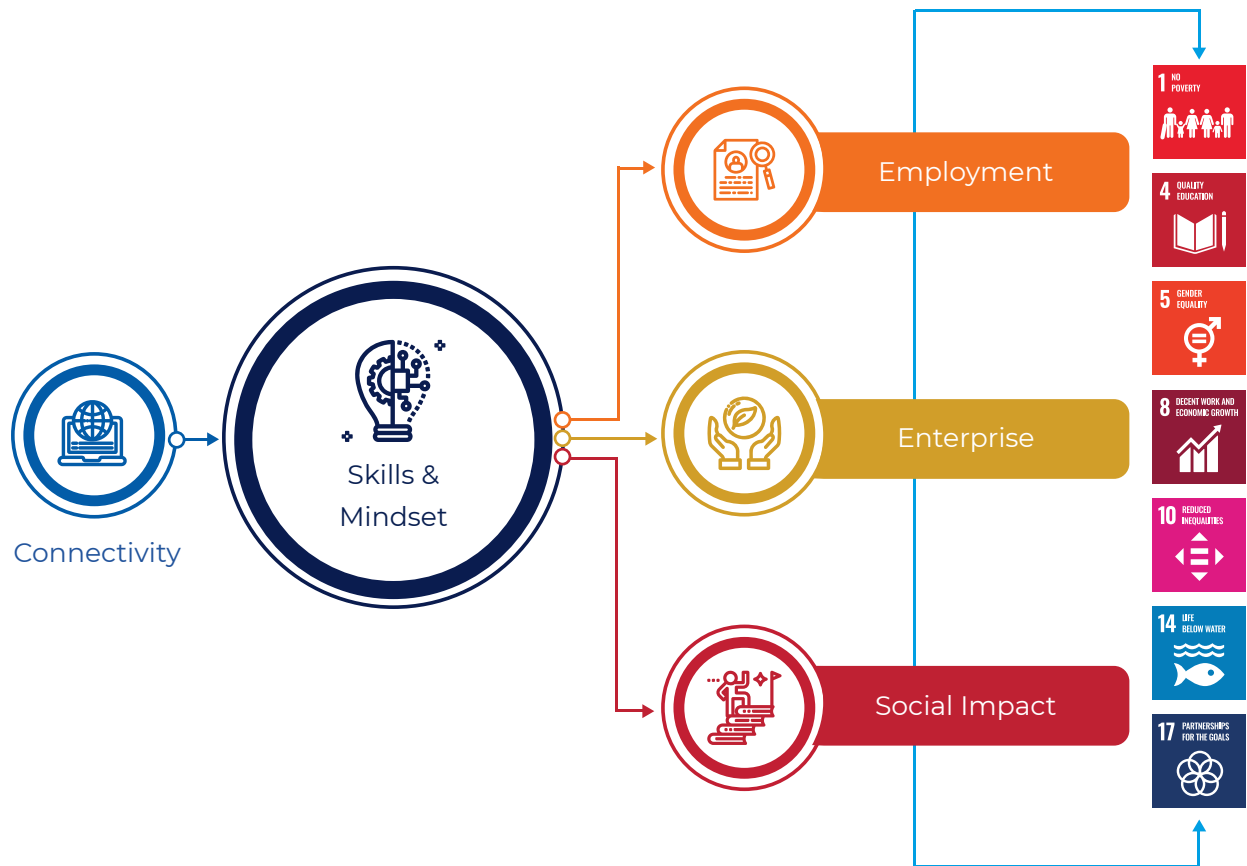
GenU skills young people and connects them to opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, and social impact, contributing towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To prepare young people for the world of work and active citizenship, GenU focuses on equipping young people with the skills and mindsets required for success and well-being, and connecting them to employment, entrepreneurship, and social impact opportunities, including through career guidance, 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.

In line with the Generation Unlimited Strategy 2022–2025, programmes focus on the most disadvantaged young people, especially 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.

GenU Mission:

Skill & connect the world's 1.8 billion youth to opportunity



Priorities



Digital



Green



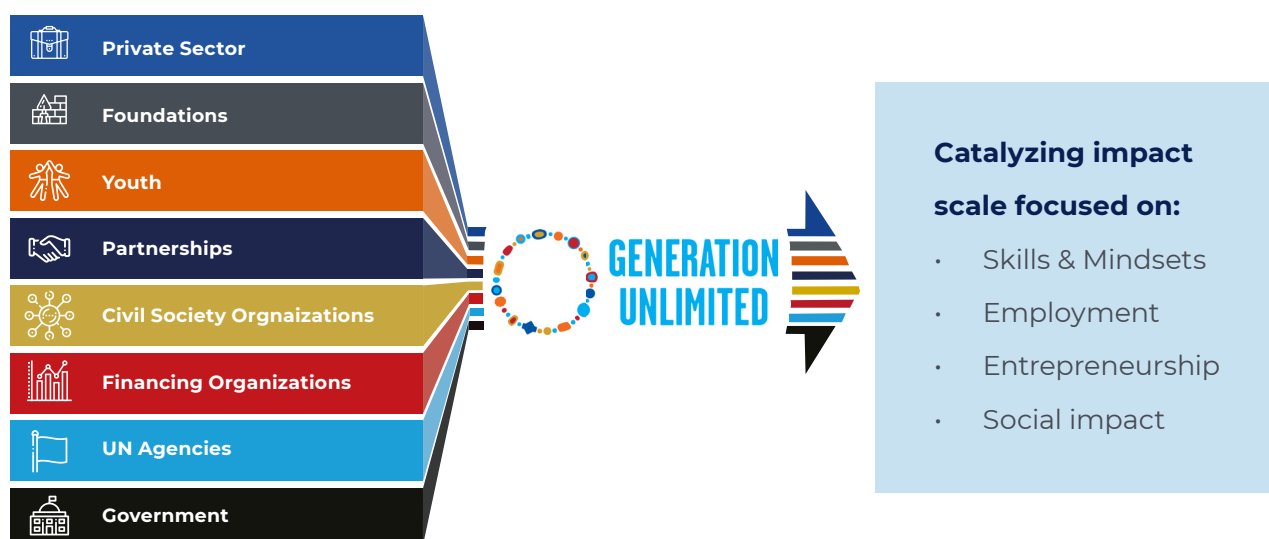
Girls

A unique value of the Generation Unlimited partnership is its ability to bring public and private sector organizations together, with young people, to develop and scale up programmes that equip young people with

market-relevant skills and connect them to opportunities. GenU does this at both global and country levels, leveraging UNICEF's extensive footprint and influence in countries.

Delivering impact through Private-Public-Youth Partnership:

Identifying co-creating and scaling up programs via PPYP consortiums that combine partners' unique capabilities, assets and reach.



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Youth Powered Impact

Young people are engaged as equal partners in GenU through the dynamic Young People's Action Team. More than 70 youth leaders and a 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; and,
- 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.



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Generation Unlimited Trust Fund



The GenU 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 catalyzes in-country resources to help take programmes to scale.

The United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF) 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 GenU Board comprises leaders from the United Nations, businesses, foundations, and civil society organizations. It also includes two youth representatives. Board duties include providing strategic direction, reviewing progress against priorities and assessing impact, monitoring the financial health of GenU and approving Trust Fund allocations.

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 percent of this sum earmarked for programmes in Kenya and Niger. In addition, in 2023, Fondation Botnar contributed \$2,822,982 to the GenU Trust Fund for Yoma (as part of a broader \$5.3M two-year commitment) to improve the relational wellbeing of youth through the establishment of strategic and contextualized learning to earning pathways for youth to succeed, grow and thrive.

In line with GenU's Strategy (2022-2025), funding has been used to scale up skills development and youth entrepreneurship and agripreneurship in Kenya and Niger, including through digital means. Support from the Trust Fund was also used by the Yoma initiative to begin the development of specific thematic pathways for youth (digital, green), and technology upgrades and research (AI matching algorithm, a data-lite solution, blockchain, and crowdsourcing) with a hypothesis that youth can effectively collaborate to design community initiatives leading to local social and environmental progress. What follows is an outline of progress and results from 1 January to 31 December 2023, in line with the GenU Trust Fund reporting cycle.

Kenya (EKYAN)

PROGRESS REPORT / KENYA

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**Kenya's
population
has increased
significantly
(growing from
11 million in 1970
to 39.5 million
in 2011) and, at
the current rate
of growth, it will
be reaching 81
million by 2039.¹**

¹ <https://www.fao.org/kenya/fao-in-kenya/kenya-at-a-glance/en/>

According to the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census, 35.7 million Kenyans (75.1 percent) are under 35 years old. Given this, the development of skills for employment, entrepreneurship, and social impact are critical. Although the overall unemployment in Kenya is at 12.7 percent, Youth (15–34 years old), who form 35 percent of the Kenyan population, have the highest unemployment rate of 67 percent. Over one million young people enter the labor market annually without the necessary skills, some having either dropped out of school or completed school and not enrolled in any college (Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) 2022).

60-70% of youth in the East African community are unable to attend secondary school due to financial hardship and barriers to access. Of this figure only 1 out of 20 rural girls complete secondary school. This has been further exacerbated by the pandemic, which has deepened inequalities and limited employment opportunities experienced by young people—especially young women and girls. In Kenya alone, women make up between 42% and 65% of the agricultural labor force (World Bank, 2014), in addition to their traditional domestic responsibilities.

On 23rd September 2022, during President William Ruto's inauguration speech, he highlighted the challenge of 800,000 youth joining the workforce annually with over 600,000 unable to find work. With the growing jobless economy and bulging youth

population, the government is advocating for the 'bottom-up economic transformation agenda' (BETA). BETA seeks to promote investments and financial instruments to the numerous unemployed young small-scale traders, farmers, fishermen, informal sector workers and entrepreneurs and financially empower them.

Agriculture is the backbone of the Kenyan economy contributing to approximately 33% of Kenya GDP and another 27% of GDP indirectly through linkages with other sectors. The sector accounts for 65% of export earnings, and provides livelihood (employment, income, and food security needs) for more than 80% of the Kenyan population. Agricultural production is considered the main source of money and security for most households in Kenya, and arable land is highly valued and sought after.

The agriculture sector offers excellent opportunities to employ young people and to ensure food security, while combatting climate change. This is especially important at a time when food systems have been heavily disrupted first by Covid and then by the Ukraine war, resulting in severe repercussions on the prices of food and fertilizers, rising inflations and increasing food insecurity. However, the sector remains largely unattractive to youth. Young people have a negative perception about agriculture, as they associate it to subsistence farming, high risk and low income, hence they



©Brian Otieno/Learning During Covid-19/Kenya Stories

cannot see it as a profitable business nor as a career option² Moreover, the education system does not prepare youth with the appropriate knowledge and skills needed to take advantage of job opportunities in agribusiness.

To make the agribusiness sector more economically viable and attractive, particularly for female out of school youth, UNICEF's Generation Unlimited has come together with various private sector and government partners to implement the Engaging Kenyan Youth in Agriculture and Nutrition (EKYAN) programme. Moreover, the World Bank has provided support for the mapping of farmers which is leveraged by the EKYAN programme and has expressed its desire to collaborate further on this initiative.

EKYAN is a pilot programme co-created with the UNICEF Kenya Country Office, implementing partners Kuza and Educate!, and young people. EKYAN aims to provide young people, especially young women, with

the skills, tools and resources for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in agribusiness. The programme is built around the principles of regenerative agriculture models that promote circular economies in predominantly rural areas. Leveraging schools as demo centres and low-tech digital infrastructure, the programme is changing the lives of young people in agriculture, getting them to participate and contribute towards improving economic livelihoods, food systems and nutritional status in the country. The pilot, supported by various governments and a private sector company, will train more than 10,000 young people on effective food systems, through regenerative agriculture methods that impact circular economies. Over 4,800 youth agripreneurs will be provided with the skills and resources to incubate businesses and earn a decent livelihood across the various agriculture value chains. These activities will support more than 50,000 farmers to improve their economic livelihoods.

² idem



©Brian Otieno/Learning During Covid-19/Kenya Stories

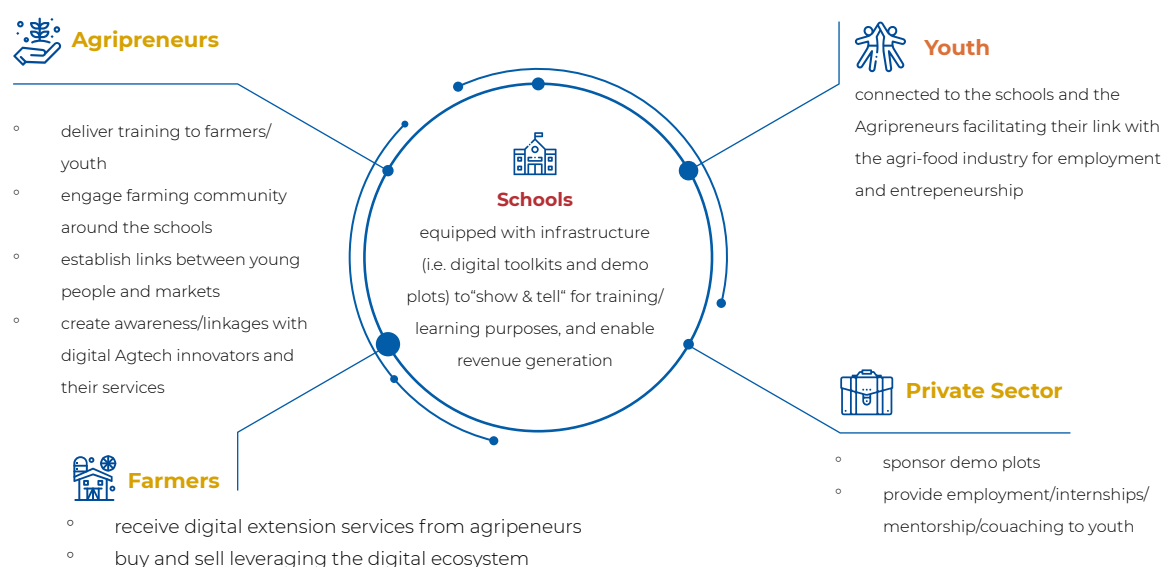
As a mentor to our aspiring agripreneurs, I'm inspired by the vision of the EKYAN program leaders. It's more than just a project; it's a guiding philosophy for our youth's future. By imparting agricultural knowledge to our youth, we're laying the foundation for long-term prosperity. Education is crucial for our advancement, and when schools excel, our entire county benefits. Through EKYAN, we aim to empower youth and farmers, promoting food security and resilient communities. Our partnering schools are equally enthusiastic about this initiative, recognizing its potential to nourish the bodies and minds of young people. This project embodies hope for our future, and as mentors, we're dedicated to supporting our agripreneurs on their journey toward growth and sustainability.

- Kelfin Mwambia, County Coordinator & Mentor.

The EKYAN programme works with the platform and business model of KUZA Biashara as well as Educate!. The social enterprise KUZA Biashara has created digital content on regenerative agriculture and agribusiness management which is made available to agripreneurs on the digital micro-learning platform (Content includes how to improve yield/quality to drive up income, soft skills, life skills, business skills, financial literacy, entrepreneurship skills, employability skills). This content is the basis for the Skilling of young Agripreneurs over a one-year incubation programme in which young people are provided with knowledge, mentorship, and digital equipment to set up a business and provide services to farmers. This enables farmers to drive up income from improved revenue and reduced costs, and in turn generate demand for increased support services by the agripreneurs (e.g., sales of inputs, soil testing, spraying, mechanization services, quality control, etc.). Moreover, farmers are provided with market linkages

and access to credit to connect off-takers with agripreneurs and farmers, therefore creating a virtuous cycle of growth among all the actors involved.

In addition, EKYAN will establish Centres of Excellence (CoEs) within the community that will be used as a one-stop-shop by youth and farmers to receive training, attend demonstrations by the agripreneurs and the private sector, and be connected to employment, services, and business opportunities. The COEs will be preferably established at schools or in other community locations that will enable the broadest reach possible to young people. While providing training and services, the CoEs will focus on promoting digital literacy as well as knowledge and innovations related to climate smart and regenerative agriculture with the objective of making farmers more resilient, and of enabling youth with knowledge and skills to address the main challenges of modern food systems.



The programme is structured around **3 consistent elements**:



Inspire – to promote a better understanding of the importance and value of agri-food systems for healthy people, healthy planet, and healthy economy, and promote a more positive perception among children and youth about work in agriculture.



Skill – to make sure that young people develop new skills, or upgrade their existing ones, to take advantage of employment and entrepreneurship opportunities that food systems offer. Mentoring, on-the-job, and digital learning will be promoted as means to acquire practical and modern skills to apply in the agribusiness industry.



Connect – to ensure that young people are linked to concrete employment and business opportunities providing income and livelihood, hence a positive outcome that will challenge the current negative perception about work in agriculture.

With Educate!, EKYAN is also working on the integration and scaling of green entrepreneurial skilling for out of school young women through inclusive market-driven bootcamps. Building on evidence Educate! runs multi-week bootcamps hyper-tailored to the needs of young people in rural agricultural settings focusing on economic

growth sectors. The diagram below illustrates the business model for bootcamps that give young women especially in rural areas the entrepreneurial skills, tools, and resources to establish and run micro/cottage businesses in their communities, and also exposing youth to agri-business models, such as agriculture value addition.

Flagship In-School Model

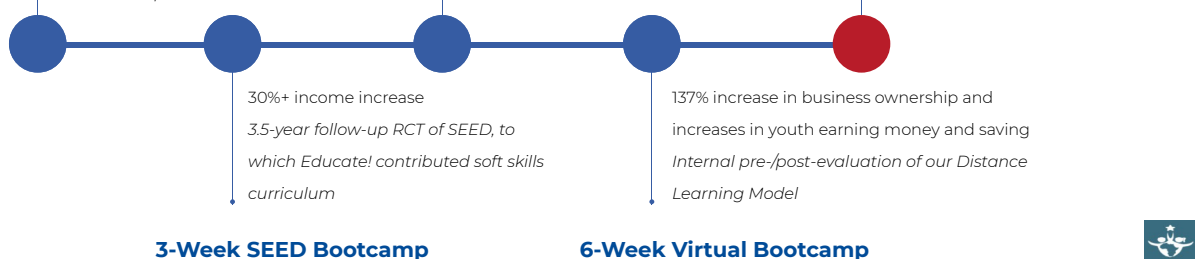
Increased skills, education attainment, and gender equity
External 4 year follow on RCT of the Educate! Experience

3-Week Boda-Boda Pilot

Increased income by 131%
Internal pre-/post-evaluation of our Boda-Boda Bootcamp for Out-of-school Youth

Bootcamps for Out-of-school Youth

A marketplace of alternative to secondary built around strategic growth sectors, groups, or business models



This collaboration will skill young women for employment and entrepreneurship within the informal sector as well as in the regenerative circular agriculture sector, grounded in a gender transformative skills strategy.

The EKYAN model specifically targets impact on rural young women and girls in Kenya, who face challenges securing employment or engaging in entrepreneurship due to gender-based barriers and discrimination. The model employs a gender-responsive approach, embedding gender equity through all stages of the programme implementation. Due to individual and national resource constraints, only half of youth in East Africa are attending

academic secondary school. Girls and young women, in particular, face unique and greater barriers to success. In rural areas of East Africa, as few as 1 in 20 girls are on track to complete secondary school. Young women, especially those who were unable to complete a traditional secondary education, need the tools to improve their livelihoods and drive development in local communities.

The model delivers impactful skill building experiences to young women, many of whom are young mothers, equips them with the entrepreneurial and employability skills to engage and grow within Kenya's economy and local agricultural sectors.

Programme launch

On 11 August 2023, International Youth Day, UNICEF's Generation Unlimited the Government of Kenya, and partners launched the EKYAN programme. "The EKYAN programme will provide training, access to employment opportunities and digital literacy as well as knowledge of climate smart and

regenerative agriculture with the objective of training young agripreneurs to become more resilient farmers," said UN Resident Coordinator to Kenya Stephen Jackson. "It will help equip youth with the specialised knowledge and skills needed to address the challenges of modern food systems."

Engagement with youth agripreneurs

In order to prepare for the selection of youth agripreneurs and their incubation, the Project team employed a comprehensive methodology and actively involved 20 youth agripreneurs from each of Kirinyaga's 20 wards in shaping the EKYAN project. The

process began with targeted outreach, identifying agripreneurs with diverse experiences. The project team facilitated workshops and collaborative sessions, providing a platform for open discussions. Feedback loops and iterative consultations

ensured continuous refinement of project goals, aligning them with local needs. This participatory approach fostered a sense of ownership among the youth. Through surveys and interviews, the project team gathered specific insights on challenges and opportunities. The methodology prioritized inclusivity, ensuring the EKYAN project reflects the collective wisdom and aspirations of the local youth & community.

What young people/ farmers say about the programme:

- *"It's an opportunity to learn and grow with the new agriculture technologies and good practices"*
- *"Association with UNICEF and the local government increases credibility"*
- *"The programme helps to get more customers (farmers) and grow their agri business."*
- *"The programme is a window of hope for this and future generations"*

A call for applications for youth agripreneurs was carried out in March 2024. Greater than 500 applications were received, resulting

in 112 youth agripreneurs being selected through in person interviews in April 2024. Selected agripreneurs will have access to incubation services such as a business and entrepreneurial skills and leadership academy, access to portable digital kits, as well as a digital marketplace. The Leadership Academy is an MBA inspired executive education programme spread over 15 weeks allowing the entrepreneurs to learn at their own pace, practice what they learn (in their day-to-day business) and work with their Dedicated Coaches to refine their goals & plans for running & growing their business. Moreover, they will have personalized access to the digital mentorship platform as well as will receive coaching through bite sized videos carefully curated by the mentors. Young agripreneurs will participate in the Kuza Leadership Academy. The design of the programme supports the entrepreneurs to learn, connect, and grow on their terms and at their own pace in a personalized learning environment with bite-sized mentorship videos and interactive exercises.

Below are some photos of the preparation work with young agripreneurs:



Programme team interacting with an Agripreneur, Kirinyaga County at her Farm



Programme team interacting with young Agripreneur at his Agrovet in Kirinyaga County



A young boy with Special Needs explaining Regenerative Agriculture practices



Program Team interacting with youth Agripreneurs, Kirinyaga County



Program Team interacting with Agripreneurs, Kirinyaga county



Youth Agripreneurs participating in the in-person selection interviews.

Engagement with schools

The project team carried out several field visits to schools, focus group discussions with farmers, agriculture teachers, head teachers of public and private schools as well as held meetings with various stakeholders including government officials representing the Ministry of Agriculture, Education, Environment, Youth and Gender. Noteworthy findings from the engagements with schools include innovative projects like vertical gardens, regenerative agriculture, and scouting activities fostering environmental awareness. Some schools faced common challenges such as limited land availability, water scarcity, climate variability and security concerns. They however demonstrated resilience willing to leverage on available resources, partnerships, and community support to overcome these obstacles. Overall, the learnings from various stakeholder engagements underscore the importance of adopting a holistic approach to agricultural education for school kids, fostering community engagement, and empowering stakeholders at all levels to drive sustainable development in the agriculture sector.

In order select school centers of excellence and satellite schools, which will be leveraged for demo plots and training of farmers led by youth agripreneurs, a comprehensive assessment process with close engagement of the Kenyan county government was carried. The assessment was based on a set of selection criteria, such as availability of land and water, openness of school management, as well as strategic alignment with UNICEF's giga school connectivity programme (a programme to connect every school in the world to the internet), social policy or nutrition and education work. Out of the approx. 60 schools that were assessed in detail, 14 Centers of Excellence across the 14 wards in Kirinyaga County as well as satellite schools were determined in quarter one of 2024. The programme will leverage 4K clubs and Young Farmers Clubs in schools, which are important platforms to further the programme goals and are recognized by Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture.

Some photos from the school visits are below:



Program Team at the Project Farm of St. Luke School for the Deaf



Programme Team at the Faustina Kerugoya Girls High School



Demo Plot at a school, Kirinyaga County



Rainwater harvesting plant at a school, Kirinyaga

Preparation of bootcamps

Educate!'s entrepreneurial skills bootcamps promote a better understanding of the potential of agricultural employment and entrepreneurship through hands-on learning in rural communities and exposure to context-specific agri-businesses. As the number of young people seeking employment in Kenya continues to grow and the climate crisis worsens, youth play an important role in leading the way. By improving access to relevant and practical skill-building opportunities that help young people – particularly young women- build livelihoods and become responsible citizens, we can enable them to drive socio-economic development and pave the way for a greener, more sustainable future. In the first year of the programme, Educate! will leverage its decade-plus experience delivering high-impact youth employment models to equip 1,600 youth with the skills to build livelihoods through locally relevant agri-businesses and ag-value chains.

Alongside an evidence-based skills curriculum, the bootcamp will facilitate interactive hands-on learning coupled with

mentorship from a trained youth mentor.

With the support of a mentor, participants will launch and run a small business, linking youth to local markets, while enabling them to practically apply the transferable and business skills they learn in real-time. Within the EKYAN pilot, young people will be trained on select locally relevant agri-business models and launch agriculture-focused and/or related businesses, such as local honey production, production of organic fertilizers and pesticides, tree nurseries, selling of local vegetables, and more.

In 2023, a user discovery process was carried out to engage communities and test the potential business models in the agripreneurship space. Young aspiring female agripreneurs were testing potential agriculture business models including local honey production, production of organic fertilizers and pesticides, cashew, and groundnut value additions, selling locally grown spices, and others. These business models were tested in preparation of bootcamps for young people not in employment, education, or training (NEET)

who will be trained on select locally relevant agri-business models and launch agriculture-focused and/or related businesses.

Moreover, preparation steps were carried out to recruit and onboard trainers for bootcamps

from local communities. Most trainers will be young people. Additionally, Educate! has been updating and improving its training curriculum based on previous learning. The first 6-weeks bootcamp is scheduled for quarter two in 2024.

Linkage to Nutrition

EKYAN programme is working with the UNICEF Kenya Nutrition programme under the collaboration with GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition) on the vegetables for all programme. The collaboration will support selection of the vegetable value chains for focus, setup of kitchen gardens, messaging on good diets for schools, farmers, and parents as well as connection to markets.

GAIN has an established a network of 5,000 plus small-scale business who will purchase and sell vegetables in select markets around the country and the EKYAN programme will feed into this ecosystem. Concretely this will involve collaboration with nutrition partners such as GAIN and Hellen Keller International (based in Kirinyaga and will inform messaging for nutrition).

Potential engagement of other partners

The EKYAN innovative pilot programme is already drawing the attention of other potential partners, which would not have been possible without the initial commitment of the current partners.

In November 2023, the Canadian Minister for International Development, Mr. Ahmed Hussen, visited Kirinyaga County and interacted with the youth agriprenuers enrolled in the EKYAN program.

The field visit highlighted the use of modern agricultural techniques using technology by young people who had fully embraced

agriculture as a career option for economic development. EKYAN aligns with Canada's international assistance policy that focuses on youth and women empowerment.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to come and see how young people are embracing agriculture as a path for career option for economic development and I commend Kirinyaga County Government in partnership with other players for their initiative in leveraging agriculture as a source of economic prosperity and development for the community," added Hussen.



BeGreen field visit to Kirinyaga by Canadian Minister

The minister interacted with the youth agriprenuers as they showcased what they have achieved through integration of digital technology in agriculture to increase production, provide extension services to farmers as well as create market linkages for themselves and other farmers.



Further events/demonstrations about regenerative agriculture will be organized in 2024 to engage suppliers, buyers, service providers, and other potential partners to further support this programme.



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Challenges, Lessons Learned and best practices

Challenges:

- **Youth Perception of Agriculture:** Agriculture is often viewed by young people as a low-income, high-risk sector associated with subsistence farming. This perception makes it difficult to attract youth to agribusiness opportunities.
- The education system does not prepare youth with the knowledge and skills needed to take advantage of job opportunities in agribusiness.
- **Resource Constraints:** Many schools and communities face limited availability of land and water, as well as challenges related to climate variability, which hinder the implementation of agricultural initiatives.
- **Gender-Based Barriers:** Female youth encounter greater barriers in accessing education and employment opportunities due to gender-based discrimination and societal norms, making their participation in agribusiness programmes more challenging.

Lessons Learned:

- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** Effective engagement with local communities, schools, and government bodies is crucial. The involvement of the county government and comprehensive assessment of schools helped in selecting appropriate sites for demo plots and training.
- **Youth-Centric Approach:** Directly involving youth agripreneurs in shaping the programme led to better alignment with their needs and aspirations. This participatory approach fostered a sense of ownership among young participants.
- **Inclusive Bootcamps:** Piloting of agriculture business models and designing bootcamps to cater specifically to the needs of young people – particularly young women out of school - in rural agricultural settings enhances the relevance and impact of the training.



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Best Practices:

- **Holistic Programme Design:** EKYAN integrates skills training, entrepreneurship development, community engagement, and nutrition outcomes.
- **Evidence-Based Curriculum:** The curriculum was developed based on local needs and evidence from piloting of business models, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness. Topics include regenerative agriculture methods and business management skills.
- **Promoting Digital Literacy:** The programme leverages digital tools and platforms, such as the Kuza digital mentorship platform and portable digital kits, to enhance learning and connectivity among young agripreneurs.
- The model employs a **gender-responsive approach**, embedding gender equity through all stages of design to delivery and implementation. The model delivers impactful skill building experiences to young women, many of whom are young mothers, equips them with the entrepreneurial and employability skills to engage and grow within Kenya's economy and local agricultural sectors.

Niger (P2E)

PROGRESS REPORT / THE NIGER



Having one of the youngest population structures in the world, with a median population age of 15 and growth projections suggesting a doubling of the population in less than 20 years, the need to invest in skilling and economic development programmes in Niger is evident. Furthermore, 69 percent of young people aged 15 to 24 are not in employment, education, or training (NEET) and for young women, this increases to 78 percent. To address this situation, UNICEF Niger joined the Generation Unlimited (GenU) movement in 2020, working with national government counterparts, partners (including the private sector), and youth led organizations, to make young Nigeriens' voices heard on issues that concern them, and to offer young people opportunities to be skillful, engaged, and impactful members of society.

To further advance skilling and opportunities for young people the Passport to Earning programme was decided to roll out in Niger. P2E is a GenU global digital Learning Management System (LMS) programme, catalyzed by dedicated partners, that provides young people aged 15-24 with free, world-class and job relevant skills training, and

positions them for job opportunities. Built on Microsoft's Community Training platform, it offers online digitized curricula curated at the national level, with content provided by public and private sector partners.

While partnerships with Government and action plans were developed, the Coup d'etat, insecurity and uncertainty instability which ensued hampered implementation and following assessments conducted by the Country Office and partners clearly identifying the continued need for the programme, efforts to identify new partners and implementation plan have been made. Pending a final formal no-cost extension approval, the P2E programme still aims to establish the platform in Niger, certify 3,000 young people (50% girls young women) adolescent with digital and in-demand job ready skills (also based on a survey to be conducted), connect at least 400 young people to internship opportunities and, as a demand creation strategy, provide 20,000 young people with career counselling sessions. This is part of a wider continuing skilling to employment effort in Niger which also has support from partners including Canada, Denmark and Germany.

Challenges, Lessons Learned and best practices

Challenges:

- **Political Instability:** The coup d'état in Niger and the resulting insecurity disrupted partnerships and hindered the progress of the P2E programme.
- **High NEET Rates:** A significant portion of young people in Niger are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), with young women being disproportionately affected (78% NEET rate among young women). This made the point of entry for skilling difficult to standardise, often needing foundational digital and language literacy skills to be considered before any training intervention.

Lessons Learned:

- **Adaptability:** The programme demonstrated the need for flexibility in design and implementation to adapt to political and security changes. This included having contingency plans and flexible funding arrangements to maintain programme programety.
- **Partnerships:** Building robust partnerships with governments, private sector entities, and youth organizations is essential. Despite the instability, efforts were made to identify new partners and

create a revised implementation plan, which has been critical to operationalizing the programme following the political developments. Strong collaboration with the donor too has been essential.

- **Demand Creation Strategies:**

Implementing strategies such as career counseling sessions helped create demand for the programme and increase youth participation. These sessions aimed to provide young people with guidance on career pathways and job opportunities.

Best Practices:

- **Digital Learning Platforms:** Utilizing Microsoft's Community Training platform enabled the programme to offer accessible, world-class skills training that is relevant to the local job market.
- **Inclusive Design:** Ensuring that at least 50% of programme participants are young women addressed gender disparities and promoted inclusivity.
- **Blended Learning Approaches:** Combining online and offline learning methods catered to the diverse needs of young people in different contexts, making the training more accessible and effective.



BeGreen

BeGreen Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Senegal

BeGreen Africa is an innovative green entrepreneurship pilot focused on tackling the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion programme implemented in collaboration with the Tony Elumelu Foundation. Building on successful initiatives like GenU's imaGen Ventures and Yoma, and the Tony Elumelu Foundation's entrepreneurship programme, BeGreen empowers green entrepreneurs through training, seed funding, mentorship, access to networks and financing. The BeGreen waste management pilot in Kenya, is focused on the problems of waste accumulation and environmental pollution. The Netherlands is supporting additional BeGreen pilots in Nigeria, South Africa, and Senegal. The Tony Elumelu Foundation is also funding additional green entrepreneurs in Nigeria. Across the four countries, 485 aspiring green entrepreneurs (120 waste entrepreneurs in Kenya) will receive \$5,000 in seed funding (at least 50% women). The provision of more than \$2.4 million in seed funding aims to support entrepreneurs in generating \$6.8 million revenue and creating at least 2,000 jobs within two years.



The BeGreen methodology builds on the following four pillars:



Training & Skill-building activities: Provide a critical mass of young aspiring green entrepreneurs with foundational entrepreneurial and 21st century skills through a mixture of online/ blended learning approaches.



Seed funding and incubation support: Provision of USD 5,000 seed funding and incubation support to setup and grow sustainable green/waste enterprises led by young people that generate employment and drive economic development.



Evidence generation: Build a body of knowledge around green and digital entrepreneurship impact and contribute to broader green ecosystem and policy work.



Youth partnerships & engagement most marginalized young people: Youth partnerships shape the programme at every stage (programme development, green curriculum development, ongoing project governance).

Programme launch

The Hon. Ababu Namwamba, Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Sports and the Arts hosted a soft launch of BeGreen and the Engaging Kenyan Youth in Agriculture and Nutrition (EKYAN) innovative pilot initiatives

on International Youth Day, which was also attended by the Principal Secretary (PS) State Department for Youth Affairs, Mr. Ismail Madejjobs.





Launch of BeGreen and EKYAN at the International Youth Day

Application drive

In 2023 the application drive, development of the green entrepreneurship curriculum and training materials; selection of aspiring entrepreneurs to take part in the training; and, implementing the BeGreen Africa Entrepreneurship training were conducted. The BeGreen application drive was comprised of both on and offline marketing campaigns encouraging young people to apply to the programme via the TEF Connect platform or

a Google form to allow for applicants in low or limited bandwidth areas. To ensure no young person was left behind, especially those from marginalized communities, various in-person activities were carried out. Examples include providing young people with access to Youth Empowerment Centers where they were able to use computers and internet access as well as received support in registering for the programme in collaboration with

the State Department for Youth Affairs; the provision of training sessions at a technical training college focused on black soldier fly; engagements with young people engaged in waste collection, sorting, and delivering within the Nairobi informal settlements; meetings with youth from various hubs; leveraging the imaGen Ventures programme within refugee and host communities and facilitation of registration sessions ensuring equal opportunities for youth on the move, spotlights of the BeGreen Programme at forums for Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), as well as the organization of a Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) fair to raise awareness and support registration.

Complementing offline application drive activities, a number of online activations included digital advertising, bulk SMS on the digital youth engagement platform Yunitok, as well as online activations via the online digital skilling platform Yoma.

Application drive activities led to more than 7,000 applications across Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Nigeria with 57% of male and 43% of female applicants, of which more than 5,300 applications were received.

The registration form had an application assessment consisting of a personality test, cognitive reasoning test (questions related to change management, conflict resolution, leadership style) and a cognitive test (motivation, financial literacy & account).

BeGreen entrepreneurship training

The project partners decided to pilot a two-pronged training approach consisting of a foundational entrepreneurship training building on TEF's Entrepreneurship training (1) and an in-depth, gender-responsive green entrepreneurship training with a strong waste management focus (2). TEF's proven entrepreneurship training was "greened" meaning that case studies throughout the modules were adapted and replaced with case studies from the waste management sector. Moreover, a green angle was added to concepts/ theories discussed across the business management modules. The training contains pre-/ post assessment questions as

well as exercises, additional reading material and multiple-choice questions per module.

The greened business management training took place from November 2023 to February 2024. Out of the 7,000 applications received across all countries approximately 4,000 young aspiring entrepreneurs completed the business training which is the first part of the comprehensive BeGreen training programme).

A fully animated in-depth, gender-responsive green entrepreneurship training was developed in collaboration with young green entrepreneurs, industry experts, and academia (University of Botswana). Co-

creation with young green entrepreneurs was crucial to ensure the content addresses the challenges they face, is appropriate for the target demographic of youth the training is designed for, and is context specific. The training will be deployed in quarter two of 2024. Green entrepreneurship training

participants will also submit a green business plan in quarter two of 2024 which - together with the training outcomes - will be the basis for shortlisting for participation in pitching events scheduled for July 2024 followed by seed capital disbursement.

Information sessions, masterclasses, and peer to peer exchange

Accompanying the BeGreen training, various activities were carried out to support aspiring youth entrepreneurs on their journey.

Information sessions, masterclasses featuring successful young green entrepreneurs, and facilitated WhatsApp peer to peer exchange groups are some examples. After disbursement of seed funding in Q3 2024, young green entrepreneurs will participate in a mentorship programme and dedicated incubation support to optimally support them in setting up and growing sustainable

businesses that will create at least 2.6 jobs per year – particularly for other young people – and approximately USD 10,000 revenue per year each.

The BeGreen and EKYAN programmes are core components of UNICEF/GenU's new signature initiative: **The Green Rising**. The initiative aims to mobilize millions of young people around the climate crisis and includes green skilling and entrepreneurship as a critical component.

Challenges, Lessons Learned and best practices

Challenges:

- **Barriers faced particularly by marginalized youth** in accessing the program were addressed through targeted approaches, including a range of in-person activities to support their engagement.
- **Sustaining Engagement:** Keeping young people engaged and motivated to complete applications, participate in

training activities, and submit business plans. A combination of in-person and online activities was carried out to support young people.

- **Limited knowledge, clarity and awareness** among young people about green entrepreneurship and the scope of sub-sectors such as waste management
- Unforeseen environmental challenges, such as floods, impacting young people in the country

Lessons Learned:

- **Importance of capacity building** activities for example a pre-application drive campaign and ongoing activities to build knowledge and raise awareness.
- **Multi-Pronged Training Approach:** Combining foundational entrepreneurship training with in-depth, gender-responsive green entrepreneurship training. The green entrepreneurship training was co-created with young entrepreneurs to ensure relevance and gender responsiveness.
- **Co-Creation with Youth:** Involving young green entrepreneurs in developing training content ensured the training addressed real-world challenges and was appropriate for the target demographic.
- **Partnerships with Industry Experts:** Collaborations with industry experts and academic institutions, such as the University of Botswana, enriched the training content and provided valuable insights.
- **In-person activations which encompassed a diverse range of engagement strategies** targeting youth across various sectors and locations were crucial in reaching marginalized youth.

Best Practices:

- Leverage a recognized, user-friendly, accessible, and stable application platform with low data requirements.
- **Engage and leverage diverse ecosystem partners**, such as government and youth-serving ministries, universities, training centers, alumni networks, UN agencies, and youth ambassadors, to support outreach and engagement.
- **Evidence Generation:** Build a body of knowledge around green and digital entrepreneurship to contribute to the broader ecosystem and policy work.
- **Youth Engagement:** Engage youth at every stage of program development and governance to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are addressed. This includes organizing masterclasses, information sessions, and peer-to-peer exchange groups via WhatsApp
- **Gender equality:** BeGreen Africa fully integrates gender-responsiveness in interventions and emphasizes results for the most disadvantaged young people, especially young women, to ensure that the programme is inclusive and that it addresses gender, disability and social inequality. Examples, include specific outreach to young women during the application drive, the development of a gender-responsive green curriculum, and gender-sensitive mentorship and networking.



YOMA

Since its establishment in 2020, Yoma has been dedicated to empowering and transforming the lives of young people aged 16-24 worldwide. The platform actively engages youth in social impact tasks and provides learning-to-earning opportunities. As youth engage in these opportunities, their activities are recorded on their profile. This allows them to build a verifiable digital CV with trusted credentials. Moreover, their efforts can be rewarded with the platform currency, a digital token that can be spent in the Yoma marketplace in exchange for goods and services such as data and e-commerce vouchers.

As of December 2023, Yoma operates in six African countries, primarily focusing on providing implementation support within these countries, with additional light implementation efforts in Trinidad & Tobago and the Philippines. Furthermore, Yoma has registered users from over 170 countries globally. The platform has facilitated opportunities for 465,980 individuals to access new types of jobs and entrepreneurial activities. Over 10 opportunity providers, including Atingi, Umuzi, GLEAC, and Accenture, have joined, offering >200 learning, task, or impact opportunities equivalent to total of 49,000 hours of earning

content, effectively enhancing their skills and knowledge base. Young people have benefited from free online opportunities promoting skill development, community engagement, and employment prospects, with 19,000+ certificates validating job-relevant skills, enhancing their employability.

Youth Agency Marketplace (Yoma) catalyzes young people's creativity and taps their ideas to address systemic challenges facing social sectors in Africa and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at multiple levels. It promotes well-being and mental health (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), foster economic growth and decent work (SDG 8), reduces inequality (SDG 10), and supports climate action (SDG 13). Yoma matches the global demand for SDGs impact with the capabilities of youth within their communities. The platform facilitates access to volunteering opportunities (impact tasks), which are rewarded with tokens and complemented by action learning, enabling youth to enhance their CVs with essential portable skills that will increase their employment prospects.

This contribution to Yoma via the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) aims at improving youth relational well-being through the

establishment of strategic and contextualized learning to earning pathways for youth to succeed, grow and thrive. This is achieved by developing multiple pathways such as the digital, green, and ambassadorial pathway, leveraging technology advancements and closely monitoring progress. By prioritizing those interventions, Yoma provides youth with opportunities that align with their aspirations, potential and the demand market. Specific strategies and interventions are prioritized to address limitations faced by marginalized young people such as rural youth, young women, and youth on the move.

Yoma contributed to improving the relational well-being of young people through the establishment of strategic and contextualized learning to earning pathways for youth to succeed, grow and thrive. Specifically, Yoma expanded access for 283,920 youth to free online opportunities that promote skills development, community engagement, and employment prospects. This report provides an overview of the main achievements thus far in the programme implementation. The indicators are all on-track, and this report highlights key achievements made during this period and outlines strategies as well as plans

Develop Yoma together and green pathway and engage youth through ecosystem

Yoma connected young people with their peers in their communities and across the world, fostering a network of like-minded individuals who share similar aspirations. This global network enables youth to exchange ideas, collaborate on projects, and establish valuable connections that can further support their personal and professional growth.

Yoma partner Goodwall organized seven online monthly challenges and three case studies for youth across Africa to expand their knowledge, skills, and becoming a part of the Yoma community. These included #YomaTogether, #YomaStage and **#Strongertogether** challenges. Additionally, the **#WasteWarriors**, **#GemsOfNature** and **#DonateWaterNG** challenges provided youth with the opportunity to increase their skillset related to the environment and green economy. Overall, there have been more than 4 million engagements from young people on Yoma related activities.

In **South Africa**, Yoma is providing scale-up support to the Duzi-uMngeni Conservation Trust (DUCT) and Amanzi Ethu Nobuntu (and its partners in the linked programmes) to open opportunities for youth working for the common good and, scale up the **'Enviro-Champs'** programme across the country. Young volunteers are monitoring the water quality of streams, warn communities when streams are polluted, and design solutions,

including advocating with local municipalities when needed. They deploy citizen Science learning tools, such as the Stream Assessment Scoring System (**www.miniSASS.org**) and are testing how citizen science can contribute towards SDG monitoring, with a focus on SDG 6.3 (water and sanitation). Additionally, innovative ways to incentivise youth using blockchain technology to participate in environmental catchment management initiatives are being explored.

Currently, more than 1,000 Enviro-Champs are employed across various environmental monitoring, ecological restoration, and food security programs in KwaZulu-Natal, coordinated by the DUCT. This project has partnered with multiple other organisations such as SANBI, Wildlands, Love Howick, The Hilton Rail Trail, and Liberty NPO who are running the individual Enviro-Champ programs. These initiatives are not only offering learning and employment opportunities but also empowering the youth in the country. Simultaneously, they provide essential support to local and regional governmental institutions. Participants have the added incentive of earning Yoma tokens for their active engagement and successful completion of learning courses. These tokens can be redeemed within the Yoma marketplace for various benefits such as data packages or e-commerce vouchers.

To address the challenges faced by refugees, displaced, and migrant youth in accessing opportunities, UNICEF launched the Youth on the Move Fellowship programme (which the Yoma Together pathway aligns and supports). Partnering with Children and Youth International, eligibility criteria were redesigned to remove common barriers youth on the move face (e.g., no recognized degree, no bank account, no university affiliation, etc.). In the initial pilot, eight fellows were placed in different UNICEF offices/teams, and the second round started with seven more fellows. Additionally, UNICEF established the African Climate Mobility Initiative (ACMI) Youth Forum in partnership with various organizations, providing young people with a platform to contribute to global discussions on climate mobility. The Africa Climate Mobility Youth Forum was launched, and the first-ever African Youth Declaration on Climate Mobility was released at COP 27. In total, 2,600 young people engaged across Africa to build a community focused on driving change in climate mobility. Youth also played a significant role in climate mobility discussions at COP 27, with 10 exceptional youth delegates selected and supported by UNICEF. They had the opportunity to make their voices heard in public events and meetings with influential figures and organizations.

Under the “Youth Green Finance Initiative”, Yoma is partnering with the University of Liechtenstein, the LIFE Climate Foundation and the Liechtenstein Banking Association

to explore innovative and sustainable impact financing schemes for Yoma linked to the SDGs. The initiative is a pilot project with the common goal to 1) develop a proof of concept for a revolving impact fund for Yoma and 2) create a multi-year cooperation to form a “Liechtenstein Youth Green Finance Lab” working as innovation and learning hub for the development of innovative financing solutions. The initiative brings together different partners and their expertise to develop a concrete bankable product, an investment case, as well as a comprehensive knowledge network, including African universities. The initiative is currently partnering with Umuzi, key ecosystem partner of Yoma, and experts in the development of learning-to-earning pathways for digital skills and developed a blended finance concept which uses NFT tokens linked to learning and employment outcomes of individual learners in South Africa. Moreover, the initiative is exploring finance mechanisms for the Green Yoma pathway where generation of revenue will be connected to local actions of young people in their communities (e.g., reforestation or water quality monitoring tasks) and the successful verification of the achieved impact (e.g., using citizen science tools). The initiative is currently finalizing the inception phase and is expected to move into the implementation phase in May 2024 crowding in more partners, such as the LGT Group to develop a bankable finance product and to set up the Youth Green Finance Lab at the University of Liechtenstein.

Develop and implement digital livelihoods pathway

Umuzi and the African Coding Network (ACN) worked together to further develop and implement digital livelihood pathways for youth in Africa. Their work focused on upskilling and providing industry-relevant training to youth. The goal is to enhance the skills and capacities of young people, enabling them to tap into new types of jobs and entrepreneurial activities emerging across Africa. This partnership established by Umuzi and the ACN is an asset for the Yoma programme. They leverage local partners to access hard-to-reach young people, and in return, they offer additional in-country support to their learners, sometimes in the home language of those learners if different from English.

Umuzi has run several learning to earning programmes through Yoma. Over the period from Jan 2021 – Dec 2023, 25,000 applications were submitted to join these programmes, with 8,100 learners trained in digital skills in the following fields: project management, data analytics, UX design, IT support, and digital marketing & E-commerce.

As a deep dive into a specific case study, the programme rolled out together with the UNICEF **Uganda** Country Office and produced the following results:

- A total of 550 learners were enrolled, with 50 individuals pursuing further upskilling after receiving their initial certificates. They acquired industry-recognized certifications in their specialized areas, such as Project Management (PSM1), data analytics, and cloud development. Interventions are delivered through two activities 1) the employability sprints (practical steps to improve the likelihood of success in jobs search, freelancing, or entrepreneurship) and 2) the Design Thinking Sprint (Project-based learning, solving real-world problems and building a portfolio to showcase skills).
- Additionally, Umuzi supported the alumni with employment and work-related opportunities in several ways:
 - Connecting young people to three month paid work experience opportunities, as was done for 25 young people in Uganda, on this project,
 - Having course completers move on to additional upskilling opportunities, including a Work Readiness Programme where learners create CVs, Linked In profiles and are coached in basic interview skills,
 - Employing alumni as facilitators on future programmes. Umuzi and the Yoma ecosystem have employed more

than 10 young people into full time positions, after assisting them to upskill themselves. These young people show immense potential, and the hope is that they will be able to bring other young people from their community into similar opportunities, with support from the Yoma ecosystem.

Additionally, Umuzi and Yoma are collaborating for the rollout of the Educate2Employ (E2E) initiative which is a programme under SAP's umbrella. This partnership, focuses on establishing digital learning pathways. In 2023, SAP started

to support this initiative. The training programme programmes soft skills, foundational knowledge, digital literacy, and SAP-specific skills, utilizing resources from the SAP Learning Hub. The goal is to equip young people with the necessary skills to access new job opportunities and entrepreneurial activities emerging across Africa. Moreover, in partnership with Accenture, SAP and Umuzi has developed an online course syllabus tailored to prepare learners for more advanced SAP-specific training. Currently, learners are actively engaged in this training, with their progress meticulously monitored and necessary support provided as required.



Marketplace for youth to engage with impact opportunities

Yoma played a pivotal role in supporting young people to achieve results for children in the rollout of the HPV vaccine in Nigeria. Through its platform, Yoma facilitated the engagement of young volunteers across 10 LGAs in Ogun state, ensuring that vital information reached **766,080 girls aged** 9-14. These volunteers were equipped with relevant training to effectively serve as community outreach agents, conducting sensitization sessions both in schools and communities. These young people engaged in interpersonal communication to address vaccine hesitancy and referred eligible girls to health facilities for vaccination.

Further, UNICEF **Kenya** conducted a verification exercise for the Out-of-School Children (OOSC) project, to confirm and update the database of the OOSC enrolled in the target schools. This represented 81.9 per cent of the enrolled OOSC and 89.1 per cent of the schools implementing the programme. 6,892 Yunitokers (18 -26 years old) expressed interest and were onboarded on Yoma, where the volunteering opportunity was hosted. 612 of them were selected for the training. From the exercise, a total of 62,156 enrolled OOSC (**28,758 girls** and 33,398 boys) in 1,738 schools were successfully verified.

Develop the first version of the impact portal, AI matching algorithm, low resource solution and impact verification/ evaluation tools

Under the leadership of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), a series of activities were carried out to explore how to leverage AI on Yoma to match youth with opportunities. The team developed an initial pilot to provide recommendations to young people for learning pathways using courses available on the Yoma platform. Another pilot algorithm was tested on Goodwall to form teams of young people based on criteria such as skills and interests.

The work on teaming algorithms led to the submission of an article to the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) collective

intelligence international conference (currently under review). The results show that creating teams with complementary skills and personalities improves skills development and the relational well-being of people participating in the Yoma team activities. This work was carried out in collaboration with Goodwall, UNICEF, and RLabs and involved two pilots.

The first pilot was a web app to learn about Goodwall users' job preferences, 440 Goodwall users completed behavior questionnaires through the Yoma Job questionnaire app. Each participant was

recommended a list of possible career fields as a result of completing the questionnaire. Goodwall analyzed the feedback submitted by 50 random participants through videos and found that 88 per cent of the participants indicated that they were satisfied with the recommendations received. Based on the analysis of the job preferences of all participants, the scope of their job interests is very wide, encompassing a wide range of careers.

The second pilot was based on another web app called Yoma Learning Pathways which recommends a learning pathway based on the job preferences of an individual. For 86 participants, a catalog of courses provided meaningful recommendations for learning

pathways. A total of 45 participants (52 per cent) interacted with Yoma learning pathways to obtain recommendations. Most of them indicated that they would be keen to follow the recommended learning pathways and pursue a career in their recommended jobs. For the development of the impact portal, Yoma is exploring a partnership with IXO to integrate a micro-gig platform into Yoma. Through these micro-gigs, young people will have the chance to engage in work opportunities including a remuneration and get a verified certificate attached to their profile. The generated impact will be verified and will be linked to an impact finance scheme to monetize the impact and support Yoma's financial sustainability.

New YOMA management entity and improved overall experience on the YOMA platform

The block grant for RLabs contributed to strengthening Yoma's operations. A total of 12 team members were recruited by RLabs and they form the Yoma HQ Team in South Africa. An Operations Team (Communications, Validation/Credentialing, Customer Support) & a Tech Team (UI/UX, Front-end & Back-end Development), are overseen by the Operations Manager and a Solutions Architect. The Yoma General Manager oversees the Operations Manager & Solutions Architect and forms part of the Leadership Team of Yoma thereby aligning Yoma HQ activities with the Yoma vision and mission.

Aligned with its mission, Yoma focuses on the needs of young people and employs various strategies to continually engage and enhance their experience on the platform. A second cohort of Youth Council was onboarded October 2023 to systematically involve young people in the improvement of the platform. Moreover, Accenture supported Yoma in conducting user testing with young people in Nigeria, South Africa, and the Philippines as part of their pro-bono support for Yoma. Informed by insights from these consultations, the platform is being revamped to provide a more responsive and user-friendly design that offers faster loading

times, enhanced navigation as well as better user experience. This revamped platform will be launched in Q2 2024 as Yoma Version 3.0. Furthermore, Yoma continues to strengthen its collaboration with youth networks to leverage their diverse perspectives,

experiences, and ideas, fostering a sense of ownership and inclusivity. By tapping into the collective power of youth networks, Yoma can effectively address the needs and aspirations of young people, maximizing its impact and driving positive social change.

Prepare and implement the Operational Research (OR)

In the current reporting period, there are three main highlights on the use of citizen science as a learning-to-earning pathway for African youth: (1) the participation of two youth teams from Yoma in a major conference at CERN in Geneva, organized by Yoma lead partner UNIGE; (2) the participation of the same teams in one-month SDG Summer Schools held in Lagos and Nairobi organized by Yoma partner CitSci Africa (3) the deployment of the DonateWater app in Nigeria through two 3-week challenges on Goodwall, that enabled >100 Nigerian citizen scientists gather information about >5,000 water resources across the country. During the second of these challenges, testing of tokens as a reward system for citizen science activities was carried out using the Yoma platform.

On the first highlight, DonateWater from Nigeria and Aquatech, a mixed team with members from Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda, participated in two major events in Geneva, the Geneva Trialogue, and the Final Conference of the EU Crowd4SDG project, held at CERN on 16-17 March. Yoma

was featured as a supporting partner at both events, and there was a UNICEF keynote speech about Yoma, given by the Yoma General Manager. The objective was to present DonateWater and Aquatech to a range of potential investors and partners in the field of water resource management. This is described in a press release about the Yoma OR and the Geneva events that was published by partner **IIASA** and in the official video of the event made by the host institution, CERN.

On the second highlight, DG Summer Schools were hosted at the University of Lagos and the United States International University in Nairobi. These summer schools were funded through Yoma OR and featured five teams in total, including DonateWater and Aquatech. Results were published in **a special issue of SDGZine**. The SDG Summer Schools enabled both teams to make significant progress towards implementation and test their solutions in the field. The Aquatech project was subsequently selected as a global finalist in the Water Category of the **Social Shifters Global Innovation Challenge**.

The third highlight was the deployment of the DonateWater app during two three-week challenges on Goodwall. The first challenge ran from 9-29 October 2023, the second one from 27 November to 17 December 2023. In the first challenge US\$1,000 in prizes were allocated to reward the 20 participants who collected the highest numbers of validated data points, with a US\$50 per participant. The second challenge rewarded each single validated contribution with a token. The value of the token was 800 Naira or approximately US\$0.90. By registering on the Yoma platform, the tokens could be redeemed as vouchers to be used on a Nigerian commercial site called SureGift.

Both challenges involved around 70 Nigerians who collected information regarding water accessibility in their communities. Each data point collected contained: (1) A survey regarding the water accessibility, quality of the water, type of source, and information related the use of the water, (2) Precise GPS location of the water source, (3) three photos of the water source at different distances. The data collected was presented to UNICEF Nigeria's WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) team, a major stakeholder in the

field of water accessibility in Nigeria that liaises with the Nigerian Ministry of water sources. The UNICEF experts confirmed that the data gathered by DonateWater data was of high quality and complementary to the data already collected by UNICEF WASH through more traditional surveys.

At the end of 2023 the token implementation using Blockchain technology was finalized by Yoma partners Caliberco and ABC and integrated as part of the IIASA DonateWater app. In the final months of the Yoma OR project in 2024, the plan is to conduct a further three-week challenge that will test this token system. With further funding from a follow-on European project called Albatross, more testing of the DonateWater app will be possible, notably to see whether a more narrowly defined challenge, within a few Nigerian states and limited to water resources in schools, can attract sufficient citizen involvement to provide a viable alternative to a traditional UNICEF WASH survey with a similarly narrow focus. In parallel with these plans for further testing, efforts will be made to raise further funding for DonateWater, notably from the World Bank.

Challenges, Lessons Learned and best practices

Challenges:

- **Reaching Marginalized Youth:** Ensuring that marginalized youth, including rural youth, young women, and youth on the move, have access to opportunities posed a significant challenge. This was often due to our ability to reach them through a scalable mechanism without technology, requiring human network and grassroots organizations to drive outreach. Being a digitally enabled solution, reaching those without devices and connectivity provide significant.
- **Sustaining Engagement:** Keeping young people engaged and motivated to participate in social impact tasks and learning-to-earning opportunities required innovative approaches.

Lessons Learned:

- **Technology Integration:** Leveraging advanced technologies, such as AI matching algorithms and blockchain verification, enhanced the platform's functionality and user experience. For example, in a pilot, AI was used to recommend learning pathways and match youth with opportunities. Leveraging technology helped to duplicate a service that would otherwise require human input and drive the cost of delivery up. However,

the downside of technology alone needs to be considered.

- **Operational Research:** Conducting operational research helped understand and improve relational well-being, the effectiveness of the token economy, and the overall impact of the programme. Yoma's robust operational research structure, alongside leading universities, ensured that an evidence driven approach was prioritized within project implementation. This has been invaluable in supporting strategic decisions going forward, regarding partnership, operationalization, youth impact and engagement and the technology role.
- **Collaborative Development:** Partnering with organizations like Goodwill, UNICEF, and RLabs facilitated the development and implementation of effective engagement strategies and tools. Working closely with partners ensures the downside for each organization are compensated for by the upside of the other. For instance, UNICEF can be slow in decision-making and implementation due to bureaucracy and size but offers stability and credibility in a programming environment. RLabs and Goodwill on the other hand can move very quickly, but do not have established trust and rigor that UNICEF offers.



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Best Practices:

- **Digital Livelihood Pathways:** Developing digital pathways provides young people with the skills and opportunities needed for new types of jobs and entrepreneurial activities. These pathways included training in digital skills such as project management, data analytics, and digital marketing. Given the digital nature of the future of work, these skills are transferable regardless of whether or not young people find employment in the exact thematic area.
- **Token Economy:** Implementing a token economy incentivized participation by providing tangible rewards. Tokens earned through participation could be redeemed for goods and services in the Yoma marketplace. Although operationally the approach has its challenges- including high cost of financing rewards and the ability to redeem for goods- the evidence strongly shows that youth highly value the opportunity to get a return for their effort and welcome any supplement to their livelihood.

Gender equality

Gender equality is key principle for all of GenU's work. All programmes adopt a gender-responsive approach, embedding gender equity through all stages of programme implementation. The programmes recognize and address the unique challenges and barriers faced by young women in accessing education, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities. This approach ensures that young women are actively included and supported in the programs.

Building on WEF's data that "Every \$1 spent on girls' rights and education would generate a \$2.80 return— equivalent to billions of dollars in extra GDP [gross domestic product]"³, the programmes have a particular focus on empowering adolescent girls and young women with a target of at least 50 per cent. This target is reflected in the resources that are allocated to gender equality in an aliquot way (at least 50% women in all programmes equals that at least 50% of resources are channelled towards ensuring gender equality).

BeGreen Africa fully integrates gender-responsiveness in interventions and emphasizes results for the most disadvantaged young people, especially young women, to ensure that the programme

is inclusive and that it addresses gender, disability and social inequality. Green entrepreneurship is not gender-neutral; processes and innovations can have gender differential impacts. Green entrepreneurship can have unintended impacts on gender equality if subconscious gender biases exist and if gender differences in needs are not accounted for. Thus, specific measures are taken to address inequalities. Examples, include specific outreach to young women during the application drive, the development of a gender-responsive green curriculum, and gender-sensitive mentorship and networking.

In Kenya, the EKYAN model specifically targets impact on rural young women and girls in Kenya, who face challenges securing employment or engaging in entrepreneurship due to gender-based barriers and discrimination. The model employs a gender-responsive approach, embedding gender equity through all stages of design to delivery and implementation. The model delivers impactful skill building experiences to young women, many of whom are young mothers, equips them with the entrepreneurial and employability skills to engage and grow within Kenya's economy and local agricultural sectors.

Overall, Yoma's work on skill development, employment, and empowerment contributes to gender equality by providing equal

³ World Economic Forum, [How investing in girls' education could return billions in GDP](https://www.weforum.org/publications/how-investing-in-girls-education-could-return-billions-in-gdp/) | World Economic Forum (weforum.org), accessed 04 October 2022

access to opportunities, enhancing women's participation in the workforce, and promoting their economic independence and agency.

All programmes address gender equality in the following ways:

- 1. Equal Access to Opportunities:** Providing learning-to-earning opportunities that are accessible to all youth, and particularly targeting at least 50% women. By offering free online skill development programs and employment prospects, Yoma for example ensures that young women have equal access to resources and opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- 2. Skill Development:** Through partnerships with organizations like Umuzi and ACN, Yoma offers training in digital skills, project management, data analytics, and more. By equipping young women with these skills, Yoma enhances their employability and economic independence, thus narrowing the gender gap in the workforce. All content across all programmes is strictly gender responsive. A notable example, the targeted #women-in-Tech outreach in Nigeria engaged 80% women applicants for tech training applications compared to 20% when applications were not gender targeted.
- 3. Empowerment Through Employment and Entrepreneurship:** Yoma's initiatives, such as the Enviro-Champs program, provide employment opportunities for young women in environmental conservation and citizen science. By engaging in meaningful work and earning Yoma tokens, young women gain economic empowerment and agency over their lives. BeGreen and EKYAN empower young women to establish or grow their green business or agribusiness creating employment for additional women.
- 4. Representation and Participation:** All programmes actively engage young women in its programs and initiatives, ensuring their representation and participation in decision-making processes. Within the Yoma Initiatives like the Youth on the Move Fellowship and the African Climate Mobility Initiative provide platforms for young women to contribute to global discussions on climate action and drive change in their communities.
- 5. Inclusive Partnerships:** All programmes collaborate with a diverse range of partners to address gender equality and empower young women. By leveraging these partnerships, Yoma can develop tailored interventions and support systems that address the specific needs and challenges faced by young women.

Conclusion

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD



With respect to Yoma, the programme, aims to achieve the following objectives: 1) Have developed the digital livelihoods pathway; 2) Have run four pilots validating the green Yoma pathway; 3) Have developed the Yoma together pathway; 4) Have conducted operational research around relational wellbeing, AI/machine learning matching algorithm, the token economy and the impact verification and evaluation 5) Have developed an impact financing strategy making Yoma partly self-financed. All of this will create a more robust offering for young people and improve the relational wellbeing of youth.

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, with focus on achieving impact for the most disadvantaged, especially young women, and on digital and green skills and solutions. Expanding PPYP to fund and deliver scalable solutions for young people in over 89 countries across the globe will be central to delivering this impact.





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