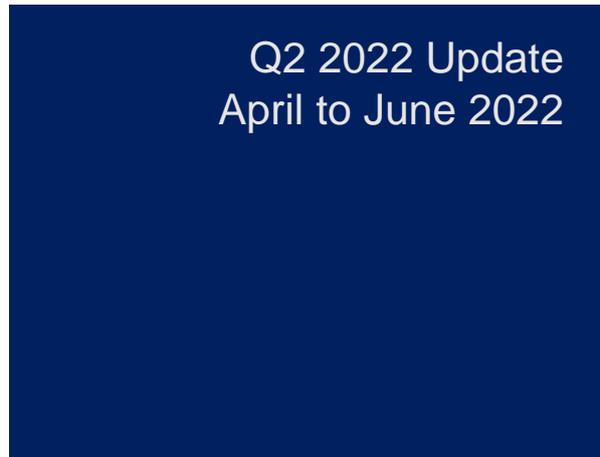


YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

Progress Report



The Youth Empowerment Project in a nutshell

In 2017, the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) was launched to support the development of the Gambian economy by (i) enhancing employability and self-employment opportunities of youth, with a focus on vocational training and the creation of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), (ii) creating and improving employment opportunities in selected sectors through value addition and internationalization, thereby addressing the root causes of irregular migration among youth in The Gambia, and by (iii) coordinating a broad communication campaign of the joint programme “Make it in the Gambia” that aims to promote attractive employment and income opportunities for Gambian youth.

The project takes a market-driven approach and focuses on traditional sectors such as agriculture and tourism while also helping to diversify the Gambian economy by supporting “new” promising sectors including the creative and digital services industries. YEP is implemented by the International Trade Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) of the Republic of The Gambia.

The graph below provides an overview of the YEP results areas:

 R1 IMPROVED EMPLOYABILITY AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH	 R2 INCREASED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ALONG SELECTED VALUE CHAINS	 R3 PROMOTE THE CONCEPT “TEKKI FII – MAKE IT HERE”: MAKE IT IN THE GAMBIA
 1.1 Skills upgraded through technical and vocational training programmes	 2.1 Improved compliance of Gambian products to international standards and market requirements	 3.1. The activities, opportunities and results of the Action are widely communicated upon at national and international levels
 1.2 Entrepreneurship promoted among youth through business skills training and support programmes	 2.2 Improved MSME productive capacities	
	 2.3 Market linkages activated	
	 2.4 Improved strategic direction and national ownership for job-centered growth	

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HIGHLIGHTS



Highlights in April to June 2022

125

youths completing a technical and/or vocational training programme or apprenticeship

65

youths benefiting from entrepreneurship services and business advisory support



Entrepreneurship

- 25** Trainers completed a training of trainers in Design Thinking
- 11** Entrepreneurs benefitted from 3D design and printing



Productive Capacity

- 1** Practical training on testing and diagnosis on poultry diseases
- Continuous work on introduction of dual-purpose chicken



Market linkages

- 13** Companies benefitted from a digitalization package
- 35** Entrepreneurs supported through the Gambia's Good Market



Communication

- 40,008** people reached on Facebook
- 60,500** impressions on Twitter

TEKKI FII STORIES



Musa Sarr's paintings inspire youth in The Gambia

In 2015, Musa Sarr realised that painting can be a profession with can provide a good revenue. By painting the walls of the Janjanbureh Youth Centre, his art now serves as a source of inspiration for youth engagement. Musa Sarr proved that painting can be a profession with potential within The Gambia.

"When I look at the work, I feel so proud. It is such a huge project considering Janjanbureh's rich history, which I was able to demonstrate through my painting."
– Musa Sarr says.

<https://yep.gm/blog/musa-sarr-young-gambian-leading-career-painting>



Mariama Ceesay's passion leads to a successful business

Mariama Ceesay opened her THEAS fashion designing business in 2016. Since then, she continued to expand her knowledge by attending entrepreneurship trainings offered by YEP. Ms. Ceesay highlights that the most important element has been her learnings in financial management and the Tekki Fii mini grant to maximize production. She is now employing three young people.

"I am motivated to stay and make it in The Gambia. I am running my own business and equally creating jobs for others."
– Mariama Ceesay says.

<https://yep.gm/blog/mariama-ceesay-budding-fashion-designer-immaculate-eye-colour>



Momodou Khan moves his world with technology

Realizing that the world is moving on the inventions of technology, Momodou Khan worked hard for his dream to become a professional web developer. Through the SkYE fund, Mr. Khan was able to gain the necessary skills. Today, he works as a freelancer in web development and design with clients around the world.

“The training assisted me in lifting myself from a novice to a semi-pro web developer. Today I am capable of developing any kind of website, from basic websites to large complex websites.” – Momodou Khan says.

<https://yep.gm/blog/momodou-khan-emerging-professional-tech-developer>



Progress in Q2 2022



1.1 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The skills development component of YEP focuses on strengthening the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions in The Gambia, enhancing training curricula and rolling-out training programmes and apprenticeship schemes to youth. The training programmes primarily aim to provide youth with the skill sets required to find employment and to fulfil the skill needs in priority sectors of YEP. The component builds on the findings of the Youth and Trade Development Roadmap, which was developed under YEP, including its findings on occupations demanded in the priority sectors.

The Skills for Youth Employment (SkYE) Fund

- As part of the third round of the SkYE Fund, 8 training providers continued to deliver 26 programmes to 710 trainees. The Indian Institute of Hardware Technology (IIHT) graduated 109 youths with diploma in Digital Marketing and Network Security. The IIHT trainees are now being assisted with job placements. The SkYE funded training programme focuses on applied practical experiences within the partner training institutions, coupled with on-the-job training. The first component of the traineeship has been completed during Q2.

ICT

- In collaboration with Make3D Gambia, YEP started a new programme to roll out access to 3D printing technology for youths across country. 14 students of the Student Association of Public and Environmental Health of the University of The Gambia as well 16 youth at the Youth Centre in Basse, URR, received training in 3D printing. To ensure manufacturing in remote areas, Make3D is developing a mobile solar station for 3D printing, allowing the accessibility of technology in remote areas.



- On 28 May, The Information Technology Association of The Gambia (ITAG) organised a digital literacy training for young Gambians at the Smart Professional College. The training covered file sharing and management, troubleshooting, the topic of digital citizenship, content creation, collaboration, and security.



- YEP developed the first formalized apprenticeship programme in The Gambia. This based on a competency framework that is developed together with the private sector through the Sector Skills Council. In the ICT sector, the apprenticeship covers the application development. In July, 9 students will start their internships with ICT companies including Cayorr Enterprise, Forte, 2M Corp, Insist global, LoomoTech, PointClick, MRC and Assutech.



Tourism

- The Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce delivered a two-day training on packaging and branding to 35 youth entrepreneurs participating in The Gambia's Good Market 2022. The entrepreneurs engaged in the production and sales of a variety of Made in The Gambia products ranging from fashion, agro-processed food, arts and craft, health and beauty and super foods.

Creative Industries

- With the support of YEP, 16 young Gambians from different regions have completed the 9-month certificate level programme in film and photography at the Media Academy for Journalism and Communications. The programme included theoretical, practical and studio sessions with mastercraft persons as well as a three-month internship. The programme certified by NAQAA aims to reinforce structured learning and to contribute to the improvement of production capacities to compete internationally.



1.2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The entrepreneurship component of YEP is a cross-sectoral component aiming at developing the entrepreneurship support ecosystem in The Gambia and at supporting young Gambians in starting and growing their businesses. Activities under this component include cross-sectoral, as well as sector-specific initiatives in the priority sectors.

The Andandoor Programme

- To enhance the training capacity of entrepreneurship trainers across the country, Start-up Incubation Gambia (SIG) commenced a training of trainers' programme on design thinking including international certification. The programme enlisted 25 potential trainers who completed an initial training for trainers facilitated by a Design Thinking Master Trainer from Ghana. This was followed by a week step-down training. The ongoing coaching and certification programme is envisaged to be completed in August 2022.



- SIG conducted design thinking training for 75 youth including 25 returnees as part of the trainer's certification programme. Participants were drawn from Central River Region (CRR), Lower River Region (LRR), North Bank Region (NBR) whilst the 23 trainers are drawn from all regions of The Gambia.
- The Coaches of Influence Foundation (COIF) implemented an entrepreneurship training and coaching programme for 62 women and 91 youth (of this 91 youths, 47 joined a hybrid coaching programme).



Access to finance

- The Mini Grants and the Mini Loans scheme closed the application window in 2021. The Mini Loan scheme recovered the last outstanding payments in Q2.
- The Gambia Angel Investor Network (GAIN) continued the pitching session and deep-dives with potential investees. GAIN is exploring the potential of investment in Yaxare. The women-led company engages about 1,000 farmers to produce tea. In case of a positive decision from the angels, this would mark the third co-investment under the project.

Tourism

- In Q2, 415 MSMEs in the tourism sector continued to receive support under the livelihood programme supported by ITC in partnership with the Spanish Red Cross, the Gambia Red Cross Society, and the Gambia Tourism Board. In April 2022, 207 beneficiaries completed their business plan training and coaching of which 111 were women and 96 men. On June 9, the programme launched the restart and diversify grants to support MSMEs who have already received training and coaching in business, digital and financial literacy. The beneficiaries are expected to receive up to a maximum of GMD 37,000 individually and a maximum of GMD 185,000 for joint applications of up to five persons. To restart or diversify their businesses, 317 MSMEs submitted their applications for the restart or diversify grants. All 8 associations included in the programme have completed their three-year strategy plans while 28 executive members have delivered coaching support to their membership after completing their training and coaching programme. The eight sector associations supported under the programme also signed MOUs to receive up to GMD 500,000 each. The funds are to be invested in infrastructure development to enhance the overall operations, functions, and activities of each association.



ICT

- In Q2, the coaching programme for ICT start-up companies was concluded. 4 start-ups were coached, namely Mam Binta Janneh, founder of Brightworld Modest; Hadik Joshic, founder of Baytech; Lamin Darboe, founder of SkyNet and Adama Marong, founder of Smartworld. During the coaching sessions, the start-ups improved their processes, developed relevant business documents and secured funding.
- In cooperation with Make3D, 11 entrepreneurs benefited from services like 3D design and printing to enhance their businesses. In addition, in partnership with Make3D printing services, for the UTG Student Association of Public and Environmental Health, to produce life-saving bracelets were provided.

Youth Centres

- The construction of Farafenni Youth Centre is progressing. Works are ongoing at the site include the finishing of the hall, restaurant, accommodation and refurbishment of the basketball court. The Youth Centre is supported by the Tekkii Fii programme partners ITC, Enabel and Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr (IMVF) and inauguration is planned to take place in September 2022.



2.1 QUALITY

The quality component of YEP aims at promoting quality, productivity improvement and food safety in businesses by Gambian youth, as well as across the focus sectors of the project.

ITC held a series of consultations with The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB), the Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA) and The Gambia Quality Association (TGQA) to finalize a coaching and certification framework for companies in the food and hospitality sectors. The programme builds on previous training programme is expected to start in August. It will culminate in the certification of Good Hygienic Practices (GHP) for a subset of the businesses.



2.2 PRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES

This component supports companies in the YEP priority sectors in enhancing their productive capacities, aiming to strengthen the businesses and the employment opportunities.

Poultry

- In collaboration with PUM Netherlands Senior Experts, YEP continued to offer advisory support in data collection and management, cooperative management, veterinarian services, policy issues and poultry farming and production.
- The poultry vet conducted a 3-day theory and practical training for the Department of Livestock (DLS) staff at the Central Veterinary Laboratory in Abuko. The training content entailed testing and diagnosis of major poultry diseases including the Newcastle disease virus.
- In Q2, YEP continued to work on the introduction of the dual-purpose chicken to diversify poultry production and support the smallholder poultry farmers. The project conducted an assessment to select farmers to manage one parent stock farm and ten rearing farmers. The procurement and the supply of parent stock will be completed in the next quarter.

Packaging

- The project has renewed its cooperation with Gambia Horticultural Enterprises (GHE) in the supply of packaging materials. GHE has received additional packaging materials

and packaging machines to increase service offers to youth businesses. Efforts are underway to launch the first packaging hub in The Gambia, which will provide packaging services for food products and cosmetics.



2.3 MARKET LINKAGES

The market linkages component of the project aims at connecting companies in the priority sectors with domestic and international markets, with the aim of increasing the income of entrepreneurs and the employment opportunities in the sectors.

Cross-sector

- In collaboration with the Jokkalante Market Platform Project, YEP supported the government's efforts on informed decisions making regarding the onion market in The Gambia. The projects provided data analysis as well as facilitated discussions with involved stakeholders and MOTIE. As a result, major importers bought local onions instead based on an agreement with MOTIE. By the end of the quarter, more than 5,400 bags (each 18kg) were bought from the local farmers 5400 bags purchased, worth 2.18m GMD.

ICT

- In Q2, the third phase of the digitalization programme with Elevate Studios came to an end. Currently, the project is in the process of collecting results from the 13 companies supported. The companies benefitted from a digitalization package, which included online store promotion on Facebook, support on keeping track of online store orders, support in sharing posts on Facebook pages and groups, as well as adding the companies to an online store.

Poultry

- With the support of YEP, The Young Poultry Farmers Association has been linked to the recently opened chicken restaurant, called Djolof Chicken, to supply dressed fresh chicken through their members. The association is now supplying between 100 to 300 fresh dressed chicken every second day. With the plans to open more Djolof Chicken restaurants in The Gambia, the supply quantity is set to grow.

Tourism

- The Gambia's Good Market (GGM) has reopened its monthly market from April to July 2022. This year's market is supporting 35 youth entrepreneurs offering a variety of Made in The Gambia products ranging from fashion, agro-processed food, arts and craft, health and beauty as well as local food. The market aims to contribute to diversifying the product offering of The Gambia's tourism sector as a sustainable product.

- In partnership with Make3D, ITC through YEP explores the opportunities in digital technology and gaming to enhance the visibility and promotion of Gambia's Tourism Sector. Make3D continues developing a board game based on the Ninki Nanka Trail with the objective of not only supporting the marketing of the trail through gaming culture but to use opportunities in 3D printing to enhance the productive capacities of local artisans. The activity supports education and awareness raising of The Gambia's historical and cultural heritage along the trail and training of communities and sales representatives in the tourism industry.



2.4 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Strategic Direction component of the project has three objectives. Setting up engagement platforms for stakeholders for sector development planning; formulation of strategic trade development action plans for priority sectors; and building capacities and provide tools for implementations of sector development initiatives.

Business support organisations

- In March this year, stakeholder consultations on the development of a coaching framework for the entrepreneurship ecosystem started. The aim is to enhance coaching implementation for Business support organization (BSOs) in The Gambia and to serve as a practical guide for basic mentoring for start-ups. Following bilateral sessions with different BSOs, ITC organised a two-day workshop with 14 BSOs from 20 to 21 June to present the developed draft. Stakeholders also discussed the implementation of the framework including the piloting and contracting of BSOs as well as a potential support to the Association of Business Coaches. Once validated, the framework will be piloted starting in August with 4 BSOs targeting 200 beneficiaries from the JSF project and others.



Youth centres

- On 16 June, the project team had a meeting with the Joint Management Board of the Bakoteh Production and Innovation Centre to discuss the operationalisation of the centre and its sustainability beyond project funding. While ITC will continue to provide technical and financial resources up to the end of the year, the aim is to ensure that the centre can cover its basic operational cost as well as be well positioned to provide revenue-generating services to support its sustainability.

- ITC partnered with the the Peace Corps Gambia. A response volunteer has been assigned to the Bakoteh Centre in June for a period of one year. ITC is exploring with Peace Corps the deployment of additional volunteers at other youth centres. .

Poultry

- Stakeholder engagements in the poultry sector continued with support from PUM. A policy paper was presented to stakeholders from both the public and private sector in May. The main objective of the policy-related work is to provide an understanding of the competitiveness of The Gambia's poultry sector and of the policy options recommended to support its growth and sustainability.

Tourism

- The ongoing consultations with the GTBoard and the Spanish and Gambia Red Cross will continue during the third quarter on the Joint Tourism Livelihood Support Programme. Interventions during Q2 included the completion of all the trainings for both associations and members, the selection and procurement of infrastructure works to be supported for the associations, identification of locations for the proposed beach hubs. YEP initiated consultation with



3. COMMUNICATION

This component comprises the communication, awareness raising and visibility work under YEP. It has the goal to promote economic opportunities in The Gambia amongst youth and to promote the Tekki Fii campaign both locally and internationally.

Capacity building

- In June 2022, the media and communication training for implementing partners progressed to the second phase. This featured five days of in-person training on media platforms and communication tools to adapt to their various needs. In Q4, the final phase of the training, post-training consultations and support packages will be completed.

Social media

- Social media continues to be one of the main channels of communication to reach young people in The Gambia, partners, and stakeholders. On Twitter and Facebook mainly, updates on opportunities, success stories, key results and key messages are regularly shared.
- From April to June 2022, YEP has reached 40,008 people on Facebook and 60,500 impressions on Twitter. The project currently has 12,483 and 8,969 followers on Facebook and Twitter, respectively.

Email newsletter

- Activities and opportunities of YEP were covered in the ITC Gambia newsletter with currently 2,611 subscribers

Progress against key project indicators

	Progress Q2 2022	Total progress to date	Project Target
R.1.1 Skills upgraded through technical and vocational training programmes			
Number of training institutions that improved training programmes and/or operational performance	0	17	18
Number of youths completing a project funded technical and/or vocational training programme or apprenticeship	125	4,375	5,350
Number of young returning migrants supported through skills training	0	110	300
R.1.2 Entrepreneurship promoted among youth through business skills training and support programmes			
Number of youths benefitting from entrepreneurship services and business advisory support	65	4,612	4,400
Number of young returning migrants supported through entrepreneurship support	24	110	150
Number of youth centres refurbished and offering improved services	0	1	2
R.2.1 Improved compliance of Gambian products to international standards and market requirements			
Number of MSMEs sensitized on programmes on quality improvement and food safety	0	381	250
Number of Trainers trained in quality related programmes	0	108	30
Number of MSMEs certified	0	1	20
R.2.2 Improved MSME productive capacities			
Number of MSMEs demonstrating improved business practices (e.g. sales / production volumes, etc.)	413	1,400	540
Number of production centres strengthened or created	0	0	1

	Progress Q2 2022	Total progress to date	Project Target
R.2.3 Market linkages activated			
Number of participating enterprises on market linkage activities	0	1,062	270
R.2.4 Improved strategic direction and national ownership for job-centred growth			
Number of stakeholders participating in sector development initiatives	0	339	100
Number of strategic trade development action plans developed	0	5	4
Number of public-private youth platforms created / strengthened	0	5	3
R.3.1 The activities, opportunities and results of the Action are widely communicated upon national and international levels			
Number of Gambian citizens reached by the Tekki Fii campaign - Number of migrants or potential migrants reached by information campaign on migration and risks linked to irregular migration	0 ¹	283.569	200,000
Number of international media pieces published concerning the Tekki Fii campaign	01	8	50

¹ This indicator is updated at the end of each year.