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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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International Centre
for Technical and Vocational
Education and Training



FOR THE EMPOWERMENT
OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AFRICA



UNESCO-UNEVOC PROMISING PRACTICES

Young Africa

Fostering entrepreneurs

2017

Young Africa

Context

In 2014, the unemployment rate for youth (aged 15 to 24) in Mozambique stood at 40.7 per cent (World Bank, 2014). The lack of employment among youth is not a result of insufficient jobs, however. There are abundant opportunities for employment, especially in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors (Ulandssekratiatet, 2014). Unfortunately, young workers' skills are inadequately matched to the demands of these and other industries (Kruger, 2016).

Due to limited public investment in TVET, training institutions often lack the financial capacity to adapt their curricula and equipment to the changing demands of the labour market (Oketch, 2007). While international aid helps bridge the financial gaps, aid can be unreliable, as donors can suddenly reduce or withdraw funding, threatening the survival of institutions and training programmes (Boone, 1996).

The initiative and its impact

In response to the need to provide youth with skills that will afford them better prospects, either for employment or self-employment, Young Africa (YA) launched two training centres (YA centres) in Mozambique: in the cities of Beira and Dondo. The Young Africa centres were established by an international team in Zimbabwe and the Netherlands and were initially funded by donors.



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Overview

<i>Implemented by:</i>	Young Africa International
<i>Where:</i>	Mozambique, since 2007. The Young Africa Model is also implemented in Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe
<i>Theme:</i>	Youth employment
<i>Funding:</i>	Initial donor-investment. Self-sustainable franchise model.
<i>Status:</i>	As of January 2017, 2 centres in Mozambique. Young Africa is also implemented in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana & Zambia.

Mozambique has long struggled to cope with youth unemployment. Recognizing that a cause of the high youth unemployment was a lack of skills among youth, in 2007, the umbrella organization Young Africa (YA) launched a technical and vocational training programme for disadvantaged youth. The programme seeks to increase their employability, and thereby enable them to develop into productive and fulfilled citizens.

In a country where education programmes are often dependent on international aid, the Young Africa franchise model allows its centres to attain a certain level of financial independence. Students and local community members are supported in entrepreneurial efforts, which contribute to the local economy, so that the benefits of YA extend far beyond the walls of its centres.

We want other organizations and the governments to take and apply this model, because it is cost-effective, self-sustainable, and maximizes opportunities for students to join the labor market

- Dorien Beurskens, Executive Director

Under the Young Africa franchise training system, local entrepreneurs practice their professions at the YA centres and at the same time supervise and train students, for which students pay a small commitment fee. The local entrepreneurs rent from YA workshop space or land, classrooms, tools, equipment and the services of janitors and a receptionist. This income covers many of the centres' costs.

As of 2017, the YA centres offer 43 courses, including on agriculture and solar power. Additionally, every curriculum includes a module on entrepreneurship (business start-up). The centres also offer a life skills course covering topics such as HIV/AIDS, gender, leadership and human rights. The courses have durations of between two and 12 months, and trainees attend for 35 hours per week. Approximately 30 per cent of learning time is dedicated to theory, and 70 per cent to practical skills.

Beira, the larger of the two YA centres in Mozambique, trained more than 1,600 young people in 2015, of which 60 per cent were female. Post-training surveys indicate that 83 per cent of graduates become economically active, and more than a third of these are self-employed. Mozambique's Beira centre generates enough revenue to cover 100 per cent of its operational costs, greatly contributing to the sustainability of the programme.

Insights

Raising the status of self-employment

Young Africa makes youth aware that self-employment is a valid option. At the centres, students see first-hand how small businesses operate, and find inspiration as well as support through contact with local entrepreneurs. In this way, the trainees develop the skills required to set up and run small businesses themselves.

When the graduating entrepreneurs first launch their own businesses they receive coaching from the YA Entrepreneur Officer, who visits graduates at their workplaces up until six months after the conclusion of the programme, and offers assistance and advice to help the young self-starters turn their endeavours into successes.

Overcoming obstacles to participation in training

Although YA tuition fees are affordable for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, youth, particularly young women, face other, structural, obstacles. The YA centres therefore make special efforts to overcome these obstacles.

The Beira centre, for example, seeks to overcome the obstacles to participation in the training by young women with family responsibilities, such as young mothers. Crèches have been established within the centres to provide childcare services that allow mothers to join training activities.

These are so popular that they have waiting lists. The crèches were set up by enterprising young



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women and have also become spaces for courses in childcare, and function as both businesses and learning opportunities for childcare trainees.

Efforts have also been made to include disadvantaged young women who have no family. Recognizing the large number of children orphaned by diseases such as AIDS and malaria, Young Africa welcomes girls from children's homes into its hostel programme. Under this programme, a social worker and a night matron prepare the girls for a life of independence by offering instruction in domestic tasks and gardening. Staff also help the girls set up small income-generating projects with poultry that, supplemented with food donations, cover the girls' basic food and nutrition needs. Importantly, girls are informed on health issues. Survey findings indicate that over 90 per cent of graduates make life-protecting choices in terms of behaviour as regards HIV/AIDS. Given that HIV infection and maternal deaths are still prevalent, this reduction in risky behaviour is a commendable success.

Ensuring the sustainability of the centres

A key concern was to prepare the YA centres for handover to local management, a process that took several years. Accordingly, the YA executive directors provided on-the-job training for local staff, and organized leadership sessions and exchanges between the management of the centres. Since the centres have been up and running, donor funding has been gradually replaced with revenue generated through Young Africa's original franchise system.

The YA centre in Beira generates enough income to cover the centre's training related costs, the salaries of management and support staff, and administration costs, including the regular maintenance of vehicles, transport, ICT, electricity, insurance, legal fees, licenses, etc. But the procurement of equipment and land, and the organization of community outreach activities are still funded by donations.

Successful implementation of the model relies to a high degree on the engagement of the local community and the local entrepreneurs. Therefore, when training local teams, YA encourages them to be flexible in their approaches and to adapt the Young Africa programme to the contexts in which the centres are located.

Looking forward

Young Africa has expanded the programme beyond Mozambique, setting up centres in Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Next, the organization plans to expand to an additional seven countries in southern Africa, with the goal of reaching 500,000 young people by 2025.

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Published by UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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Learn more about Young Africa

Ms. Dorien Beurskens— co-founder and executive director of Young Africa— helped us compile this document. She may answer your questions at dorien.beurskens@youngafrica.org

You will also find more references on the initiative in our website at: http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=PP_YA



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