

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

Q1 2018 Update

January to March, 2018



HIGHLIGHTS



1,225
individuals trained
to date



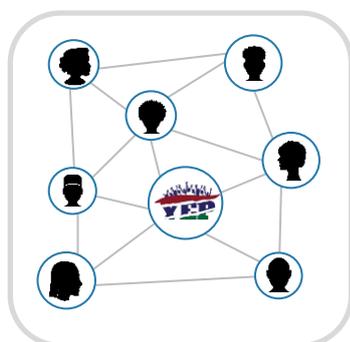
188
in Q1 2018



17
Memoranda of
Understanding
Signed to date



3
in Q1 2018



38,693
youth reached to date



595
in Q1 2018



Trainings



Facebook



Events



YEP Portal

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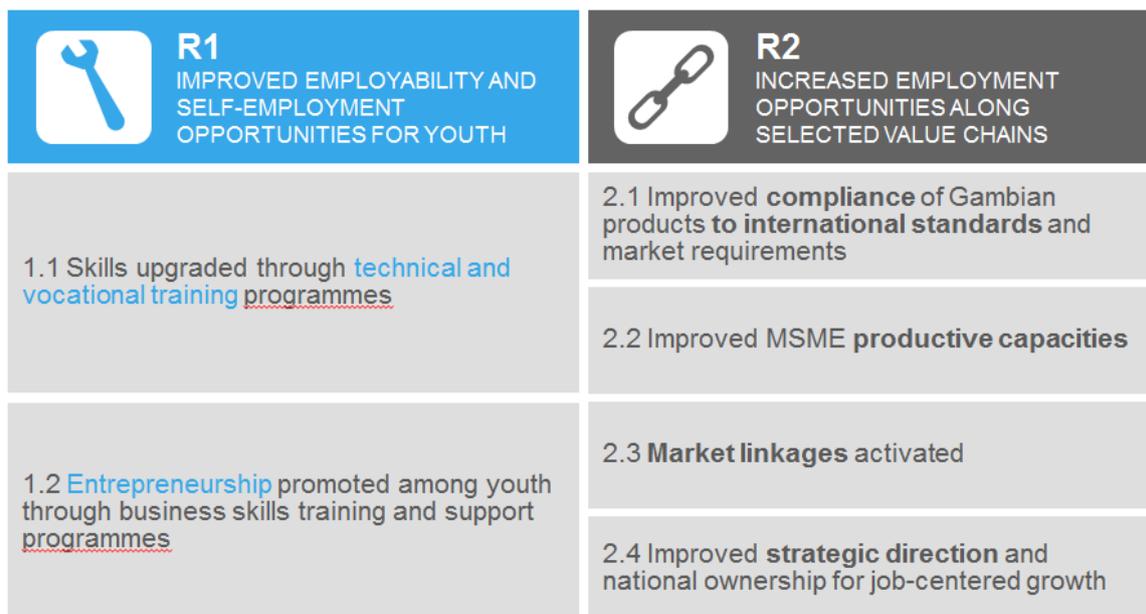
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YEP in a nutshell

The Gambia Youth Empowerment Project addresses the economic root causes of irregular migration by supporting youth employment and entrepreneurship. YEP is a four-year project funded by the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. YEP started in January 2017 and has a total budget of EUR 11 million.

The project takes a market-led approach to improving the skills and employability of potential and returning migrants according to demands of the job market while simultaneously creating employment opportunities along value chains. The project is structured around two results areas as illustrated below:



Other key areas of work include **access to finance** plus **value addition** in key sectors such as agribusiness, tourism, ICT, fashion and construction (Compressed Stabilized Earth Blocks, targeting young entrepreneurs, youth groups, brick makers, engineers and architects and contractors).

Progress in Q1 2018



1.1 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The skills development component focuses on strengthening the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions in The Gambia, enhancing the training curricula and rolling-out training programmes and apprenticeship schemes to youth. The training programmes primarily aim to contribute to skill needs in priority sectors of YEP, whilst providing youth with cross-sectoral skill sets. The Youth and Trade Roadmap developed under YEP is critical to identifying the specific occupations demanded in the priority sectors and to further develop this component based on evidence.

Institutional Capacity

- Sewing machines have been procured for the President's International Award (PIA) and are expected to be delivered and installed in April.

Training Programmes

- 104 trainees graduated from the Sterling Consortium (14 in Solar Installation and Wiring, 60 in Satellite Installation and Programming and 30 in CCTV Installation and Programming).
- 64 trainees graduated from the Gambia Telecommunication and Multimedia Institute (GTMI) (24 trained on Satellite Installations and 40 on Laptop and Mobile Repairs).
- During the graduation ceremonies held for these graduates, they demonstrated their skills with equipment and devices like mobile chargers and speakers made from improvised material available.
- The Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI) launched the request for applications on 20 March for a six-month training program in food, beverage and housekeeping for youths in the Central River Region. The objective is to have 60 young well-trained service personnel to provide better service standards for tourists visiting the region. This is the first time the GTHI courses are offered in the rural Gambia which is part of YEP's objective to decentralize skills offering to rural areas.



Apprenticeship Schemes

- The National Youth Service Scheme (NYSS) launched the Accelerated Apprenticeship Training Programme on 6th March with an objective to train 150 youth across the country. The pilot phase will focus on five skill areas: rice agronomy, plumbing, brick laying, tailoring and auto mechanics.
- NYSS will work with selected training institutions and local private sector companies to offer a mix of off the job and on-the-job training. NYSS were given copies of a work-based learning contract that they could adapt to ensure that formal activities were identified and agreed between the employer, training institution and student
- The Skills for Youth Employment (SkYE) Fund pilot phase was launched on 7th March with participation from The Gambia's top companies, industry associations and training institutions.
- The SkYE Fund will have a financial volume of USD 300,000 and aims to subsidize training for at least 1,000 youth.



1.2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The entrepreneurship component is a cross-sectoral component aiming at developing the entrepreneurship support ecosystem in The Gambia and at supporting the sector-based initiatives of YEP. Under awareness raising, the project focused on youth in the rural regions most prone to migrate.

Entrepreneurship and Business Development Support

- The Youth Entrepreneurship Summit (YES Gambia 2018) was held on 15-16 February 2018. The two-day event, organized by Startup Incubator Gambia (SIG) with YEP support, was attended by 300 participants, including active and aspiring entrepreneurs, young professionals, experts, policy makers and investors. The 16 speakers led different sessions and panel discussions on topics such as on how to promote entrepreneurship and professional development, and how to create decent jobs for all.
- Following their graduation from the EMPRETEC programme in 2017, 150 MSMEs across the country are benefiting from business development services (BDS). Monitoring and evaluation for the first 3 months of the 6-month cycle is currently ongoing.
- On 10 February 2018, the first class of 25 trainees graduated from the Youth Mentorship Programme organized by the Gambia Chapter of the Global Youth Innovation Network (GYIN) with YEP support. The 25 young trainees went through an intensive three months mentoring on enterprise management and have since made notable changes to their businesses and their productivity.
- After a first training of trainers in Design Thinking organised by YEP in December 2017, nine of the potential new trainers facilitated a 5-day training on design thinking at the Startup Incubator Gambia (SIG) from 12 to 16 March 2018. During the training, the participants learnt how to take a design thinking approach to developing their businesses, while the trainee trainers gained practical experience in facilitating the process, thereby taking a step towards becoming certified design thinking trainers.
- On 28 March 2018, YEP, in collaboration with Bridging Gaps Advisory organised an event in celebration of Women's month bringing together current and future female leaders of The Gambia including very inspiring speakers. At the occasion, attended by 58 participants, YEP and Bridging Gaps launched a joint Mentoring Scheme for Women which entails match making of young women with experienced women for guidance and support over a six-month period. The platform was also used to create more awareness on SheTrades, ITC's global initiative to connect 1 million women entrepreneurs to markets by 2020
- ITC launched a Request for Proposal for service providers that can offer a traineeship or mentorship programme for young Gambians to acquire skills through on-the-job trainings in creative industries. The service provider should be an enterprise in show business, entertainment business, cultural service provision, concert production, radio or TV production or similar activity. ITC received seven proposals and is now conducting the technical and financial evaluation.



Facilitate Access to Finance

- In January 2018, YEP opened the application process for the mini-grant scheme in partnership with the National Association of Cooperative Credit Unions of The Gambia (NACCUG). The scheme is expected to disburse 250,000 USD as mini-grants to grassroots entrepreneurs, with maximum grant size of 1,000 USD. NACCUG is in charge of disbursing the mini-grants and providing coaching and financial literacy training to all beneficiaries.
- The mini-grant scheme aims to facilitate acquisition of equipment, materials, licences and other business critical inputs and assets for grassroots entrepreneurs. Moreover, through

the financial literacy trainings, the mini-grant scheme seeks to ensure that beneficiaries improve their capacity to save, exercise financial planning and separate their private funds from the funds of the business. It prepares the beneficiaries and their businesses for being eligible for more sophisticated financial solutions to further develop and grow their businesses. It also increases the understanding of financial management in general.

- In order to manage the scheme, a Grant Coordination Committee was set up. This committee meets on a regular basis to review the mini-grant applications and select beneficiaries. During the first two months of implementation of the scheme, out of over 130 applications, 22 entrepreneurs were selected. The selected entrepreneurs have taken part into an orientation meeting to get familiarised with the YEP project and receive initial financial counselling. Applications are open on a rolling basis and disbursement is ongoing.
- Targeting more established entrepreneurs YEP is soon to launch a mini-loans scheme. The mini-loans scheme aims to facilitate access to finance for young entrepreneurs and MSMEs currently not eligible or not able to access to bank credit. More specifically, it aims at facilitating the acquisition of small machinery and equipment, acquisition of new premises, improvement and expanding of existing premises, and working capital for young entrepreneurs desiring to grow their businesses. The medium-term objective is to familiarise young entrepreneurs with banking products, graduate, and eventually become ready to access commercial financial products.
- Loans under the Mini-Loans Scheme should be disbursed to target final beneficiaries with a reduced interest rate and collateral requirements. This is possible due to YEP offering an alternative risk mitigation option, which serves as partial collateral for the loans disbursed. The target average loan amount per beneficiary will be of USD 3,000.
- ITC has open a call for proposals from local financial service providers. ITC received proposals and clarifications commenced with shortlisted bidders. Currently, YEP is finalising the technical analysis of proposals to run the scheme.
- In March, ITC's access to finance team conducted a scoping mission to assess the feasibility of supporting high growth small businesses and start-ups with a dedicated facility to support their expansion. The possibilities discussed during the mission include diaspora funding, equity finance, and crowdfunding.

Awareness Raising on Economic Opportunities

Launch of the Returnee Assessment by MOTIE

- In January 2018, YEP supported the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Regional Integration to launch the maiden report of the assessment conducted on 295 returnees from Libya and Niger. This also coincided with the launch of the Migration and Sustainable Goal for The Gambia.



2.1 QUALITY

Compliance to standards component is a cross-sectoral component aiming at promoting quality, productivity improvement and food safety in businesses initiated by the youth and at supporting the sector-based initiatives of YEP.

- A 5-day follow up Training of Trainers (TOT) was conducted from 26 February to 2 March on introduction to quality and food safety for 30 trainers.
- The first part the training conducted October 2017, followed by sensitisation workshops. The follow up training aimed at consolidating the learnings of the young trainers.

- The Food Safety and Quality Authority (FSQA) trained 26 youth on Food Safety Mechanism from 26-30 March in Farafenni, North Bank Region. The trainees were mainly female entrepreneurs from Lower River and Central River Regions. This capacity building will enhance compliance to food safety standards and consumer protection, improve businesses and contribute to the viability & growth potential of the food sector. The first roll out training was in December 2017 with 26 youth from the tourism industry.
- YEP plans to have other events for the year with the future trainers specialised in quality management and food safety in collaboration with TGSB & TGQA.



2.2 PRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES

Processed Groundnuts, Cashew and Cereals

Through stakeholder consultations and preliminary assessments conducted in 2017, the project identified a number of opportunities and income-generating activities that meet both market attractiveness criteria and relevance/suitability criteria for the youth. These include: (1) Processed Groundnut (GN) and Cashew; (2) Backyard Poultry Farming (egg and meat); (3) Local Building Materials (Compressed and Stabilized Earth Blocks/CSEB) and (4) Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

Handing over Decorticating machines

- YEP handed over five groundnut decorticating machines worth about half million Dalasi on 14 March 2018 to four processors/traders and one farmer group in the North Bank and Central River Regions.
- The machines will help make the processor's operations more efficient, thereby creating jobs for young people in agro-processing. Each machine can decorticate (remove groundnut husks) one ton (1000kg) of groundnuts in every one hour.



Community Based Tourism

- On 16 January, YEP in partnership with the National Council for Arts and Culture, the Gambia Tourism Board and the Association of Small Scale Enterprises in Responsible Tourism supported the revival of the Kankurang Festival in Janjanbureh. The festival was attended by both local and international tourists from over 10 countries (Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, UK, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Norway, Austria, Switzerland and USA). It is now envisaged to be an annual event to boost tourism and as part of the larger initiative to empower the youth of the Central River Region.
- From 18 to 27 February, the villages of Tabanani and Jamali, Central River Region, hosted the follow up training of the then 5 youth from Janjanbureh on community-based tourism.

- The training was facilitated by two master trainers, with 30 selected participants from Tabanani and Jamali.
- YEP conducted the second phase of the CBT from the 14th to 22nd March 2018. The training was conducted in Bakau and the Village of Ndembane (West Coast Region) and was concluded with a meeting and strategic session with key tourism stakeholders in the country including Tour operators. .



2.3 MARKET LINKAGES

- In February, YEP supported a study tour for 17 young entrepreneurs to visit the well-established Dakar Farmers Market in Senegal, in partnership with the Association of Small Scale Enterprises in Tourism.
- Participants engaged with practical exercises on developing entrepreneurial skills and improving the quality of their products. The study tour is followed by mentorship support provided by ASSERT in cooperation with NEDI and ITTOG.
- The Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) and YEP are again hosting a Youth Pavilion at this year's Trade Fair Gambia International, where young entrepreneurs from a range of different sectors are exhibiting their products. In preparation for the trade fair, which is running from 24 March until 15 April 2018, the 30 selected entrepreneurs participated in a pre-fair training on products on 10 March 2018 covering topics like marketing, trade fair etiquette, food safety amongst others.



2.4 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Youth and Trade Roadmap aims to assess business opportunities to foster youth employment and to identify potential skill gaps. The roadmap design process is developed around a series of public-private-youth consultations to bring together all stakeholders to identify the main development issues and market opportunities across the most dynamic sectors. This analytical process has also included the identification of competitiveness constraints at the MSME level through a business survey and the assessment of the main training institutions' capacities. The first part of the consultative process has resulted in the definition of a detailed list of opportunities along different value-chains that present economic sustainability, market growth opportunities and high potential for youth integration.

SYTDR Validation Event

- In February 2018, around 100 representatives from more than 40 organizations, including youth associations, public and private organizations, announced their support to the Youth and Trade Roadmap (SYTDR), developed as part of YEP.
- The roadmap aims to empower youth through skills development and entrepreneurship.



Visibility

- In February, YEP launched its News Flash, an informative newsletter on YEP main activities and open opportunities. The newsletter is distributed to a large database, which includes YEP beneficiaries, government counterparts, development partners, media, among others. The newsletter has been released on a fortnightly basis (4 issues to date).
- In Q1, there were 89 publications at the YEP Facebook Group (29% increase), 1,241 active members and 255 new members. In the twitter page, YEP posted 75 tweets, was mentioned in 427 tweets, acquired 254 new followers and received 1,692 page visits. The YEP Portal had circa 1,700 visitors in the period, which translated into around 2,800 sessions.
- YEP has finalised the evaluation of designs submitted to its Car Branding Design Competition. The winner is to be announced soon.