

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

Annual Progress Report - Short version



January to December
2021

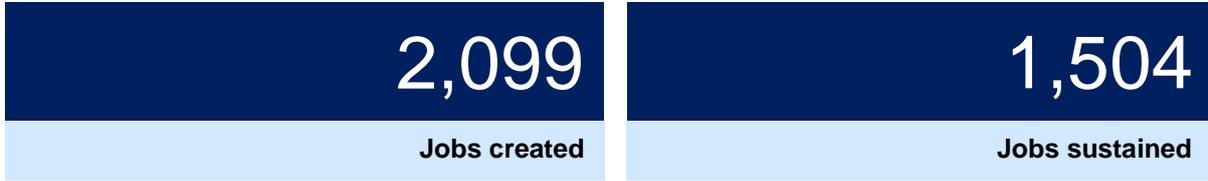


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1. Highlights 2021

Jobs for youth



Individuals supported



53%

Women



47%

Men



15

Returnees

Skill trainees per region



Entrepreneurship support & access to finance



Capacity building at MSMEs



Compliance with international standards



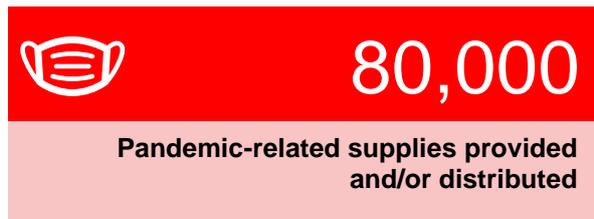
Outreach



Sector development



Mitigation of the pandemic



2. Success Stories

YEP grant allows Ellen Sambou to enter a male-dominated field

“My biggest motivation has been wanting to do things that people think cannot be done by a woman.”, Ellen Sambou says.

Ellen Sambou has always been keen on challenging existing gender norms and empowering others to fulfil their full potential. Therefore, she studied refrigeration and air conditioning, a male-dominated field. With a YEP mini grant of D50,000, the entrepreneur was able to rent a store and buy essential materials to improve her business. Currently, she is training three apprentices and is planning to empower even more women in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector.

<https://yep.gm/blog/ellen-sambou-young-woman-set-inspire-generation-women-through-her-technical-venture>



Abdourahman Jobarteh succeeds in his entrepreneurial journey

A family member convinced Abdourahman Jobarteh to seek his fortune in The Gambia instead of migrating. After initial hesitation, he discovered the poultry training programme by GIEPA. With his new skill set and a Tekki Fii grant, he was started a poultry farm. Motivated by this learning experience, he applied for the pilot Youth Tricycle Initiative. The initiative aims to improve transport challenges through a youth-led approach. Today, Abdourahman Jobarteh makes good use of the waiting time until his chickens are grown with his tricycle business.

“I learned so much but most importantly, the marketing lesson was great in getting me to understand how to make good customers”, Abdourahman Jobarteh says.

<https://yep.gm/blog/abdourahman-jobarteh-young-entrepreneur-defining-tekki-fii-path>



Sainabou Gaye redefines the Gambian fashion world

29-year-old Sainabou Gaye is the founder of the African Swag Collection. She started her fashion brand with just GMD 3,000 (approx. USD 50) which she invested in a household sewing machine and scissors. Today, her company is listed among the top-ten fashion brands in The Gambia. With the support from YEP and the Andandorr Export Advancement Programme, she expanded her network as one of the representatives from The Gambia to the African Continental Free Trade Area Programme.

"The most important element I learned, which is beneficial to my business, is networking. It is the fastest way of building business linkages and maximizing brand visibility." Sainabou Gaye says.

<https://yep.gm/blog/sainabou-gaye-fashion-enthusiast-redefining-gambian-fashion-industry>



Muhammed Ceesay gains a livelihood through satellite installation

Initially thinking of migrating to Europe, Muhammed Ceesay instead challenged himself to improve his skills and start a business. With the support of the SkYE Fund and the YEP mini-grant, Muhammed Ceesay started his digital business PROSPECTIVE. Today, he already employs five people and accommodates interns from different schools. Muhammed Ceesay calls young people to challenge themselves to do something beneficial to the country.

"I must say, Tekki Fii is one of the best youth programmes in The Gambia. It is encouraging and challenging youths to learn skills, do business and make it in The Gambia." Muhammed Ceesay says.

<https://yep.gm/blog/vsatellite-installation-means-sustainable-livelihood-muhammed-cesay>



Ndey Fatou stirs up the entertainment industry

Ndey Fatou Jabang is the founder of Flex Fuzion Entertainment and The Dance Academy, The Gambia's first dance company. With the support of YEP, her team works on empowering youth in the creative industry. Through her companies, dancers get the chance to compete against each other in the biggest dance competition in The Gambia. Ndey Fatou Jabang has proven that dance can not only embrace traditions but also be a valuable source of income.

"People think dance doesn't pay the bills. I had to work on changing minds, not only on the importance of dance but also on its role in creating jobs." Ndey Fatou Jabang says.



<https://yep.gm/blog/dancing-kept-me-and-many-young-people-streets>

3. Impact and Mitigation of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic and urged the international community to adopt measures which prevent and mitigate its spread. In response, the government of The Gambia adopted the following measures: suspension of international flights and closure of borders, prohibition of gatherings of more than ten people, complete or partial closure of markets, closure of schools and educational establishments and restrictions on public transportation. These measures stayed in place for the majority of 2021.

YEP continued to adapt its activities and to implement specific initiatives to support Gambians in their fight against the pandemic. The support included awareness raising, production and distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as entrepreneurial solutions for new challenges. Moreover, YEP supported institutions to move services online, provided financial, and technical assistance to companies to adapt to the new circumstances as well as enhanced market linkages for vulnerable producers.

As in 2020, the Tekki Fii communications strategy included awareness raising on COVID-19. The campaign involved videos featuring influential Gambians and billboards with key messages related to the prevention and spreading of the disease.



To mitigate the devastating effects of the pandemic, seven Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centres were engaged to produce 80,000 facemasks. This support helped reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the garment and fashion sector by providing a source of revenue and allowing business to retain their staff. The mask production supported preventive measures of COVID-19 but it also provided socioeconomic support to the TVET centres and offered on-the-job training to trainees in tailoring.

At TVET centres, the classroom sizes were reduced to follow the requirement of physical distancing. The project promoted the implementation of additional safety measures by ensuring the compliance of COVID protocol and health guidelines developed in 2020 and by handing over face masks to the TVET partners. The project facilitated online delivery of trainings for poultry farmers and entrepreneurs, coupled with complimentary distance coaching to farmers and businesses.

As a result of the lockdown of local markets in the Gambia, horticultural produces in rural areas were confronted with severe challenges to market their produce. To facilitate market linkages between urban centres and upcountry farmers, YEP, SheTrades Gambia and IMVF jointly supported the Government of The Gambia in linking local producers to markets. The initiative facilitated the purchase of 9,643 bags of onions from local farmers amounting to 174 tons. In total, 1,242 small holder farmers including 1,200 women were supported through these market linkages with a transactional volume of over 4.4 million Dalasi.

To enhance the environment for personnel and tourists in The Gambia and facilitate the reopening of the tourism sector, YEP in partnership with the Gambia Tourism Board, the Ministry of Health, and the Spanish and Gambian Red Cross, implemented capacity building measures on infection prevention. The training of trainers covered 443 service providers and establishments in the tourism industry. Additionally, YEP handed over 40,000 reusable and locally made facemasks to the Gambia Tourism Board.

4. Key Achievements in 2021

Skills Development

Across the different target sectors, YEP continued its work on boosting skills development for Gambian youth and linking trainings with employment or self-employment opportunities. In 2021, 959 youths have graduated from technical YEP trainings. Another 710 youth are currently enrolled and will graduate in 2022.

Skills for Youth Employment Fund

The second round of the Skills for Youth Employment (SkYE) Fund was successfully concluded in 2021. The project, awarded contracts to four training institutions to train close 700 youths in a broad range of skill areas such as catering, tailoring, electric installation, and IT support, to just name a few. All training programmes have ended while some of the institutions are still working on job placements of the graduates.



Vocational training graduates were trained in the following professions:

Training Institution	Training Programme	Total trainees
Gaye Njorro Skills Academy	Catering	101
	Hairdressing Design & Beauty Cosmetology	100
	Tailoring & Garment Construction	101
Gambia Technical Training Institute	Carpentry & Joinery	36
	Electrical Installation	30
	Refrigerator & Air Conditioning	8
	Rural Mechanics	20
	Welding & Fabrication	36
Indian Institute of Hardware Technology	Diploma in IT Technical Support	31
	Diploma in Professional Graphic Designer	38
	Diploma in Professional Network Support Technician	34
	Diploma in Professional Web Developer	31
Sterling Consortium	Aluminium fabrication and Installation	20

	Plumbing and Pipe Fitting	20
	Satellite Installation	40
	Vehicle Diagnostic Technique and Repair	20
Total		666

Two of the contracted institutions have concluded their work on job creation. They have achieved the target of more than 50% employment of the trained course participants:

Training Institution	Training Programme	Job Placement
Indian Institute of Hardware Technology	Diploma in IT Technical Support	17 (55%)
	Diploma in Professional Graphic Designer	19 (50%)
	Diploma in Professional Network Support Technician	18 (53%)
	Diploma in Professional Web Developer	27 (87%)
Sterling Consortium	Aluminium fabrication and Installation	10 (50%)
	Plumbing and Pipe Fitting	15 (75%)
	Satellite Installation	29 (73%)
	Vehicle Diagnostic Technique and Repair	20 (100%)
Total		155

Particularly in the technology-oriented courses, returnees were successfully reintegrated in the Gambian labour market (ca. 45% of the trainees employed were returnees).

For the third round of the SKYE Fund, ITC was working even closer with NAQAA to incorporate national standards in the assessment of proposals. The application process for training institutions has been re-designed to include a two-step assessment, including on-site visits and NAQAA inputs. The improved process ensures that training programmes are aligned with national quality standards and that trainees receive certification. In addition, the applied approach improves national ownership of the SKYE Fund model.

Following the selection of training institutions, the third round of the SKYE Fund was successfully kicked-off in August 2021. ITC has awarded funds to 8 training providers to deliver 26 programmes to a total of 710 trainees. The institutions are:

- The Gambia Technical Training Institute,
- Sterling Technical Training Centre,
- GayeNjoro Skills Academy,
- Indian Institute of Hardware Technology,
- Crab Island Technical and Vocational Training Centre,
- Gambia Telecommunications and Multimedia Institute,
- Smart Professional and Golden Hands.

The training programmes cover a broad range of technical skills with high demand in the Gambian labour market such as mechanics, construction, electrical and satellite installation, catering, tailoring, hairdressing, or digital technology. All the institutions have completed the student recruitment and are now in the training phase.

Other TVET trainings across sectors

With partners such as The Institute of Travel and Tourism of The Gambia (ITTOG), the Austrian Embassy in Dakar, the National Centre for Arts and Culture, , and Women Initiative Gambia (WIG), YEP concluded training programmes in event management, museum management, and heritage management. In addition, YEP rolled out craft production trainings for 120 women in communities along the Ninki Nanka Trail rolled out to diversify incomes. Two Gambian private security companies, Five Star Security and Prestige Security Gambia Limited, partnered with YEP to train 200 youths to take up jobs in the private security sector.



Institutional Strengthening

In collaboration with the National Accreditation and Quality Association (NAQAA), YEP has supported the development of seven new standards and curricula for TVET in high growth areas. The project funded the development of three standards and curricula for creative industries, including music production and management, photography and filming, and event planning and management. Moreover, the collaboration launched the recognition of prior learning programmes completed by experienced master craft persons in film, photography, music production and management.

YEP further supported The Gambia Standards Bureau in developing technical standards on Compressed Stabilised Earth Blocks, a sustainable technology for the construction sector. Additionally, the project supported capacity building of 15 staff of the Food Safety and Quality Authority on the revised Preventive Controls for Human Food Regulations on Export of Certain Products into the United States by the American Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA). YEP also supported the The Gambia Quality Association (TGQA) and strengthened the new association. Moreover, the Department Livestock Services (DLS) Central Veterinary Laboratory was provided with equipment to enhance their capacity in diagnosing poultry diseases.

Institutions in the Garment Sector

Following the development of a national standard and curriculum on Garment Construction, six TVETs active in the fashion sector benefitted from modern industrial sewing machines:

- Insight Training Centre,
- Club Foire Training Centre,
- Presentation Girls Vocational School,
- Fajara Skills Development Centre,

- Ida's Ideas Design Institute,
- and Bakoteh Community Centre;

Following a competitive process, ITC contracted PIA, Insight Training Centre and Fajara Skills Development Centre to deliver training programmes to 160 youths on garment construction using the new curriculum.

Institutions in the Poultry Sector

A group of trainers from four training institutions have benefitted from the second phase of the training of trainers in Poultry Management. The institutions are Njawara Agricultural Training Centre, the Gambia Songhai Initiative, the Gambia College School of Agriculture, and the Rural Development Organisation. The ToT covered curriculum development, instruction methods and technical skills of poultry management and housing. The programme which was developed in partnership with PUM Netherlands Senior Experts included an assessment of the capacities and gaps regarding training infrastructure and facilities and poultry farm visits. Face-to-face online poultry management trainings were carried out with 50 poultry farmers in four cohorts. The training equipped the farmers with improved skills in brooding, feeding, biosecurity, poultry health and vaccination, farm data management and marketing.



Entrepreneurship

The entrepreneurship and access to finance component of the YEP project is an integral component to complement the ongoing work in all sectors to unleash the potential of the young entrepreneurs. While many of them are still recovering from the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, many had to also adjust to trends such as digitalisation.

In 2021, the YEP flagship entrepreneurship programme Andandoor registered remarkable achievements. The ecosystem Customer Relationship Management system was broadly launched, all training and coaching for the 5 sectors in the pilot programme were completed, fostered by increased collaboration between BSOs which implemented the programme. Noting the demand for further generic entrepreneurship training, the project focused on the implementation of tailored support to the enterprises under the Andandoor programme, complementary training of TVET graduates and engagements with partners to increase the responsiveness of BSOs to the needs of the ecosystem in the medium to long term. This approach increased the sustainability of the gains made under the project.

Institutional Support and Ecosystem Strengthening

The key highlight in 2021 on institutional strengthening and knowledge management in



the Gambian entrepreneurship ecosystem was the work on fully establishing the Andandoor Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform anchored at GIEPA. Following a series of Training of Trainers and engagements with BSOs, the CRM was officially launched at the end of June by the Honourable Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration & Employment (MOTIE). The CRM provides an ecosystem-wide tracking mechanism for entrepreneurs and business support organisations. It will help to monitor results, increase collaboration, reduce duplications, and improve the service offering across organisations.

The monthly Andandoor Talks by YEP and its partner Innovate Gambia allows young entrepreneurs to learn from thought leaders and experienced entrepreneurs in their respective trade.

Andandoor Programme Across Sectors

The acceleration phase of the Andandorr Programme for the first cohort of 100 entrepreneurs classified in 3 levels of maturity in the creative industries, fashion, agribusiness, poultry and ICT ended in 2021. This final phase consisted of tailored technical trainings, business support services, financial support, market linkage activities, and mentoring by national and global leaders.

17 entrepreneurs graduated in November 2021 from the agribusiness incubation programme in partnership with Startup Incubator Gambia. The programme consisted of intensive business development training, one-on-one coaching, access to a co-working space, advisory from sector experts, lecture series featuring successful Gambian entrepreneurs and regular networking opportunities to facilitate peer learning and partnerships. 19 promising entrepreneurs in the poultry sector went through an introductory and advanced remote poultry training facilitated by the PUM experts. The framers also benefited from 1:1 advisory through including onsite visits in-country.

16 entrepreneurs completed the 9-months accelerator programme in 2021 empowering them to build sustainable businesses in the creative industries. The programme led by Innovate Gambia included mentorship support, sector-specific training, and networking opportunities. The graduation featured an exhibition with a pitch contest by the artists who promoted their products and services. In May, nine photographers and videographers benefitted from a documentary storytelling masterclass as part of the Programme. The training was complemented by a coaching program and led to a national photo exhibition.



The entrepreneurs in the Andandorr fashion cohort went through a 6-months intensive incubation programme with Startup Incubator Gambia (SIG). A total of 19 fashion designers completed the programme.

Business Development Support

In 2021, entrepreneurship training and business development support services at level 1 of the Andandoor Programme focused on TVET graduates to complement their technical skills training to successfully start their own businesses. The project partner GIEPA held a six-day entrepreneurship training for TVET graduates across West Coast Region.



Project partners the Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce (GYCC) and the Information Technology Association of the Gambia (ITAG) rolled out digital literacy courses for 50 entrepreneurs. The training equipped them with digital marketing skills and the capacity on setting up social media accounts to boost brand visibility. YEP in partnership with Start-up Incubator Gambia and the UTG on-campus Hult Prize Initiative launched its first mentorship programme for student entrepreneurs.

YEP Tech

In 2021, 375 participants including 227 youth took part in training programmes in the tech component of YEP. Activities reached from webinars on business development for start-ups in the context of COVID-19, a one-on-one coaching programme on crisis management for founders from IT companies to the “HackCOVID Challenge”, a hackathon in partnership with ITAG and HackWeakEnd. The company “The Web Way” won the competition with a voice & knowledge-based chatbot addressing COVID-19 questions.

Packaging

In 2021, the project provided training and one-on-one coaching on packaging to MSMEs in textile and fashion, horticulture, and agro-processing. YEP continued to institutionalise the capacity building of packaging trainers and the provision of advisory services through the Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce (GYCC), which now has knowledge to train and mentor youth entrepreneurs with minimal support from project. In collaboration with GYCC, YEP trained 57 entrepreneurs on packaging to boost their competitiveness. Experts of The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB) were invited to address requirements related to labelling and certification. The course was part of the preparation support for the National Youth and Women Agribusiness and Tourism Expo (YATE). Moreover, graduates of the Entrepreneurship, Leadership & Information Technology Camp, benefitted from a 3-day packaging and labelling training.

The project continued to maintain a packaging hub in collaboration with Gambia Horticulture Enterprises (GHE) which provides packaging materials to young entrepreneurs across the country at affordable rates. The hub is popular among MSMEs. The project will explore to replicate the model at other locations together with a private sector partner. With the support in packaging, YEP was able to observe tangible changes in product appearance with innovative packaging developments, increasing market access.

Youth Centres

ITC in collaboration with the National Youth Council continued the refurbishment and expansion of two Youth Centres. The construction work of the youth centre in Janjanbureh has been completed in December 2021. The work included the renovation of the hall and accommodation block and construction of a kitchen and the visitor's reception centre. The youth centre in Farafenni is under development and has been linked to a Cash4Work programme implemented in collaboration with Enabel. The main structure has been built and the work on the finishing, the restaurant and accommodation block is underway. In parallel, YEP and NYC have engaged partners to support the operationalization of the youth centres and the provision of services including the job advisory, IT, restauration, and accommodation.



Access to Finance

Start-ups face many obstacles when launching their businesses, one of the most challenging is access to capital. In 2021, YEP consolidated its three-tier approach to provide access to finance to companies at different stages. This approach allows enterprises to grow sustainably and eventually become ready to access commercial financial products.

The YEP Mini Grant Scheme

The first step is the Mini Grant Scheme, targeting grassroots entrepreneurs, with the aim of making it possible for them to purchase equipment, materials, permits, and other business-critical inputs.

In 2021, 188 grants were approved and disbursed with a total of 9,374,896 GMD. In addition, 36 grants were already approved in 2020 but only disbursed in 2021 with a value of 1,782,575 GMD. Due to the large demand, the Tekki Fii Mini Grant Scheme suspended applications for two months in the beginning of 2021. The National Association of Cooperative Credit Unions Gambia (NACCUG) used the time to review a backlog of applications and prepare them for review by the Grants Committee. The scheme re-opened on 1 April.

2021 also marked the last year of the YEP-funded grants. During four phases since 2018, 609 grants with an average amount of 48,000 GMD, totalling to 29,010,659 GMD (ca. 508,210 USD) were approved and disbursed. Nearly half of the beneficiaries (41%) are between 26-30 years. The majority (62%) of the recipients were male, 20% returnees. Entrepreneurs active in the service sector benefitted mostly from the grants (56%), followed by Fashion/ Textile (15%) and Poultry (14%). The coastal areas (43% for West Coast Region and 31% for Greater Banjul Area) were most prominent amongst the six regions. Since its inception the Mini-Grant Scheme has sustained and/or created at least 1,535 jobs.

The YEP Mini Loan Scheme

For young Gambian entrepreneurs and MSMEs currently unable to access bank credit, the YEP Mini Loan Scheme offers credit products at reduced interest rates and against modest collateral, with ITC providing partial loan guarantees. Through the Mini Loan Scheme, ITC unlocked over USD 250,000 in private capital for youth-owned businesses to date. 41 working capital loans and 10 equipment loans have been disbursed. Four enterprises received both types of loans. Overall, the scheme enabled 47 businesses to expand their operations and consolidate and/or create 304 jobs. Due to the project ending in 2022, the applications for the scheme were closed end of 2021 to ensure that all entrepreneurs have sufficient time to pay back the loans.

In 2021, the Social Development Fund (SDF) has disbursed three loans for the acquisition of transport tricycles. The objective of this scheme is to provide self-employment opportunities to youth and at the same time relieving transport constraints of the Kanifing Municipality.

The Gambia Angel Investor Network

To cater for high-growth enterprises, ITC continued to support the establishment of the Gambia Angels Investors Network (GAIN), the first of its kind in the country. GAIN was formally launched in July 2019 with the support of 12 founding members and technical assistance from ITC through YEP. In 2021, GAIN hosted their first annual general meeting, bringing together member investors. During the year, GAIN offered several training and support activities to entrepreneurs and business support institutions.

GAIN and Vertis Capital trained 24 high-growth entrepreneurs on investment readiness. The six-day workshop focused on financial statements and investment documents such as term sheet, shareholder agreement, and convertible notes. One-to-one support was provided to 13 entrepreneurs on the use of financial models and pitch deck templates. GAIN and Vertis also supported five BSOs with a training of trainers on "Building suitable Investment Readiness Programmes for Start-ups". The training helped the organisations to support their clients in becoming ready for attracting external funding through training, mentoring, and networking. In 2021, GAIN also closed its second investment deal. This initial investment of USD 25,000 was secured by the Gambian service company Indil Ltd.

Quality

In 2021, the quality component focused on food safety for domestic and export markets. The project partner the Gambian Food Safety and Quality Association (FSQA) implemented a training for their staff and food operators targeting the US market. The programme focused on the revised American Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) Preventive Controls for Human Food Regulations. Additionally, FSQA delivered a three-days course on ISO 22000 for their staff and members of The Gambia Quality Association (TGQA).

In collaboration with the Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI), tourism food establishments as well as food processors across the country received training on the



implementation of Good Hygienic Practices (GHP), including COVID-related measures. Promising enterprises will receive additional coaching and certifications support in 2022.

YEP partnered with the Gambia Tourism Board, the Spanish and Gambian Red Cross, the Ministry of Health and others to support the tourism industry in its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The joint programme included a training of trainers for service providers in tourism, both from the formal and informal sector. The training covered the implementation of mandatory and voluntary guidelines of infection prevention and control to ensure a safe environment for staff and tourists. Moreover, YEP together with FSQA rolled out food safety sensitization including COVID-19 related measures in 5 schools across regions.

Productive Capacities

The project provided a combination of support to enhance the competitiveness and sales for MSMEs through training in packaging, transport logistics support, support to industry associations and facilitation of B2B meetings.

Agro-processing & Poultry

Following the outbreak of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) or H5N9 in Senegal YEP in collaboration with the Netherlands Senior Experts (PUM) organised an online poultry stakeholder conference to sensitise them on the identification and preventive measures of the disease. In addition, the project supported the Department of Livestock Services (DLS) in the efforts to sensitise the general public and poultry stakeholders on the signs and symptoms and the preventive measures of HPAI. The project provided support to produce 3,000 posters and 5,000 flyers for distribution. There are ongoing efforts to enhance the capacity of the Central Veterinary Laboratory by supplying laboratory materials for the diagnostic of poultry diseases worth over \$46,000.

To support the poultry industry, YEP in partnership with EMPASS Poultry Farm and technical support from PUM addressed the shortage of day-old chicks through the supply of 25,720 fertile eggs to supply youth poultry farmers. EMPASS has since been revolving the revenue received to buy further fertile eggs and supply farmers. Leveraging the existing partnership between YEP and PUM Netherlands Senior experts, 20 poultry farmers of the Andandorr Programme and members of the Young Farmers Association concluded a 5-week online training on advanced poultry management.

The agro-processors that received agro-processing equipment in 2018/2019 continue to be active and a recent follow up survey conducted in the last quarter of 2021 showed that the investment has created more than 1,000 direct jobs and realised over GMD 400 million (USD 8 million) in revenues over the past 2 years. This nearly double the job creation projected for the support.



Fashion

In partnership with the Bakoteh community and the Kanifing Municipal Council, YEP made significant progress in establishing the Bakoteh Production & Innovation Centre. The centre will serve as a hub for the production training and commercialization of textile and fashion products. YEP and the stakeholders completed the renovation of the garment production facilities and hired a centre manager. In April, YEP in collaboration with textile experts in India organised a joint workshop for fashion designers in The Gambia and India. The workshop was tailored to enhance linkages between Gambian and Indian Fashion designers to support the product development processes at the Production and Innovation Centre.

Market Linkages

Andandorr Export Advancement Programme

YEP in collaboration with GIEPA launched the pilot Export Advancement Programme (EAP) as a component of the Andandoor Programme. The tailored EAP targeted the fashion and food & beverages industries. Seven coaches from BSOs, the private sector, and individual experts were selected to provide export advisory to 24 MSMEs. The EAP commenced by developing sector-specific export training materials and a ToT delivered by international experts. The programme was co-implemented in collaboration with YEP partner GIEPA to build capacity. The programme aimed to foster export and marketing coaching in the country and simultaneously support the participating enterprises to reach the next level.



The food & beverage component ended with three virtual showcase events which focused on exporters to build relationships with selected regional and international importers and wholesalers. This way, YEP helped to establish supply chains from The Gambia and promote the Gambian Food & Beverage Export Sector. 22 of the 24 enterprises in the programme concluded with detailed marketing plans as well as export action plans, 17 founders produced promo videos to introduce their products to foreign consumers.

The MSMEs of the fashion component participated in Fashion Weekend Gambia 2021 with an international audience after their training and coaching. The event celebrated its 10th year edition under the theme Sustainability in December. Ceasing the occasion, YEP provided training and coaching to ten additional designers and 36 models participating in the event, and to the event team.

Trade fairs

YEP together with The Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) invited to the 14th Trade Fair Gambia International (TFGI). The trade fair and its Youth Pavilion provided young entrepreneurs and associations the opportunity to showcase their businesses and network. The project team was very pleased to welcome The Gambian President Adama Barrow at the official opening of the Trade Fair Gambia International which included a visit of the Tekki Fii Youth Pavillion. Similar to previous years, TFGI featured a Youth & Women Day which was supported by the project. The inspiring booklet introducing some of the exhibiting entrepreneurs can be downloaded here:



<https://yep.gm/storage/app/uploads/public/60b/4a4/fba/60b4a4fbae6c1241959279.pdf>

The Fashion Weekend Gambia celebrated its 10th year edition on the theme Sustainability. The runway featured designers from the Export Advancement Programme who also exhibited at the event's marketplace.



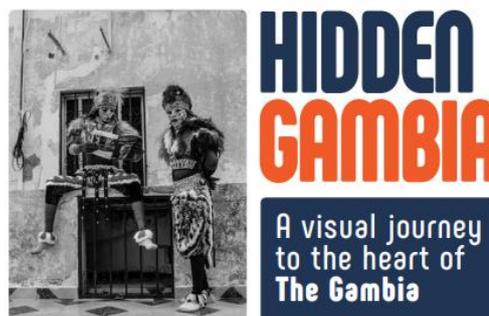
Tourism & Creative Industries

Through the support of YEP, the Janjangbureh Tours Guides Association completed the recruitment of four local staff which support the operation of the Visitor and Information Centre in Janjangbureh. The project also provided financial and technical support on implementation and promotion of community-based tourism in the Central River Region.

To promote domestic tourism, YEP launched the Go Experience Gambia challenge provide businesses in tourism a platform to present their products and services. In support of “building forward better”, YEP organized an international press trip featuring the iconic Ninki Nanka Trail and a selection of community-based tourism products. The trip increased the visibility of the

destination The Gambia with publications on National Geographic, online magazines, and daily newspapers.

Selected youth photographers and videographers embarked on a journey to capture The Gambia through their lens. In partnership with the renowned photojournalist and photographer Jason Florio, participants benefited from on-the-job training and mentorship. Building on the mentorship package, the YEP-featured exhibition "Hidden Gambia" opened its doors at Alliance Française de Banjul. Through pictures and videos, the exhibition took visitors on a journey to experience the uniqueness of The Gambia.



<https://yep.gm/storage/app/uploads/public/61e/836/1d3/61e8361d3e527507557093.pdf>

ICT

Under the Tech component, YEP supported the 7th annual Gambia National Internet Governance Forum (IGF) with the theme "Digital Inclusion and Access for Resilient Gambia". The Internet Governance Forum brought together stakeholders to discuss public policy issues related to the Internet. YEP partner the Information Technology Association of the Gambia (ITAG) held its first virtual career fair. In collaboration with the Disruptive Lab, YEP Tech organised Tech4Good, an event designed to connect the development community with Gambian Tech start-ups. In partnership with ITAG, YEP Tech organized a logistics and e-commerce event as a platform to discuss the impact of e-commerce and delivery services in the pandemic. YEP supported founders from The Gambia to participate in the regional edition of the AfricArena West Africa Summit in Dakar. The project further worked with Start-up Genome to feature the Gambian start-up ecosystem in the *Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2021*.

Strategic Direction

The Strategic Direction component of the project has three general objectives: (1) set up engagement platforms for sector stakeholders to facilitate sector development planning; (2) formulate strategic trade development action plans for priority sectors; and (3) build capacities and provide tools for implementations of sector development initiatives. Highlights in 2021 were:

In close collaboration with the JSF project, YEP continued to provide technical support to the implementation of the National TVET Road Map through the National TVET Committee, Sector Skill Councils and the technical working group on the national TVET policy.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment (MOTIE) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MOFEA), YEP organized a retreat on access to finance. The workshop brought together stakeholders from the government,

development partners, business chambers, and business support organizations which facilitate access to finance for young entrepreneurs. The retreat provided space to discuss existing instruments, target clients, modalities, lessons learnt, and good practices and complementarities between different instruments.

In addition, representatives from the Gambian government, development agencies, and the private sector met to discuss approaches on digitalisation in the horticulture and poultry value chains. The retreat reviewed different projects, platforms, and upcoming initiatives in support of data collection and management, monitoring, extension support, sharing or market price information and business linkages. The objective was to explore synergies and linkages between different projects while developing an overall government-led framework to drive the digitalization agenda. The retreat led to an agreement on increased inter-ministerial cooperation between MOTIE and MOA and common principles related to rolling out further digitalization support.



The YEP team concluded the assessment of enterprises in the agribusiness sector to better understand their competitiveness, income generation and employment prospects after receiving support from the project. The observations provided insights on the scope and nature of further support to sustain their growth.

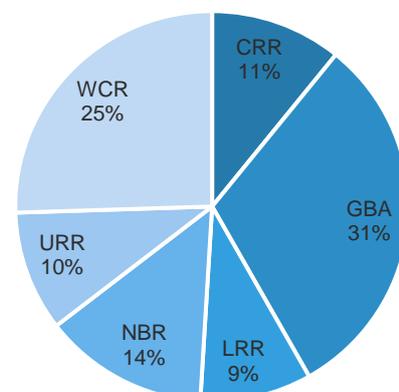
7. Project Results

Profiling of beneficiaries

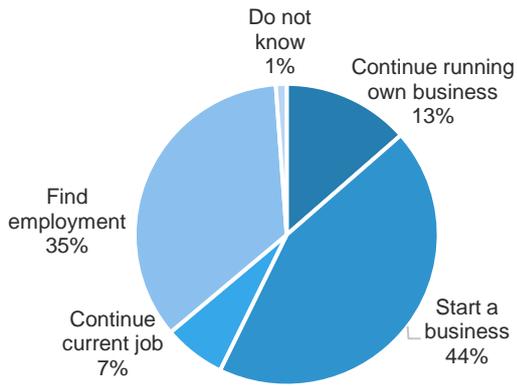
Detailed data collection is a key component of the overall monitoring and evaluation work of the project. Beneficiary data is collected at the beginning of project support using questionnaires aligned with the indicators of the project's logical framework. Data is collected at two levels - at the level of individual beneficiaries who have benefited from technical, vocational, and entrepreneurial training, and at the level of supported enterprises. The project applied computer-assisted personal interview methods and analysis on Stata. To obtain follow-up data, a second data collection takes place at least one year after the intervention.

The graphs below focus on data collected from individual beneficiaries who received technical and vocational skills as well as entrepreneurship training. As of December 2021, a sample size of 3,589 individuals have been surveyed, representing about 40% of individuals supported under YEP.

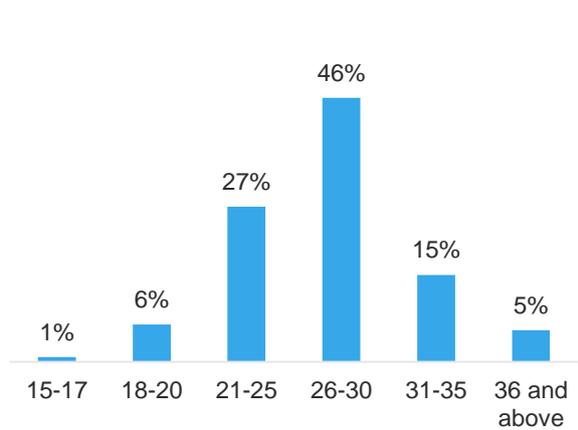
Regions



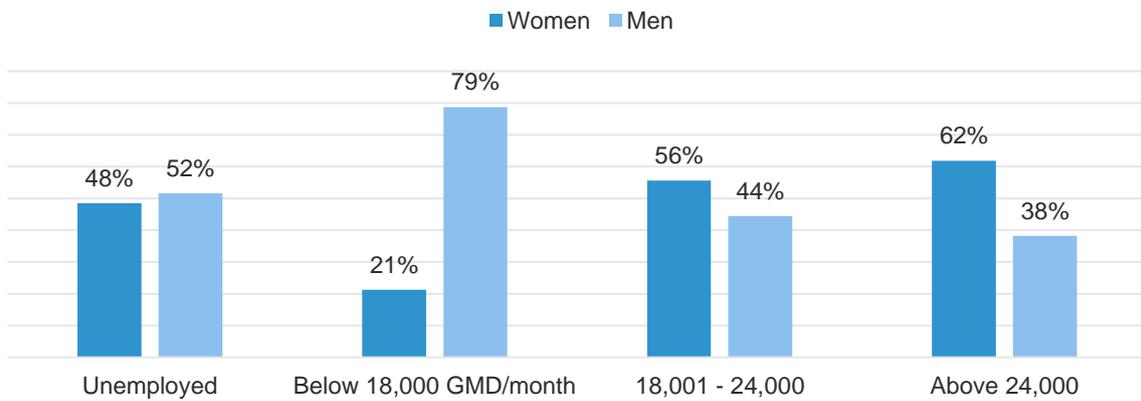
Plans after YEP training



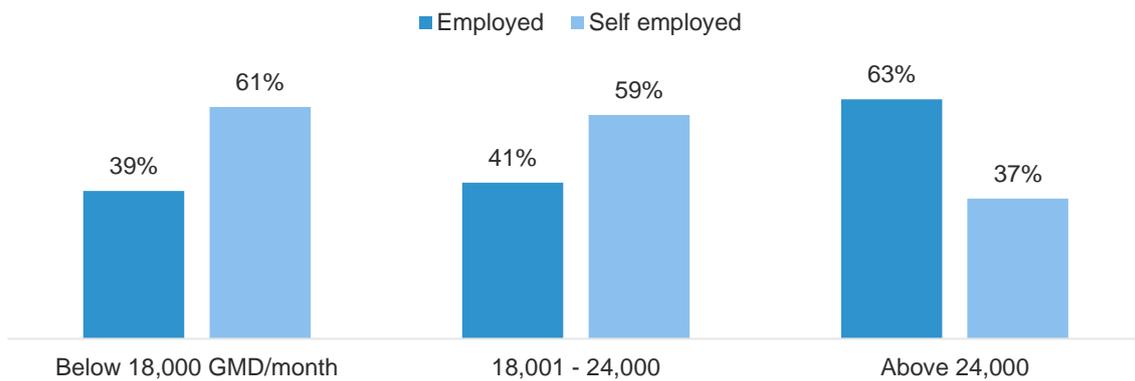
Age of beneficiaries



Income & gender



Income & employment status



Results by project indicator and year

Project Indicator	Project Target	% accomplished	Total (2017-2021)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
SO: Tackle the root causes of irregular migration through increased job opportunities and income prospects for youth								
# of sustainable jobs created / jobs sustained for youths directly and indirectly	4,300	167%	7,179	0	500	1,869	1,201	3,603
R1.1 Skills upgraded through technical and vocational training programmes								
# of institutions that improved training programmes and/or operational performance	18	94%	17	4	4	2	6	1
# of youths completing a project funded technical and/or vocational training programme or apprenticeship	5350	77%	4,128	263	432	1,679	415 ¹	1,339
# of young returning migrants supported through skills training	300	36%	109	8	11	34	44	12
R1.2 Entrepreneurship promoted among youth through business skills training and support programmes								
# of youths benefitted from entrepreneurship and business development services (male, female)	4,600	94%	4,321	727	1,037	1,105	872	630
# of young returning migrants supported through entrepreneurship support	150	48%	73	48	13	5	5	2
# of youth centres refurbished and offering improved services	2	50%	1	0	0	0	0	1
R2.1 Improved compliance of Gambian products with international standards and market requirements								
# MSMEs sensitized on programmes on quality improvement and food safety	250	143%	357	110	140	0	0	107
# Trainers / advisers trained in quality related programmes	30	360%	108	41	67	0	0	0
# MSMEs certified	20	5%	1	0	0	1	0	0
R2.2 Improved MSME productive capacities								
# MSMEs demonstrating improved business practices (e.g. sales / production volumes, etc.)	540	178%	963	0	316	224	247	176
# Production centres strengthened/ created	1	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0

¹ Including 8 non-youths who were trained as trainers to align with revised EU reporting standards.

R2.3 Market linkages activated								
# participating enterprises on market linkage activities	270	371%	1,001	136	379	244	242	338
R2.4 Improved strategic direction and national ownership for job-centred growth								
# stakeholders participating in sector development initiatives	100	337%	339	162	43	93	39	34
# strategic trade development action plans developed	4	125%	5	4	0	1	0	0
# of public-private youth platforms created / strengthened	3	167%	5	4	0	1	0	0
R 3.1. The activities, opportunities and results of the Action are widely communicated upon at national and international levels								
# of migrants, or potential migrants, reached out by information campaign on migration and risks linked to irregular migration	150,000	189%	283,569	27598	79,761	152,210	231,687	214,063
# of Gambian citizens reached out by the Tekki Fii campaign	200,000	141%	283,569	0	0	152,210	231,687	214,063
# of international media pieces published concerning the Tekki Fii campaign	50	16%	8	0	0	3	2	3
COVID-19 Response								
# of COVID-19 pandemic-related PPEs produced and distributed to end users	N/A	N/A	155,295	0	0	0	75,295	80,000

Results by geographic reach

The project covers all regions of the country. Efforts have been made to ensure significant representation throughout the country. Over the years, the project made progress in increasing the proportion of rural youth in training programmes. This was achieved mainly through support of rural training hubs of Gaye Njorro in Soma (LRR) and Farafenni (NBR), GTTI in Mansakonko (LRR) and Julangel (URR), Sterling in Janjanbureh (CRR) and Basse (URR) and GTHI in Farafenni (NBR) and Janjanbureh (CRR). YEP has also given priority ratings in our SKYE selection for programmes delivered in rural Gambia.

Consequently, the project has been able to increase the rural enrolment for skill training programmes from 25% in 2017 to 35% in 2021. For entrepreneurship and access to finance, the proportion of rural beneficiaries increased from 22% in 2019 to 33% in 2021.

2021 Breakdown of Beneficiaries by Region

	GBA	WCR	CRR	NBR	LRR	URR
Skills Training	35%	30%	10%	13%	3%	8%
Entrepreneurship & Access to Finance	54%	13%	19%	0%	5%	9%

Results by gender

Gender and inclusion are mainstreamed throughout YEP programming. In 2021, 53% of YEP beneficiaries were women.

2021 Breakdown of Beneficiaries by Gender

	Women	Men
Skills training	51%	49%
Entrepreneurship & access to finance	58%	42%

Inclusion of returnees

YEP works in close collaboration with other partners to assure the inclusion of returnees in all activities. In 2021, 15 returnees graduated from YEP programmes. Generally, the project finds it difficult to motivate returnees to take advantage of training opportunities. Most returnees prefer monetary reintegration support, at least during the immediate period that follows their return to The Gambia.

Job creation

To assess job creation, data is collected before and after each intervention and periodically through follow-up surveys. The results in terms of job creation are based on results of 3 main interventions: skills development programmes with job placements, access to finance schemes, and support to MSMEs.

2021 Jobs Created and Sustained

	Jobs created			Jobs sustained
		Women	Men	
Skills training	575	45%	55%	0
Access to finance	276	38%	62%	260
MSME support	1,248	44%	56%	1,244
TOTAL	2,099	44%	56%	1,504

9. Project visibility & the Tekki Fii Campaign

In 2021, YEP intensified communication and visibility efforts and built on existing initiatives to drive a change of perception on irregular and amplifying available opportunities. The project amplified socio-economic initiatives in The Gambia through various channels and mediums. This increased the visibility of the project inspired young people to take charge and increase awareness on COVID-19.



Through the year, the major communication channels were:

- 1) Community outreach, physical meetings, and orientation sessions.
- 2) YEP website, Tekki Fii website, Youth Service Directory, International Trade Centre Website
- 3) Social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube
- 4) Monthly e-mail newsletter
- 5) YEP weekly Employment Hour on West Coast Radio, one of the national radio stations. Regional engagements at community-based radio stations in rural Gambia.
- 6) YEP appearances in television talks shows on GRTS, QTV, Paradise TV, Star TV, Eye-Africa TV, Fatu Network & Kerr Fatou. The major television networks were also engaged to broadcast videos of the project.
- 7) Articles and coverage in print media, mainly Foroyaa Newspaper, Standard Newspaper, The Point Newspaper, and The Voice Newspaper. See Annex III.
- 8) YEP used print materials such as billboards, pull-up banners, booklets and flyers to inform about the work of the project.

Online

YEP social media platforms and online channels remained a key communication medium for opportunities and campaigns. The YEP Facebook page had a reach of 61,807 unique individuals in 2021 and 10,381 likes at the end of 2021. 49,7% of the visitors are men between 18 and 34 years (youth) and 22,7% are women in this age category. On Twitter, the Youth Empowerment Project has 8,807 Followers and 18,000 impressions on average per month. Building on the YEP channels, regular updates were additionally disseminated on the ITC Gambia Twitter and Instagram channels which have accumulated a total of 1,721 and 451 followers, respectively.

On the websites yep.gm and tekki.gm, the project amplified opportunities, success stories and news. The Youth Service Directory continued to serve as meta platform for opportunities from YEP and the other Tekki Fii partners.

Community Outreach

In Bansang and in Kudang, Central River Region, the project team deployed a Tekki Fii outreach campaign to reach young people in with key messages and information on opportunities. The creative engagement approach included entertainment from icons like Nobles and Bright Stars Entertainment. The Gambian-produced film Flight Mode was screen to trigger discussions on the topic of irregular migration. YEP staff engaged the attendees but equally listened to their concerns, hopes and aspirations to make it in The Gambia.

In partnership with the National Youth Council and through the support of the regional programme officers, available opportunities, and information on Tekki Fii were continuously shared in communities across the country.

Reach

To calculate the total outreach figure, YEP has added up engagements across different communication channels as shown below.

Total number of people reached to date: 283,569 ²						
Total number of people reached in 2021 across categories: 214,063		Previously total people reached in 2017 - 2020: 239,297			Estimated Overlap: 70%	Total carry-over from 2017-2020: 69,506
Category	TV	Radio	Events & in person	Online	Print	YEP Beneficiaries
Total counted	144,000	34,500	200	34,917	210	236
Estimated overlap between categories	base	75%	80%	70%	80%	95%
Total counted per category	144,000	138,000	1,000	116,390	1,050	4,722
Estimated overlap between activities	60%	0%	0%	50%	75%	0%
Total if adding up activities	360,000	138,000	1,000	232,779	4,200	4,722
Activities	COVID sensitization videos played on QTV, GRTS, PTV & Star TV & News coverage across channels	West Coast Radio, Community radio programmes, other radio programmes	Community outreach	Facebook, Twitter, YEP Portal, Newsletter	About 56 newspaper reports on YEP events, see Annex	Total count of beneficiaries counted under other project outputs

Estimates on overlap percentages have been adjusted to reflect the nature of this year's activities and focus on outreach channels.

² Adjustment of the methodology for the estimated total overlap as well as the count of the overlap for television. Due to the stable high number of new social media users each year and the nature of the activities conducted in 2021, it can be assumed that a higher number of new individuals has been reached, resulting in a lower percentage of estimated overlap.

Print material

In 2021, a new Tekki Fii success story booklet was developed. It highlights the achievements of ten young Gambians who have benefited from Tekki Fii grants, loans and training. Additionally, the project distributed Tekki Fii merchandise and visibility materials such as Tekki Fii calendars, diaries and flower pots. Find the booklet here:

<https://yep.gm/storage/app/uploads/public/61e/837/4ba/61e8374bae656213700505.pdf>



Broadcast media

Throughout 2021, ten different Tekki Fii success stories were broadcasted on GRTS, QTV, Paradise TV, Kerr Fatou, Fatu Network, Taxi FM, and West Coast Radio. The videos featured the entrepreneurial journey of young people across sectors.

Project staff participated in key national programmes and gave interviews to amplify project interventions. YEP appeared on GRTS AM Show, “Coffee with” on GRTS, The Youth Show on QTV, Paradise TV and Star TV, among others.

The radio show Employment Hour continued in 2021 with weekly shows, featuring available opportunities, young people making incredible strides in their sectors, YEP, Tekki Fii and partner interventions. To amplify the work of partners, the Employment Hour was handed over to MOTIE, SIG, GYCC, GYIN Gambia and GWCC at the end of the year. Through the National Youth Council and other regional partners, community radios like Farafenni and Kerewan community radios, Soma Community Radio, and Brikama Ba Community Radio were engaged to amplify opportunities and the Tekki Fii messages. In addition, YEP staff participated in various radio shows on an ad-hoc basis.

Print media

Key print media like Standard Newspaper, Foroyaa Newspaper, The Point Newspaper and The Voice Newspaper were engaged to amplify YEP and Tekki Fii interventions. Foroyaa Newspaper disseminated the success stories of the Tekki Fii booklet online and in their print papers.

The project partnered with several international media outlets to spread the message of Tekki Fii and Gambia as a tourism destination. As a highlight, YEP facilitated a full-length feature of the sustainable tourism product Ninki Naka trail in the National Geographic Magazine.

COVID-19 Awareness

To support the awareness raising efforts of the government of The Gambia to fight COVID-19 in the country, YEP employed numerous communication initiatives.

- COVID-19 awareness billboards:** Building on the efforts against COVID-19 made in the previous year, ten billboards on precautionary measures were developed and mounted in strategic locations along Greater Banjul Area, Central River Region, Upper River Region, Lower River Region, and North Bank Region in 2021. The billboards featured influential leaders in The Gambia like medical practitioners, community leaders, TV broadcasters, social media influencers and a survivor. Messages focus proper usage of a facemasks, social distancing, supporting effective health care delivery, business continuity, fighting stigmatization of COVID-19 survivors, and the role of young people in mitigating the pandemic.



- COVID-19 awareness videos:** Four video and audio clips in several local languages featuring influential leaders were produced. The videos on COVID-19 prevention measures were disseminated across the networks GRTS, QTV, Paradise TV, Kerr Fatou, Fatu Network, Taxi FM, and West Coast.
- COVID-19 awareness on social media:** Leveraging on YEP's social media reach, messages on prevention were widely shared on a weekly basis. The influencers engaged for the billboards and video campaigns joint forces with YEP to share messages and material which resulted to greater reach and influence.