

Africa Renaissance Hub

Project Progress Report: Building
Youth Livelihoods Resilience
June 2020 to February 2021





From December 2019 to May 2020, AAYMCA embarked on a consultative process to establish the best approaches of ensuring that the YMCAs in Africa deliver relevant youth programming. The purpose of the process included identifying ways to create the right environment for youth to lead and be innovative in their contribution to the YMCAs mission. The result of the 6 months process was a confirmation of the value of the Power Space in its design to deliver relevant youth programmes but most importantly, the urgency in creating prototypes of youth led and youth serving initiatives that provide young people an opportunity to be creators of solutions to challenges they face.

The Building Youth Livelihoods Resilience Initiative is among the first, among a series of other prototypes, to be set into motion by the AAYMCA in 2020. The initiative was preceded by an online youth survey to establish the exact needs for young people, particularly those in entrepreneurs and aspiring to be entrepreneurs. Among the needs that were most highlighted is the financing (grants, loans, investors) for their businesses, business management skills, financial management and marketing strategies. This provided an indication of the most relevant content for young people. While searching for the most relevant online platform to host the initiative, Mighty Networks was identified as an ideal space due to its capacity to host a large community of participants, host events and content. This coupled with the results of the survey laid the necessary foundation for the launch of the initiative in July 2020.

This initiative was especially built to respond to the youth livelihoods crisis resulting from the COVID 19 Pandemic. The pandemic has accelerated already existing vulnerabilities faced by young people in Africa. These vulnerabilities include that very few young people in Africa are wage earners. Those who are employed are informally employed and in temporary jobs and mainly in food, agriculture and tourism sectors which were adversely affected by the pandemic and have social protection and no teleworking opportunities. The Building Youth Livelihoods resilience initiative was therefore a prototype to address these vulnerabilities in and post the Covid 19 Pandemic.

The progress with this initiative has demonstrated the potential of migrating more programmes to online platforms making them accessible to as many young people as possible. The content on the platform is now also being used in prototypes in Madagascar, Ghana and Zimbabwe that are also aimed at building youth livelihoods although they are not entirely based online. This has therefore proved that the online platform can serve as a library of digital content that can be used both online and offline for youth livelihoods initiatives.

Summary of Progress



The Building Youth Livelihoods Resilience initiative strategy was to create an online platform for young entrepreneurs to access resources and skills building that can help them keep their businesses operating/pivoting or at least hibernating to enable them to bounce back quickly after the pandemic.

This prototype initiative was built upon the architecture of AAYMCA's programme methodology, the Power Space, that enables young people experience self- discovery, unlock potential and connect to opportunities on an online platform. In its pilot phase, the project targeted young entrepreneurs in urban areas of Madagascar (Antananarivo), Zimbabwe (Harare and Bulawayo), Ethiopia (Bahir Dar) and South Sudan (Juba).

The initiative commenced with the recruitment of mentors to support the content creation for the platform. Participating National Movements recommended at least 17 Mentors, both staff and volunteers to support content creation and support youth on the platform.

Created content was posted on the platform and later promoted through our social media platforms Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The webinars mainly focused on self-awareness with the mobilization undertaken through our social media platforms and newsletter. A summary of the results for the period are detailed in the table.

Overall Objective

To build the resilience of youth to enable them to improve their chances of accessing a sustainable livelihood during and after the Covid 19 Pandemic

Outcome 1

Youth capacity to innovate and co-create safe entrepreneurial ventures during and after the Covid 19 crisis period developed through an online platform.



KPI (Performance metrics)

1. Improved perceptions of young entrepreneurs regarding their potential and opportunities available to them during and post the Covid 19 Pandemic
2. Number of youth enterprises established/re-established through the support of the platform
3. Proportion of young women in business participating in the project

Output 1.1

Young men and women entrepreneurs are capacitated to earn and retain income and assets during and after the Covid 19 Pandemic



KPI (Performance metrics)

1. One online platform

Progress

One online platform established on Mighty Networks. Mighty network provides an opportunity to set up an online exclusive community for learning and sharing.

The link to the platform is available below to join:

https://aaymca.mn.co/share/RybWVFliLLrj4-J9?utm_source=manual

Presently there are 45 people signed on to the platform from Madagascar, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, Cameroon, South Africa, Senegal, Gambia and Togo

2. Audio and visual resource materials accessible through the platform

Progress

A total of 9 resources are available on the platform covering the topics of Financial Management (Budgeting and Charts of Accounts), Business Planning, Business Ideation and Social Media Marketing. Two webinars were held on Self Awareness and why it is important for an entrepreneur. One was held in English and one in French.

3. Number of youth accessing the materials

Progress

24 youth participated in the webinars on Zoom and Facebook Live. The 6 instructional videos received 89 Views on You Tube. In addition, Ethiopia YMCA hosted a series of in person meetings to disseminate the content developed. These meetings reached a further 76 youth

4. Demonstrated impact of resource materials/tools on the platform on the sustenance or growth of the youth enterprises

Progress

Feedback from the users survey shows that the members of the platform rated the platform overall as somewhat useful, the content rated most useful was the “Emotions of Money” as well as the webinar on Self Awareness in French. However, among the users noted that the platform is unusual and the content should be shared on another platform.

Output 1.2

Young men and women have access to opportunities for mentorship and/or funding



KPI (Performance metrics)

1. Number of mentors providing support to young entrepreneurs through the platform

Progress

9 Mentors contributed to content on the platform. These Mentors were from Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, and Madagascar. These created the videos on the online platform and panelists on the webinars.

2. Number of online interactive sessions held between youth and mentors

Progress

2 sessions held: 1st Session was exclusively on Zoom to pre-registered participants. The 2nd Session was available on Zoom for Pre-registered members and broadcasted through Facebook Live. Both sessions were on Self Awareness.

3. Number of mentorship relationships developed and supported

Progress

Not yet achieved

4. Number and nature of additional opportunities made accessible to youth through the project

Progress

One additional opportunity was shared on the online platform, an ICT skills building session on Cloud Computing and Sage Accounting Software.

Outcome 2

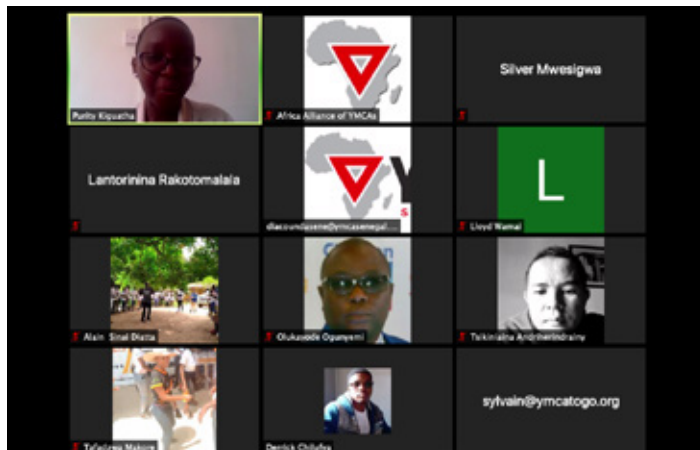
AAYMCA and National Movements improved advocacy work for prioritization of youth access to decent work and access to social security with specific emphasis on young women.

KPI (Performance metrics)

Joint advocacy campaigns messages developed by AAYMCA and NMs participating in pilot

Progress

Not yet achieved



Output 2.1

AAYMCA and National Movements have information resources and tools for advocacy for youth access to decent work and social security

KPI (Performance metrics)

1. Advocacy campaign messages for youth access to decent work and social security developed

Progress

The Programme Staff Caucus was re-constituted to serve as the platform for development of joint advocacy messages. A first meeting was held on 4th September 2020 as a re-orientation to the caucus.

A second forum was held on October 9th 2020, a second forum was held with the Programme Staff Caucus, NGSs and Project Officers of livelihoods projects. In this forum the discussions focused on Decent Work and Social Protection for youth with the information in that session expected to provide a basis for identifying the gaps and opportunities for advocacy on the same. The forum hosted as a guest speaker Mr. Silver Mwesigwa from COMESA. He took participants through the principles of Decent Work and Social Protection for Youth.

However, no messages were developed in this period but will be a focus in 2021.

2. Joint social media campaigns conducted

AAYMCA developed messages for the social media campaign messages on youth livelihoods and these were disseminated alongside the promotion of the content on the platform. National Movements participating in the programme were then able to share on their own platform the content shared by AAYMCA for the campaign.

10, 113 people reached with 47 post



YMCA
1988

Brot
für die Welt

Projet Agor@

INCUBATEUR ENTREPRENEURIAL

OBJECTIF

Contribuer à l'insertion professionnelle des jeunes
en vue de l'amélioration de leurs conditions de vie.

CIBLES

150 jeunes socialement défavorisés,
âgés de 20 à 35ans



Challenges and Lessons Learned



The Building Youth Livelihoods initiative was designed to be a prototype to study the viability of the concept of an online platform for youth skills building and mentorship. The prototyping period, 8 months, only allowed for the testing to be at output level but a longer-term implementation is likely to yield results that can further be measured at outcome level. In light of this the following were the main challenges and learning from the prototype:

1. There exists great opportunities for youth engagement online. This is because of the potential to increase access to content that can be accessible at any time unlike in person engagements that are tied to time and space
2. As the management of the pandemic improved and movement restrictions reduced, the availability of audiences for webinars reduced as people returned to their education and business activities. Consequently, the approach has been to create very short videos and articles for easy accesses.

3. Internet access is among the main challenges to overcome to make the online platform accessible to the targeted youth. Consequently, the videos were made available for download to National Movements for them to host small in person viewings for young people. Further it was agreed that the audio visual content would be short to make it easy to share through platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram.

4. Language is also a challenge that the content creation has had to overcome. Efforts have been made for French to English translation but we might have to consider how to conduct translations into local language. Ethiopia YMCA for instance made efforts to translate the first three videos into Amharic.

5. Data bundles to enable youth connect to webinars and access the videos is to a full webinar are a challenge hence the collaboration with National Movements to hold screenings and discussions on the content created through this project. Also making the content into short audio or video clips is expected to mitigate this.

6. Content creation is time consuming for an already stretched staff team. Consequently, it has taken longer than anticipated to create and distribute the audiovisual materials. It is anticipated that with the already nominated Mentors and existing resource materials at AAYMCA and in participating National Movements, content creation and delivery will be more efficient.



Conclusion

This prototype initiative has provided much learning for the AAYMCA about the possibilities of youth engagement through online platforms away from social media. It has also demonstrated the wealth of knowledge from within the YMCA from the fact that the content on the platform was exclusively generated from within the movement. AAYMCA will continue in 2021 to improve the platform with the intention of expanding its reach and providing more content for young entrepreneurs. AAYMCA is appreciative of the support of Y Care International that made it possible to particularly set up the infrastructure to make the platform a reality.

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