YouthXcel Africa

IMPACT REPORT

Impact Report 2025–2026

Our work with young people, January 2025 to October 2026

1,500+
young people reached

105+
connected to mentors

9
countries in our convenings

Published October 2026

www.youthxcelafrica.org



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Inside this report

PERIOD COVERED

January 2025 to October 2026

HOW WE COUNT REACH

A young person counts as reached when they take part in at least one activity with us. Social media figures are reported separately.

MAIN SOURCES

Our programme records, the Youth Skills Pulse 2026 and convening registrations

PUBLISHED & UPDATED

October 2026, by Youth Excel Initiative (IT 9874080)

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Abdulazeez Musa

Founder and Executive Director

01 FOREWORD

What twenty-two months taught us

YouthXcel Africa began in January 2025 with a practical question. Could a small team, working largely online and on its own resources, help young people find the opportunities they were missing and stay with them until they reached one? Twenty-two months on, more than 1,500 young people have taken part in our work, and more than 105 have been connected directly to mentors and sector experts.

This report sets out what we did in that time, who we did it with and what young people taught us along the way. The most important lesson came from our first Youth Skills Pulse. Most of the young people we surveyed had started learning a new skill in the past year, and most had stopped before finishing, held back by cost and by having no one to check on them. That finding has shaped every plan we have made since, including ScaleAbility, the first of our programmes to move from design into delivery in 2027.

In 2026 we incorporated, adopted a five-year Strategic Plan and put in place the governance we intend to grow into. We are also clear about what we have not yet done. We have not yet received external funding, and our results so far are measured in reach and connection. In 2027 our task is to turn that reach into livelihoods, and to measure it properly.

I thank every young person, mentor, speaker and partner who has given us their time.

Vision, mission and values

OUR VISION

An Africa where every young person can earn a dignified and fulfilling livelihood, and where markets and governments treat their ambition as worth backing.

OUR MISSION

To equip young Africans with the skills, agency and voice to build meaningful work and enterprise, and to partner with markets, institutions and governments on the evidence, policies, programmes and investment that widen opportunity for them.

OUR VALUES

Equity
We design first for those the system reaches last

Agency
Young people shape what we build

Integrity
We publish only what we can stand behind

Collaboration
We build with others and share credit

Innovation
We test, learn and adapt

Impact
Every decision returns to outcomes

Our results in numbers

January 2025 to October 2026

1,500+

young people reached and engaged across our programmes

Counted when a young person takes part in at least one activity with us

105+

young people connected directly to mentors and sector experts

30+

young people in subsidised courses through Fuse Varsity

87

young people surveyed in our first Youth Skills Pulse

9

countries represented in our convenings

12

communities and institutions partnered with

5

youth policy and framework processes supported

27,500+ people reached on our social media platforms. We report this separately and never count it as reach.

From first engagement to a registered organisation

We began with community engagements and no external funding. By October 2026 we had a working community, an annual evidence cycle and the legal and governance base to grow.

Jan 2025

Began community engagements with young people across Nigeria

Aug 2025

First International Youth Day Discourse, in person and online, with two innovation hubs as partners

Jul 2026

First Youth Skills Pulse published on World Youth Skills Day, and the Pathfind opened nationwide

Aug 2026

Discourse 2.0 with young people from nine countries. Strategic Plan 2026–2030 adopted

Sep 2026

Incorporated with the Corporate Affairs Commission as Youth Excel Initiative, IT 9874080

Oct 2026

Resource partner to the JPI State Youth Assembly, convened across Nigeria's 36 states

Two labs and one community

In 2026 we organised everything we had built into two labs and one community. One lab works with young people, the other works on the conditions around them, and the Pathfind connects young people to both. All three answer to one results framework.

WORKS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Enterprise and Employability Lab

Demand · Practice · Proof

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

- **ScaleAbility** first cycles in 2027
- **Worktra** first cohort in 2027

The Pathfind

open since July 2026

WORKS ON THE CONDITIONS AROUND THEM

Narrative and Accountability Lab

Evidence · Capacity · Voice

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

- **International Youth Day Discourse** held since 2025
- **Youth Skills Pulse** published since 2026
- **YouthDex** first edition in 2027

2025 Community engagements, mentoring and our first International Youth Day Discourse → **2026** Labs established, the Pathfind opened and the first Youth Skills Pulse published → **2027** Both labs delivering, with ScaleAbility, Worktra and the first YouthDex

Five conditions, one results framework

We work with young people on their path into work and enterprise, and with the employers, investors and governments who shape what they are offered. Every activity is designed and measured against five conditions that must hold for a young person's ability to become a livelihood.

Active

01

Discovery

Young people find the opportunities meant for them, in time to act

1,500+

young people reached and engaged

Active

02

Direction

They choose a path that suits them and what their economy rewards

105+

connected to mentors and sector experts

Active

03

Readiness

They are prepared and supported to completion

30+

in subsidised courses, with ScaleAbility ready for 2027

Active

04

Recognition

Employers, investors and communities see and value what they can do

5

youth policy and framework processes supported

In design

05

Response

Governments answer with fitting policy and investment

2027

first edition of YouthDex, covering six states

DELIVERED THROUGH

The Pathfind
our community for opportunity

Enterprise and Employability Lab
first programmes in 2027

Narrative and Accountability Lab
Pulse, Discourse, YouthDex

The Pathfind

Our community for opportunity. Membership is free, open to any young person and needs no prior experience. Most members join through our convenings and outreach, and we stay with them until the application is in.

Pathfind Weekly

A curated set of scholarships, fellowships, jobs and grants each week, chosen for quality and accessibility

Readiness Check

An AI-assisted tool that compares a member's profile with a real opportunity and suggests practical next steps

Pathfind Circle

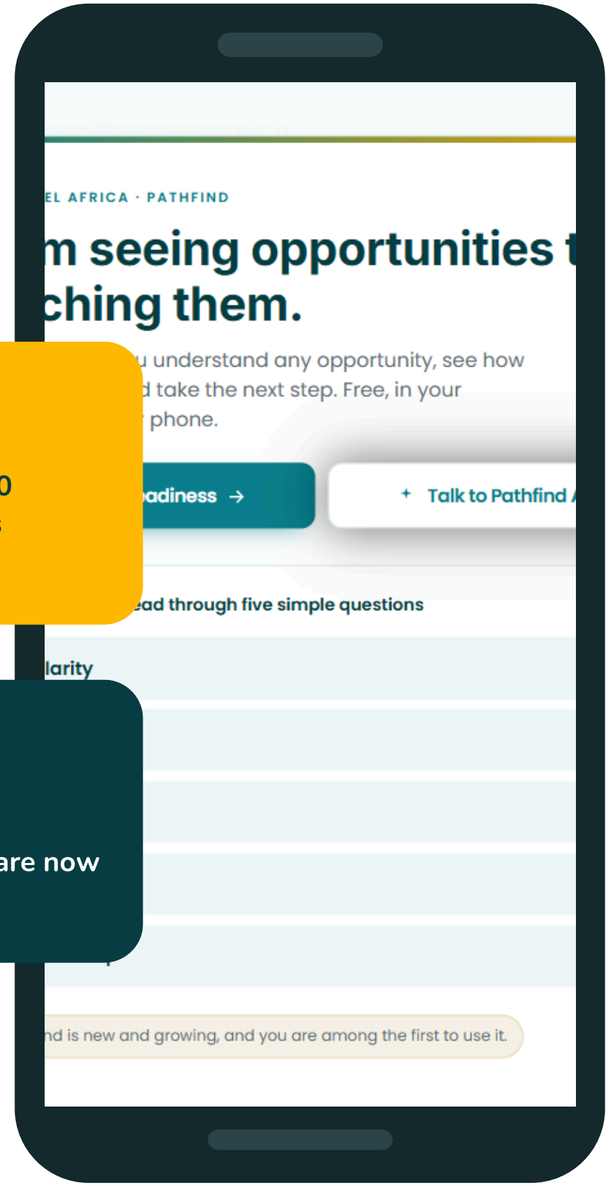
Peers and mentors who keep members going between sessions

Pathfind Stories

A record of what members applied for and what changed

READINESS CHECK LANGUAGES

English | French | Hausa | Yorùbá | Igbo | Arabic



About half

of those at Discourse 2.0 became active members

15+

State Youth Assembly participants joined and are now mentored

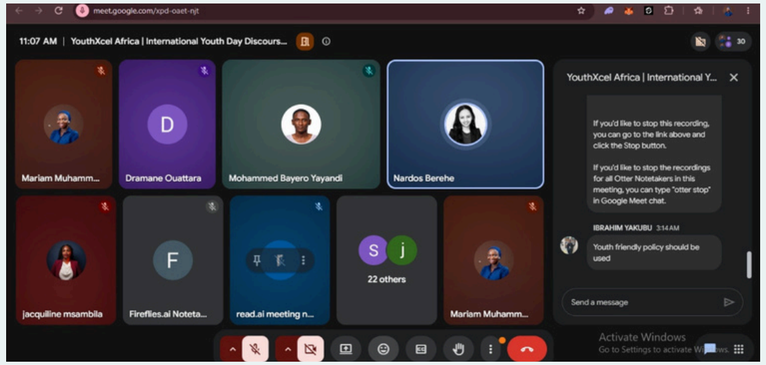
Someone to see the attempt through

Information alone rarely changes a young person's path. Given six kinds of support, young people in our survey ranked a mentor first and a list of opportunities last.

DIRECTION

105+ young people connected directly to mentors and sector experts, matched to what each is working towards

16 Pathfind Sessions, where practitioners and recent winners show how a competitive opportunity was won



READINESS

30+ WITH FUSE VARSITY

young people from underserved communities enrolled in career-focused courses at a reduced rate. We follow up with each of them during the course.

ScaleAbility

First cycles 2027

A youth-to-youth model in which young people who already earn from a trade are certified to teach it to peers, in short cycles tied to local income. First cycles are planned for three communities in Kano.

PATHFIND STORIES



Adesanya E. Lawal

Kano State

I was a medical student who wanted to do "something" beyond the classroom, but I didn't know where to start. I wasn't sure I could find an outlet for what my heart was clamouring for until I discovered YouthXcel Africa.

My first engagement with the organisation changed my perception of young people's ability to lead change in their communities. Through an opportunity I accessed via YouthXcel Africa, I discovered my passion for health systems strengthening and policy.

I believe every young person seeking expression, a voice, and opportunities needs a platform like YouthXcel Africa. They don't just connect you to opportunities; they guide you through the process and help you make the most of them.

Young people's own evidence, in front of decision-makers

Young people are more likely to be valued and invested in when decision-makers hear their own account of the skills economy. Our annual cycle is built for that.



Youth Skills Pulse

Young people tell us what skills they hold, what they need and what stands in the way. We publish the findings in full.

International Youth Day Discourse

Practitioners and policy voices test the findings with young people, and participants are invited into the Pathfind.

Policy and practice

Young people's evidence goes into youth policy processes and shapes the design of our own programmes.

5 youth policy and framework processes supported with young people's evidence

INCLUDING

- The review of Nigeria's National Youth Policy
- The Nigeria Youth Employment Action Plan

and three further youth policy and framework processes.

Read the evidence
Youth Skills Pulse 2026 report

International Youth Day Discourse 2025

August 2025 | **In person and online**

Our first convening, held for International Youth Day, brought young people together with speakers from Nigeria and the United Kingdom, among them a Chevening Scholar.

~50
young people

8
speakers

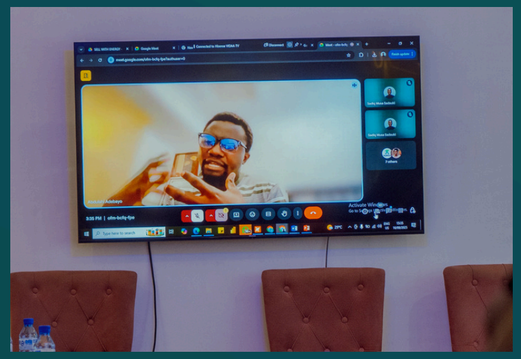
20+
became active Pathfind members

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Outside Innovation Lab

SparkLab Creativity and Innovation Hub



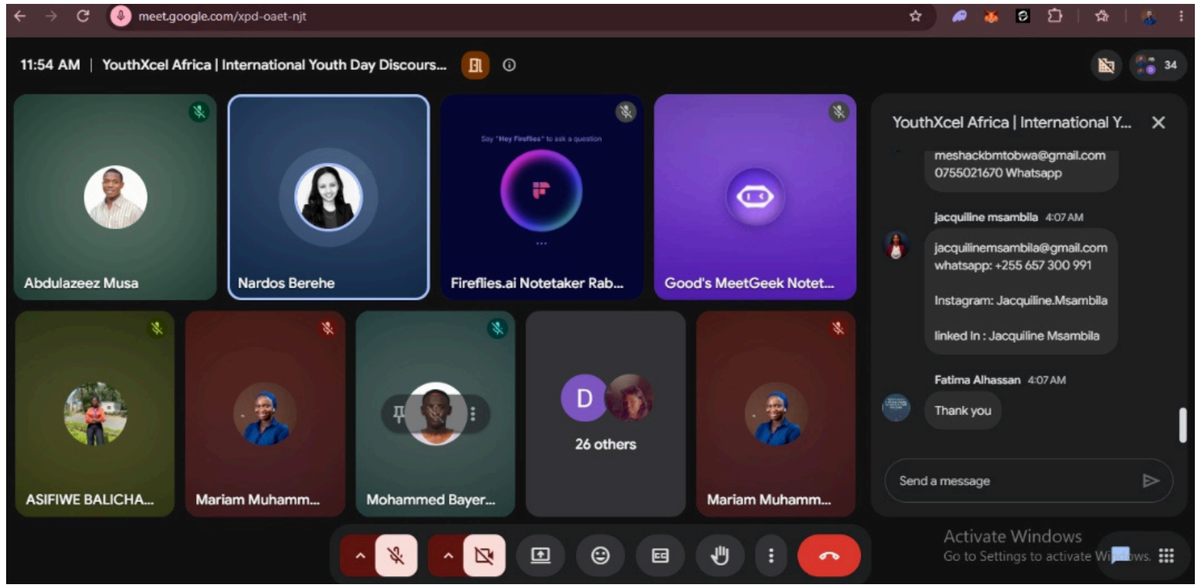


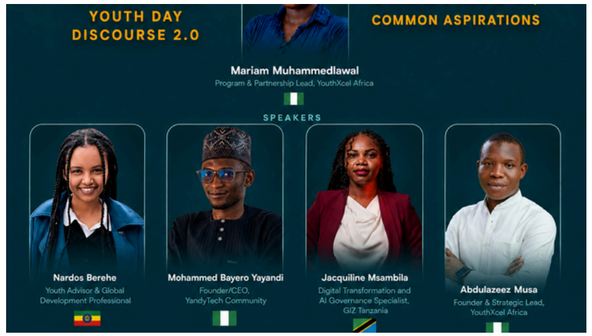


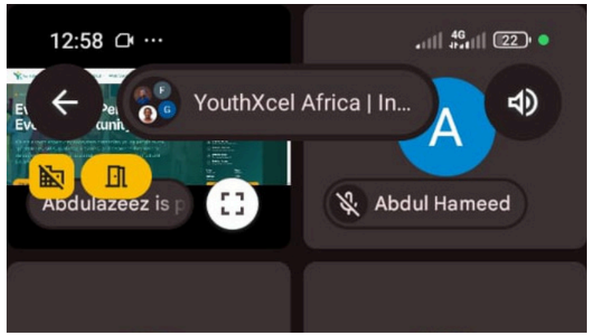




International Youth Day Discourse 2.0







15 August 2026 | **Online** | *Different Contexts, Common Aspirations*

~60	9	1 in 2
young people	countries	became active Pathfind members

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

Nigeria · Ethiopia · Tanzania · Zambia · Sierra Leone · South Sudan · Liberia · Mali · Belgium

SPEAKERS

- **Nardos Berehe**
  Youth Advisor and Global Development Professional, Ethiopia
- **Jacquiline Msambila**
  Digital Transformation and AI Governance Specialist, GIZ Tanzania
- **Mohammed Bayero Yayandi**
  Founder and CEO, YandyTech Community, Nigeria

Meeting young people where they are



JPI State Youth Assembly 2026

October 2026 | **Nigeria's 36 states**

Convened by Jamie Pajoel International. We served as a resource partner and led sessions on finding and preparing for opportunities.

15+

participants joined the Pathfind and are mentored



Domestication of the National Youth Policy in Kogi

March 2026 | **Kogi State**

Contributed to a Focused Group Discussion Process on the Domestication of the National Youth Policy in Kogi State, organized by the Lugard Youth Empowerment Initiative

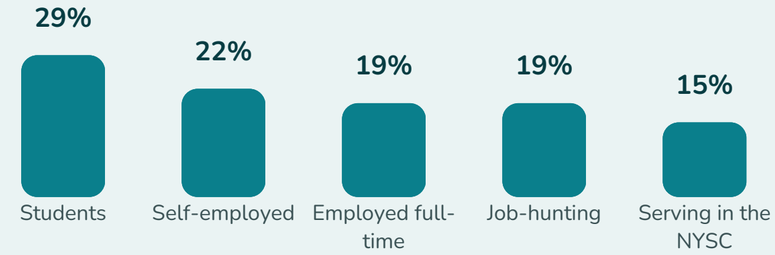
Already trying, still without the support around them

In July 2026, 87 young people answered our first Youth Skills Pulse. Read together, the numbers describe young people who are fairly confident and already building skills. What they lack is affordable access, opportunities they can see and someone to see the attempt through.



Youth Skills Pulse 2026, 87 respondents. Most were in Nigeria, with Kogi and Kano each about a quarter of responses and the FCT close behind. Most held or were completing a first degree.

WHO ANSWERED



> **Sustainable skills are built when young people can see a pathway forward and believe they belong.**
>
> Kudirat, Kano

> **You cannot learn a modern, sustainable digital skill if your power cuts out every two hours and data costs more than your lunch.**
>
> Ayuba, Kano

Who we work with, and how we are held to account

We have worked with 12 communities and institutions since January 2025. Each partnership is built around a clear contribution to one or more of the Five Conditions.

Outside Innovation Lab Youth innovation and talent	Resource and talent partner for the International Youth Day Discourse 2025
SparkLab Creativity and Innovation Hub Creative economy and innovation	Resource partner for the International Youth Day Discourse 2025
Fuse Varsity Learning platform	Subsidised course places for young people we refer, with more than 30 enrolled
Jamie Pajoel International (JPI) Youth civic organisation	Partner in the 2026 JPI State Youth Assembly across 36 states
Enactus, Bayero University Kano Academic and institutional	Partnering to deliver ScaleAbility from 2027

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Incorporated

As Youth Excel Initiative, IT 9874080, under Part F of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020

Governed

Two Trustees hold legal and fiduciary responsibility. With independent members, they form an Advisory Board that reviews progress every quarter

Protected

Safeguarding, PSEA, data protection and anti-fraud policies being adopted. Personal data handled under the Nigeria Data Protection Act 2023

Self-funded

Funded so far by our founding team and the unpaid time of staff, mentors and volunteers. No external funding received to date

Audited

Our first financial year closes on 31 December 2026. Accounts will be independently audited every year from then



Strategic Plan 2026–2030

Adopted by the Trustees in August 2026, the plan turns what young people told us in our first two years into four goals and one results framework. This report records where we stand as the plan begins.

1. **Young people find their direction and the opportunities meant for them**
2. **Young people build skills that earn and turn them into work and enterprise**
3. **Employers, investors and governments value young people's ability and deliver for them**
4. **An institution built to last**

TARGETS FOR 2030

100,000	young people reached
10,000	given sustained support
3,000	into dignified work or enterprise
37	states and FCT in YouthDex

WE ARE HERE

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Foundation	**Proof**	**Midterm and growth**	**Deepening**	**Consolidation**

What we have learned, and what comes next

1

Young people need someone to see them through

The drop-off happens in the middle of the attempt. Support that continues until the application is in, or the skill is earning, matters more than another list of opportunities.

2

A convening works best as a door

The Discourse and the State Youth Assembly brought young people to us, and the Pathfind kept them. We now plan every convening with the follow-up already in place.

3

Small, honest evidence is useful

87 responses do not describe all young Africans, and we say so. They were still specific enough to shape our Strategic Plan and the design of ScaleAbility.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2027

The year of proof, when our programmes move from design into delivery

- First ScaleAbility cycles in three Kano communities, and the first Worktra cohort with partner businesses
- The first edition of YouthDex, covering six states
- The 2027 Youth Skills Pulse and the third International Youth Day Discourse
- Our first annual report and audited accounts, with the Advisory Board meeting every quarter

YouthXcel Africa

Every young person. Every opportunity.

YouthXcel Africa is a youth development organisation working to put dignified and fulfilling livelihoods within reach of young Africans. Registered in Nigeria as Youth Excel Initiative, IT 9874080.

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Sources. Youth Skills Pulse 2026, July 2026. YouthXcel Africa Strategic Plan 2026–2030. Mastercard Foundation, Young Africa Works strategy and its definition of dignified and fulfilling work.