YouthXcel Africa

2026

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

Every young person. Every opportunity.

We prepare young Africans for dignified and fulfilling livelihoods, and shape how markets and governments see, fund and serve them.

www.youthxcelafrica.org



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Who we are

YouthXcel Africa is a youth development organisation working to put dignified and fulfilling livelihoods within reach of young Africans.

We work alongside young people as they find their direction, build skills that hold value in the economy around them, and turn those skills into meaningful work and enterprise.

We work equally on what surrounds them, from the way employers, investors and governments regard young people to the delivery of the policies and budgets meant to serve them.

January 2025

Working with young people since

Kano, Nigeria

Our home base

15 to 35

The age group we serve

What drives us

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


Agency


Integrity


Collaboration


Innovation


Impact

Dignified and fulfilling livelihoods

We use the standard developed by the Mastercard Foundation with young people across Africa. A dignified and fulfilling livelihood brings a reliable income, together with at least one of three further qualities.

Reliable income

Earnings a young person can count on, month after month

+

AT LEAST ONE OF

Respect

Fair treatment and a voice in the workplace

Reputable standing

Work that family and community value

Sense of purpose

Work that feels meaningful to the person doing it

Skills go a long way towards the first. The other three depend on how young people are seen and treated, which is why our work reaches past the training room.

Why we exist

Africa holds the world's youngest and fastest-growing workforce, and young people are seldom short of ambition.

What they meet are systems that were not built around them: opportunities that circulate in closed networks, training that ends before it pays, and institutions that too often treat young people as a risk to manage.

1 in 4

young Africans outside employment, education and training

ILO, 2024

73 million

more young people in Africa's labour force by 2050

ILO, 2024

172nd

of 183 countries: Nigeria in the Global Youth Development Index

Commonwealth, 2023

6 in 10

young Nigerians would start a business, given the choice

Afrobarometer, 2025





Where our work began

YouthXcel Africa grew out of what our founder, Abdulazeez Musa, saw growing up in Okene, Kogi State, where political violence closed schools and drew boys he knew into the service of people who saw them as instruments.

As a university student in Kano, he later watched opportunity stop at the campus gate.

> **A young person's prospects are shaped as much by what surrounds them as by what they can do.**
>
> **The lesson our work is built on**

The Five Conditions for Opportunity

What must hold for a young person's ability to become a livelihood. All our work is designed and measured against them.

01

Discovery

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

02

Direction

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

03

Readiness

They are prepared and supported to completion, so a skill becomes income.

04

Recognition

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

05

Response

Governments and institutions answer with fitting policy and investment.

Reach runs through all five. We start with the young people opportunity reaches last, and report our results for them separately.

How we work

Two labs work on the two sides of the problem, and the Pathfind connects young people to both.

WORKS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth Enterprise and Employability Lab

Skills, work and enterprise

The Pathfind

WORKS ON THE CONDITIONS AROUND THEM

Youth Narrative and Accountability Lab

How young people are seen, financed and served

HOW WE DELIVER

Flagship initiatives

Platforms and models we build and run

Partner programmes

Designed and delivered with partners

Research and advice

Evidence and dialogue for institutions

08 LAB

Youth Enterprise and Employability Lab

Skills that earn, and a record of work that travels

Works with young people as they build businesses and prepare for work, through an Enterprise track and an Employability track.

OUR METHOD

01

Demand

We start from what businesses and local markets already pay for.

02

Practice

Young people learn by doing real work in short, mentored cycles.

03

Proof

Every task completed is recorded and verified.

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

ScaleAbility

Skilled young people are certified to train peers in underserved communities, in short cycles tied to local income.

Worktra

Young founders and job seekers deliver paid work for real businesses and leave with a verified record.

09 LAB

Youth Narrative and Accountability Lab

How young people are seen, financed and served

Works with markets, institutions and the public on economic opportunity and on the governance of youth opportunity.

OUR METHOD

01
Evidence

We gather and publish data on how young people are perceived and served.

02
Capacity

We train young people to use that evidence.

03
Voice

We bring their work and findings to decision-makers.

FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

YouthDex

A state-by-state record of what governments commit to and deliver for youth livelihoods.

Youth Skills Pulse

An annual, openly published survey of the skills young people hold and need.

Youth Day Discourse

An annual convening where findings meet practitioners and policy voices.

The Pathfind

Our community for opportunity. Membership is free, and members are supported until the application is in.

Pathfind Weekly

Curated scholarships, fellowships, jobs and grants

Readiness Check

An AI-assisted check against a real opportunity

Pathfind Sessions

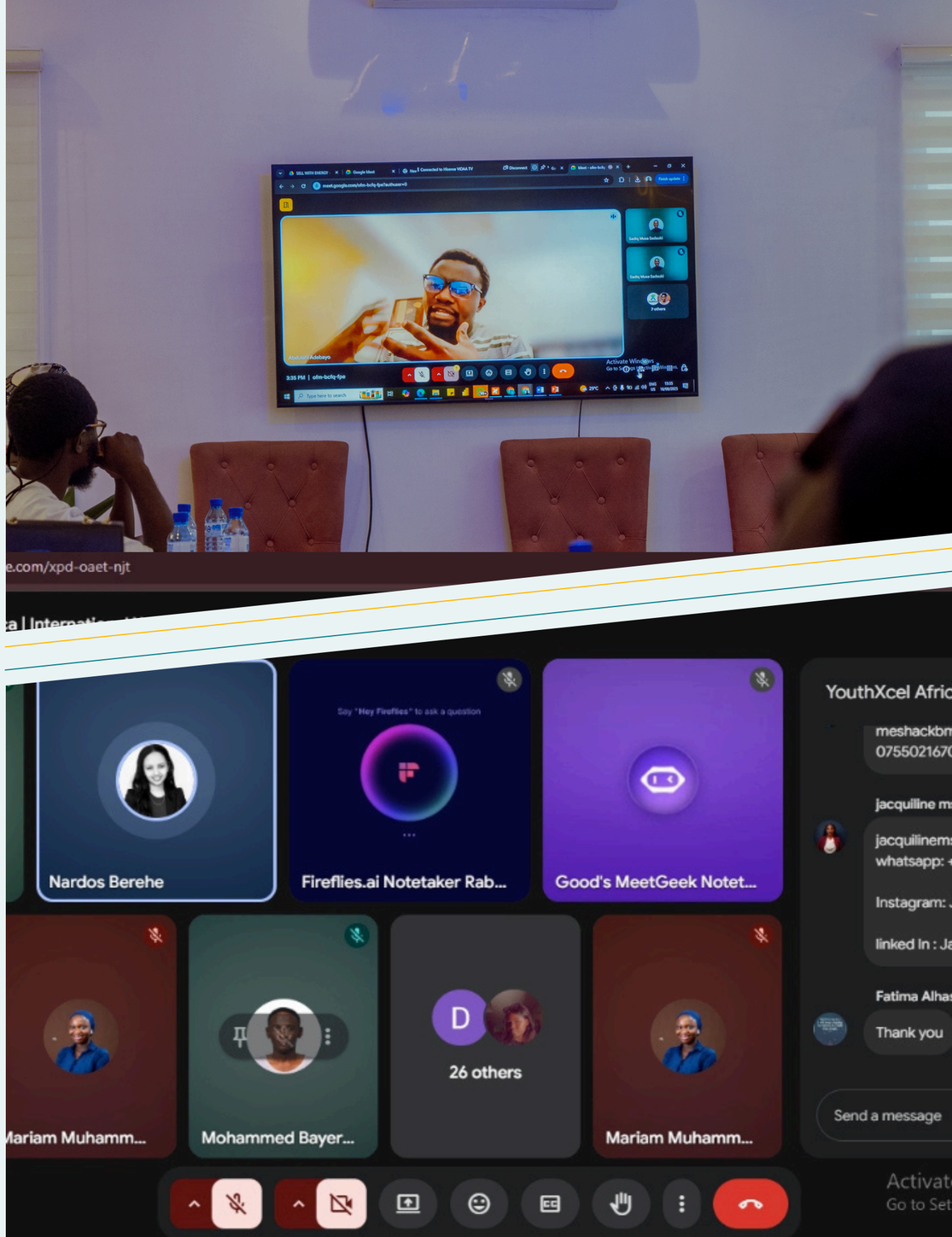
Live sessions with practitioners and recent winners

Pathfind Circle

Peers and mentors who keep each other going

Pathfind Stories

Members' accounts of what they applied for and what changed



Focus themes

Where opportunity for young Africans is moving fastest or is most at risk.



Digital economy and future of work

Platforms and AI are changing which skills pay and how work is found.



Agriculture and agribusiness

Value chains from processing to logistics offer routes into enterprise.



Green and circular economy

Recycling and clean energy are creating new trades in communities.



Fragile and conflict-affected settings

Where livelihoods are scarce, young people are drawn into conflict.



Governance and public finance for youth

States decide much of what reaches young people through their budgets.



Young women's economic participation

A lens across every theme, where barriers are steepest.

We remain open to new areas as they emerge, wherever the evidence shows they can widen opportunity for young people.

Our impact since January 2025

1,500+

young people reached and engaged across our programmes

105+

young people connected to mentors and sector experts

12

communities and institutions partnered with

5

youth policy and framework processes supported

9

countries represented in our convenings

27,500+

people reached across our social media platforms

Milestones

Young people who join our convenings are invited into the Pathfind, where they are matched with mentors and sector experts and supported by peers as they prepare and apply. Around half of those at our most recent International Youth Day Discourse became active members, and our Youth Skills Pulse has put young people's own account of the skills economy into the public record.

Jan 2025



Began community engagements with young people across Nigeria

Aug 2025



First International Youth Day Discourse, in person and online

Jul 2026



First Youth Skills Pulse published and the Pathfind opened nationwide

Aug 2026



Second Discourse, with participants from nine countries

Our 2030 targets

FOUR STRATEGIC GOALS

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. YouthXcel Africa grows into an institution built to last

100,000

young people reached

10,000

given sustained support of three months or more

3,000

moved into dignified work, enterprise or higher income

37

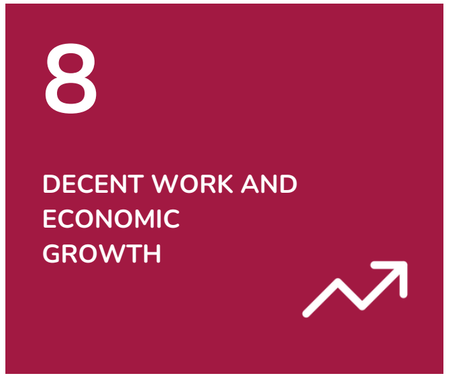
Nigerian states and the FCT covered by YouthDex

Global and continental alignment

Our work contributes directly to five of the Sustainable Development Goals and to Africa's own commitments on youth, skills and enterprise.



Target 4.4: skills for decent jobs and entrepreneurship



Target 8.6: fewer young people outside work, education and training



Target 10.2: economic inclusion, starting with those reached last



Targets 16.6 and 16.7: accountable, participatory decisions on youth



Partnerships across government, business and civil society

African Union Agenda 2063

Aspiration 6: development driven by the potential of Africa's women and youth

African Youth Charter

Article 11 on youth participation and Article 15 on livelihoods and youth employment

AfCFTA Women and Youth in Trade Protocol

Young founders' access to finance, training and markets across the continent

Governance and leadership

Registered in Nigeria as Youth Excel Initiative (IT 9874080) under Part F of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020.

Our trustees hold the organisation's legal and fiduciary responsibilities. With independent members from development practice, enterprise, public policy and youth leadership, they form an Advisory Board that guides strategy and reviews progress against results.

We commit to independently audited accounts every year, and we are adopting a full suite of organisational policies, including safeguarding, data protection and anti-fraud.

We also have a team of 9 staff members and several volunteers who bring various experstise and years of experiences to the work we do at YouthXcel Africa.



Abdulazeez Musa

Founder and Executive Director

Nearly eight years leading youth and women's economic programmes in Nigeria, including skills work under the Mastercard Foundation's Young Africa Works that reached more than 39,000 young people. Member of the Youth Panel of the EU Youth Empowerment Fund and a ONE Africa Champion.

Partner with us

We work with foundations, development partners, governments, businesses, universities and community organisations. Each partnership is built around a clear contribution to one or more of the Five Conditions, with results agreed at the start and reported openly.

Fund our work

Core support, or funding for a lab, initiative or focus theme

Build programmes with us

Co-designed programmes and consortium bids

Commission evidence

Research, youth consultations and advice

Open doors for young people

Assignments, placements, mentors and finance

Aligned with SDGs 4, 8, 10, 16 and 17, Agenda 2063, the African Youth Charter and the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade.

YouthXcel Africa

Every young person.
Every opportunity.

Let's widen opportunity for young Africans together.

info@youthxcelafrica.org

www.youthxcelafrica.org

+234 704 176 9100

No. 242 Hausawa Dan Fulani, Bawo Road, Tarauni, Kano State, Nigeria

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@youthxcelafrica