RESULTS SUMMARY

Youth Economic Empowerment in Benin, Burkina Faso, Togo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe

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PROJECT

Title:	Youth Driving Change
Partner:	35 CSO partners across the seven countries
Countries:	Benin, Burkina Faso, Togo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe
Period:	January 2022 – Ongoing

CHANGE

The programme contributed to substantial improvements in young people's economic empowerment between 2023 and 2025. Targeted young people in self- or wage employment increased from 19% in 2023 to 55% in 2025 (representing around 18,000 young people) with significant increase in employment linked to climate adaptation and mitigation activities, demonstrating that green livelihoods become an increasingly important pathway to economic resilience.

CONTEXT

Young people in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe face several challenges when operating youth-led enterprises due to limited startup capital, lack of equipment and workspaces, non-favourable legal frameworks, insecure land tenure, weak infrastructure, and poor market access. These constraints lead to difficulties in sustaining businesses, with inconsistent demand and limited market understanding affecting profitability.

CONTRIBUTION

PlanBørnefonden's integrated youth empowerment model, linking economic empowerment with gender equality, safety, health, resilience, social cohesion, climate action and influencing, leads to change in governance processes across these themes. By integrating entrepreneurship support, green skills development, and financial inclusion with youth-led advocacy and civic engagement, the project addresses both structural barriers and market constraints faced by young people.

IMAGES

Seed nursery training in Manga, Burkina Faso.

Greening initiatives/groups in Uganda.

See next page for more details →

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITIES

Civil society partners, youth-led organisations, local authorities, and private sector actors all played a leading role in programme delivery and sustainability. CSOs mentored youth-led organisations and groups, building their confidence, credibility, outreach, and advocacy capacity for improved economic environment. Youth-led organisations drove community-level action and represented young people in local governance spaces. Private sector actors contributed skills development, market linkages, entrepreneurship support, and access to finance, helping turn training into employment and enterprise opportunities. Activities in areas facing security challenges with large numbers of IDPs and refugees (Burkina Faso and Ethiopia) included provision of start-up capital and kits (equipment) to the most vulnerable together with skills training. In more stable contexts young entrepreneurs engaged in small scale businesses were supported with mentorship and coaching incl. peer-to-peer support together with provision of entrepreneurship kits (Uganda, Kenya, Benin, Togo, Zimbabwe).

LESSONS

Combining skills development, financial inclusion and market linkages significantly improved youth employment and entrepreneurship outcomes across the seven countries. Integrating green skills and climate action in the youth economic empowerment programme has generated both environmental and economic benefits. Supporting youth-led organisations and local civil society partners to drive change has increased sustainability and ownership of economic and climate initiatives. Examples include youth businesses in Zimbabwe adopting solar energy for operating their business to withstand challenges related to high electricity pries and power cuts. In Benin and Togo, integration of green economy principles were done through investments in eco-friendly initiatives such as recycling, agroecology, organic waste recovery and renewable energy. In Kenya and Uganda green businesses were expanded incl. eco briquette production, urban farming, waste collection, recycling and upcycling.

EVIDENCE

Individual change resulted in increased employment rates among targeted young people (from 19% in 2023 to 55% in 2025, around 18,000 young people). Access to formal financial services to support youth businesses increased between 2023 and 2025, from 5% to 22% among targeted young people. This reflects the programme's contribution to strengthening financial inclusion through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), financial literacy training, partnerships with microfinance institutions and tailored financing mechanisms that enabled young entrepreneurs to invest in, expand and diversify their businesses. Institutional change was seen in financial institutions improving how they support young entrepreneurs e.g. in Zimbabwe where partner advocacy resulted in the Youth Urban Poor Fund introducing graduated loan sizes and in Togo where partners achieved a fomal agreement with a microfinance institution enabling financing of youth entepreneur’s business plans.

DOMAINS

Development strategy priorities:	Insert strategy priority
Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability	YES
Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people’s rights	YES
Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights	YES
Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people’s rights	YES
Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability	YES

	Changes in local leadership of development and humanitarian work	YES

GUIDANCE NOTE

This format consists of two overall sections: on page one, the results summary communicates results to an external audience using a brief summary of what has been achieved; while page two provides an opportunity to explain the background and evidence behind the claims made as part of the summary.

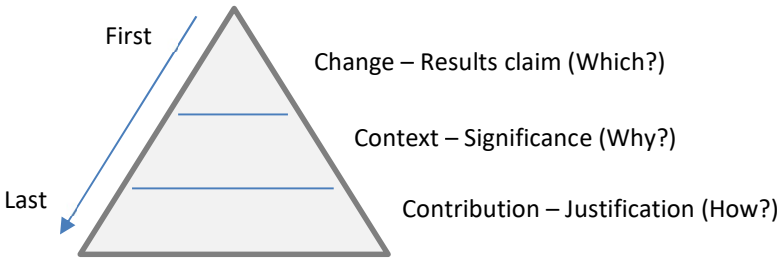
Page 1: Results summary
The results summary should outline of the overall change. This should be phrased in a clear and concise manner, focusing on the benefits for target groups or communities, and preferably start out by stating the overall key message as a one-line statement. It is thus important to prioritise what the key message should be and not attempt to describe every possible change that may have occurred.

Note that case studies should not describe all of the activities carried out during the implementation. Instead, it should focus on one or two key messages to be highlighted – which may also span several projects – and only outline activities to backup contributions to the highlighted change.

This can be illustrated as a "reverse funnel." First, the "change" section introduces the overall results claim, which answers the "which." Note that this is done before any details have been provided. Second, the "context" section outlines the problem being addressed by the project and the significance of the change. For example, by explaining "why" it benefits target groups or communities.

Finally, and lastly, the "contribution" section should provide examples to justify for "how" the intervention contributed to realising change. Note that this should focus on the plausible linkage between the change and intervention rather than describing details from activities. It is often useful to think of this as a reverse theory-of-change, i.e. "After we did X, then Y occurred, because of Z."

Figure 1:
Reverse funnel for communication



Page 2: Additional information
The second page should provide background and evidence for project's contribution to change. It can also address technical issues that do not fit in the results summary. The section consists of the following sections:

- *Activities:* Whereas the "contribution" section on page one provides a brief summary of the project contributions to change, the "activities" section allows for more detail on the project design, organisation and underlying activities in support of the contributions made.
- *Lessons:* Describes lessons learned through the implementation. These should relate to the results claim or alternatively the project(s) as a whole. Please consider (1) novelty – i.e. whether the change represents something new – and (2) the potential to scale and/or build on lessons going ahead.
- *Evidence:* A narrative comparison between results claims and the underlying evidence. It should answer "X led to Y, because of Z," although it does not need to be phrased this way. It is useful to include references to a few selected documents for further details. Please see guidelines for more.
- *Domains and development strategy:* Describes contributions to defined domains and the Danish development strategy. Please consider limiting the number of domains to a few selected ones.