

# Retaining Youth, Sustaining Impact: CFYE's Strategies for Long-Term Employment



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Employment

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Lise Paaskesen and Roselyne Warau Mwangi

CHALLENGE  
FUND  
FOR  
YOUTH  
EMPLOYMENT

# Challenge Fund for Youth Employment – Retention Strategies

## Final research report

**MDF Training & Consultancy**

Bennekomseweg 41

6717 LL Ede

The Netherlands

[mdf@mdf.nl](mailto:mdf@mdf.nl)

+ 31 318 650060

Trade register 09073461

VAT NL800182923B01

ISO 9001:2015 Certified



# Contents

<b>Research summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Introducing the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment.....	4
1.2 CFYE Framework: The Youth Quality Work Journey.....	4
1.3 Objective of the research.....	5
1.4 CFYE Framework and Objective of Research .....	6
<b>2 Problems, opportunities, and strategies.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Defining retention and staff turnover.....	8
2.2 The Business Case and Rationale for Investing in Youth Retention.....	9
2.3 Disaggregation of retention strategies .....	11
2.4 The action plan .....	13
<b>3 Effective Retention Strategies and Solutions .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4 Solutions' cost-effectiveness.....</b>	<b>38</b>
4.1 Cost-effectiveness.....	38
<b>5 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Annex 1: Approach to literature study and qualitative data collection .....</b>	<b>42</b>
Approach to the literature study.....	42
Approach to the qualitative research .....	44
<b>Annex 2: list of literature explored.....</b>	<b>45</b>
Overview of used sources .....	45
Analysis of quality of sources.....	46

## Research summary

The Challenge Fund for Youth Employment is a 7-year programme funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and managed by Palladium, VSO Nederland and Randstad in a consortium. The Fund aims to create a prosperous future for 230,000 young women and men in the Middle East, North Africa, Sahel & West Africa and Horn of Africa by 2026.

Recognizing that job creation alone is not enough, CFYE commissioned this research to understand how youth can be retained in meaningful employment, benefiting both young people and the businesses that hire them. Drawing on a literature review and qualitative insights from CFYE implementing partners in five countries, this report aims to identify the main challenges and effective strategies for youth retention.

### Why are we focusing on retention?

Retention is shown to deliver significant value: reducing recruitment and onboarding costs, building a skilled and resilient workforce, and fostering innovation and diversity. For youth, it offers greater stability, personal development, and pathways to leadership.

### Insights & Tools

The table on the next page summarizes our key insights in terms of the major challenges towards youth retention – as well as observations on solutions that mitigate these challenges. We also present a simple six-step action plan for employers (page 12) to help employers finetune their business case, the situation at hand and the practical steps towards improving their (youth) retention. Overall, we hope that the findings in this report can equip employers and ecosystem partners with actionable strategies to improve youth retention, ensuring that investments in employment have lasting social and economic impact.

	Frequently observed challenges	Observed best practices in retention solutions
<b>Building Block 1 Youth Professional Development</b>	1. Work does not align with youth aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Get insight in and acknowledge youth's aspirations and seek to meet them.</li> <li>✕ Formalise youth's skills through the provision of certificates to strengthen their CVs.</li> </ul>
	2. Transitioning into employment takes time and calls for the accumulation of skills, experience and confidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ (Pre-employment) exposure to the industry ensures youth understand what the job market offers and what skills are required.</li> <li>✕ Supporting youth in improving their soft skills leads to more confidence in the workplace. Implement comprehensive training programmes that equip youth with skills to grow into (in-organisation) leadership roles.</li> <li>✕ Demand-driven career planning to ensure youth's hard and soft skills match the demand of the job market.</li> <li>✕ In-house training, either on the job or through internships, ensures cost effective demand-based skilling.</li> </ul>
	3. Negative perceptions of youth held by senior staff prevent youth from advancing in employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Develop in-company strategies towards positive perceptions and collaborations between young employees and managers.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 2 Peer Networks</b>	1. Youth feel unseen, demotivated, and alone, leading to lower retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Provide a flat management structure where there is collaborative decision making, where goals are clear and shared, and young employees feel they are part of a peer network.</li> <li>✕ Showcase successful women and provide women's mentorship programmes contributes to retaining and nourishing female leadership talent.</li> <li>✕ Work with a peer-based model to support young women's professional and personal growth, higher independence, and stronger positions in their communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 3 Space for Youth Voices</b>	1. Lack of dialogue leads to lower job satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Putting in place a meaningful youth participation strategy facilitates a participatory, inclusive working environment.</li> <li>✕ Create a responsive and transparent environment where youth feel heard through open dialogue.</li> <li>✕ Stimulate open communication through tools like regular learning sessions and social gatherings using (Human Centered) Design Thinking to ensure the business model reflects the true interest and needs of employees and customers.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 4 Youth-focused secondary benefits</b>	1. Lack of pay transparency demotivates youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Understand youth's payment incentives and implement a payment structure that works for them.</li> <li>✕ Offer retirement policies for future financial security.</li> </ul>
	2. Mental health unwell-being impacts youth's ability to perform well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Allow for greater job flexibility, like working remotely or in young employees' own time, ensure managers' buy-in for mental health policies, foster conversations between junior and senior staff, and be consistent in supporting mental health well-being.</li> <li>✕ Encourage bonding between staff by implementing a social committee that organizes social activities.</li> </ul>
	1. Young women face sociocultural pressures to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Engage men in the household that may oppose women working to challenge cultural norms and to encourage men's buy-in to women working.</li> </ul>

<b>Building Block 5</b> <b>Gender-inclusive practice</b>	prioritise domestic and maternal roles over professional demands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Embed inclusive gender policies that offer childcare or support access to childcare services, enabling women to participate in the workforce without being hindered by caregiving responsibilities.</li> <li>✕ Create livelihood opportunities that can be pursued at or close to the home to allow mothers to work.</li> <li>✕ Invest in providing necessary tools to work to women working from home or in remote places to build trust and increase job satisfaction among employees.</li> <li>✕ Focus on output as opposed to physical presence at work to allow for flexibility in remote work policies.</li> </ul>
	2. Reintegration challenges for young mothers hinder retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Structure reintegration programmes for young mothers including training to young mothers in rural areas seeking to remain employed.</li> <li>✕ Align business policies to mothers' (and young parents in general) needs to increase their job satisfaction.</li> </ul>
	3. Stereotypes about gender roles within the workplace, and in the household hinder equality in the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Support a gender inclusive mindset in the workplace by developing practical and easy to implement gender inclusion policies, including awareness raising campaigns and onboarding and refresher trainings for all staff.</li> <li>✕ Adapt the language used in recruitment processes to be inclusive of women in male-dominated sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 6</b> <b>Youth-focused Respect and Dignity at Work</b>	1. Traditional employment methods constitute barriers to decent employment and for capturing youth's aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Support the meaningful participation of youth by allowing them to exercise voice, make them visible, and let them influence decisions.</li> </ul>
	2. Sexual harassment creates a hostile and uncomfortable work environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✕ Create safe spaces for women by applying inclusive policies and practices and training leaders on tools to implement them.</li> </ul>

# 1 Introduction

MDF Training & Consultancy was commissioned by the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (CFYE) to research effective retention strategies for youth employment. This report provides an overview of retention strategies and findings on the (dis)advantages of these solutions, concluding on the business case for youth retention and the value of it. To start, we introduce CFYE, its framework as a fund, as well as the objectives and purpose of the literature study. We also provide an overview of referenced sources and an analysis of their quality of these sources.

## 1.1 Introducing the Challenge Fund for Youth Employment

The Challenge Fund for Youth Employment (CFYE) is a €134 million program funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It aims to create employment opportunities for 230,000 young women and men in the Middle East, North Africa, Sahel & West Africa, and Horn of Africa regions. The programme supports initiatives in offering youth, particularly young women, access to decent, waged jobs that contribute to their development and well-being.

To ensure that job opportunities are not only created but also sustained, CFYE set out to delve deeper into understanding youth retention rates within its implementing partners (IPs). By analysing retention strategies and general job quality improvements that influence retention, CFYE aims to optimise the Youth Quality Work Journey, a framework that guides implementing partners in creating positive experiences for youth.

## 1.2 CFYE Framework: The Youth Quality Work Journey

Employing young talent presents both significant opportunities and challenges for businesses. While youth can bring fresh perspectives, innovation, and energy to the workplace, they may also be perceived as less reliable or productive. To address these perceptions and capitalise on the potential of young workers, CFYE has developed the Youth Quality Work Journey: a comprehensive framework designed to guide businesses in effectively hiring and retaining young talent. By focusing on both the needs of young people and the strategic goals of businesses, this framework provides a practical approach to optimising youth employment.

CFYE's Youth Quality Work Journey comprises three key stages: I) how to attract youth, II) how to select youth, and III) how to retain youth in employment. These three stages are further supported by 10 building blocks described in the picture below. During this research, we zoom in on the building blocks in the 'retention' stage of this journey.

Attract young talent by optimising:	Select young talent by optimising:	Retain young talent by optimising:	Attract - Select - Retain young talent by optimising:
BB1: Online Youth Marketing	BB3: Youth-Inclusive Recruitment	BB4: Young Professional Development Opportunities	BB10: Gender-Inclusive Practice
BB2: Community-Based Youth Outreach		BB5: Peer Networks	
		BB6: Space for Youth Voices	
		BB7: Youth-Focused Secondary Benefits	
		BB8: Young Parent Specific Benefits	
		BB9: Youth-Focused Respect & Dignity at Work	

### 1.3 Objective of the Research

This research contributes to the overall purpose of CFYE as it aims to support the fund's partners in creating the most sustainable and decent jobs that remain after CFYE's involvement ends. As such, CFYE commissioned this study to provide stakeholders in the wider employment ecosystem with a knowledge piece that outlines the rationale and best practices in youth employment retention for businesses and organisations in CFYE's portfolio and the employment ecosystem in general. Hence, the research aims to generate lessons on youth retention and youth retention strategies in employment.

The research is composed of two parts, namely a literature study and a qualitative research section, with the objective of involving partner and youth voices. It also aims to answer six questions, namely:

1. *What are generally seen as (cost-)effective youth retention strategies (outside the CFYE portfolio)? And how can these be disaggregated across sectors/business models/gender?*
2. *What critical challenges are our implementing partners facing around youth retention?*
3. *What retention strategies are our implementing partners deploying, and to what extent are they successful?*

4. *What other job quality investments are companies making that contribute to improved youth retention?*
5. *What gender inclusion strategies are effective in youth retention?*
6. *What is the business case for youth retention strategies?*

To answer these questions, MDF delved into programme-related documents and non-programme related reports and documentation sources online. We included both academic and policy papers published in English since 2015, which represents the time frame for when specific attention to youth employment began to significantly increase. Finally, we included CFYE's implementing partners and youth in semi-structured interviews and group discussions. The list of literature used can be found in Annex 1. The approach to literature study and qualitative data collection can be found in Annex 2.

#### 1.4 CFYE Framework and Objective of Research

CFYE was established to support initiatives that create and sustain decent, waged jobs for youth—particularly young women—across sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Recognizing that it's not enough to simply create job opportunities, CFYE has focused on understanding and strengthening youth retention within its implementing partners.

To guide this, CFYE developed the Youth Quality Work Journey: a comprehensive framework to support businesses and organizations in not only attracting and selecting young talent, but crucially, in retaining them. The framework recognizes both the challenges and opportunities associated with employing youth, aiming to bridge gaps by addressing perceived reliability issues while leveraging the innovation and energy young people bring to the workplace.

The Youth Quality Work Journey includes three stages—attraction, selection, and retention—underpinned by ten key building blocks that address skill development, inclusive culture, and well-being.

#### Purpose and Objective of This Research

This research was commissioned to further CFYE's mission of ensuring that jobs created through its support are sustainable and impactful even after CFYE's involvement ends. The study aims to provide actionable insights and best practices for youth retention, tailored to businesses and organizations within CFYE's portfolio and the wider employment ecosystem.

To achieve this, the research sought to:

- ✕ Identify cost-effective youth retention strategies (within and outside the CFYE portfolio).

- Examine critical challenges to youth retention faced by implementing partners.
- Document successful strategies and assess their effectiveness.
- Explore job quality investments that contribute to improved retention.
- Identify effective gender inclusion strategies.
- Establish the business case for investing in youth retention.

The study combines a literature review with qualitative research—drawing on the experiences of implementing partners and youth themselves—to generate practical lessons and inform evidence-based decision making on youth employment retention.

## 2 Problems, Opportunities, and Strategies

This section defines retention and staff turnover, providing a rationale for employers to invest in youth employment retention. A business case and strategies for retention are presented, followed by an action plan for employers.

### 2.1 Defining retention and staff turnover

In the literature studied, successful retention is suggested to be closely linked to a business's ability to keep youth on board, through certain strategies, and engaged for ensuring long-term success of the company. Retention in training and agency models is equally important, as it means empowering youth for a stronger talent pool and for long-term engagement of youth employees.

CFYE defines retention in terms of time and quality. Retention strategies are considered successful if the business or organisation can retain staff for a period of at least six months. However, retention is inherently difficult to define, especially as the programme includes various different sectors, some of which call for seasonal employment and others for flexibility. For example, the tourism sector, which constitutes seasonal work, hence, only provides temporary or short-term employment.

The quality of retention measured by employee satisfaction and/or employee performance is equally important. Without improved employee satisfaction and performance, the potential positive impact of retention strategies on organisation's' performance and young employees' wellbeing is absent. This was validated by CFYE's implementing partners during interviews and a workshop, where a manager noted:

*'Realising retention is useless for our business if the employee in question does not show stable (or even improved) performance'.*

Madfoatcom, an implementing partner in Jordan, reflects that it may take long for agents to generate enough income for their business to mature, which is why they encourage continuous involvement of youth in their network and agent outreach. From the perspective of agent-based employment and flexible work, motivation and continued involvement of youth are key to generating an income, further enhancing a strong and growing network of young workers.

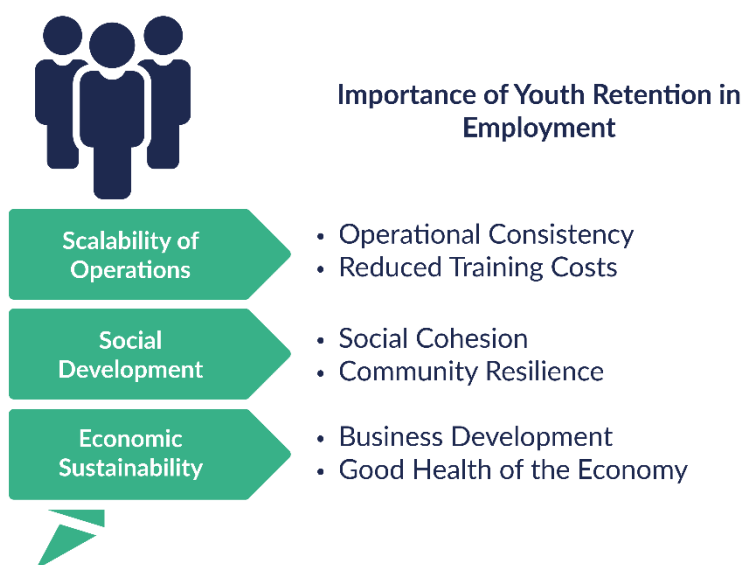
CFYE notes that retention may be an end and a means to youth enjoying job satisfaction, opportunities for professional growth, and well-being. For businesses, retention strategies may be a means to enjoy growth, through increased productivity, efficiency, access to new networks, and other

business-oriented outcomes. However, it is apparent that retention of youth should also not come at the cost of quality of the organisation's outputs.

Though the research focuses on retention strategies for youth employment, staff turnover rates overall provide a good indication of retention in businesses. Literature studied defines staff turnover by how many employees depart from a company in a set period. It is often presented as a percentage, calculated by dividing the number of employees who leave the company with the average number of employees remaining in the selected period. This allows businesses to evaluate whether their turnover is in line with sector norms.

Rates of staff turnover, however, are often sector and context-specific and should therefore not be compared to businesses in other sectors. Rather, staff turnover, or the retention rate, should be assessed against the business's human resource policies and plans for growth.

## 2.2 The Business Case and Rationale for Investing in Youth Retention



<sup>1</sup> Youth retention in employment is not just a social imperative, it is critical for sustainable economic growth, business development, and individual well-being. Persistent youth unemployment undermines economies, leads to social disenfranchisement, and limits opportunities for young people to become self-reliant and engaged citizens. In contrast, retaining young talent delivers significant benefits for employers, youth, and society at large.

### Rationale for Investing in Youth Retention

- ✕ **Economic and Social Imperative:** Retaining youth in employment contributes to a more robust and sustainable economy. It supports operational consistency, reduces onboarding and training costs, and helps foster meaningful social and professional networks.
- ✕ **Personal and Community Benefits:** Stable employment provides young people with knowledge, skills, stability, and professional networks. This stability is essential for personal development, social integration, and poverty reduction.
- ✕ **Organisational Performance:** Retention strategies strengthen organizations by building resilient, loyal, and capable workforce—key to weathering disruptions and scaling operations.

### The Business Case for Youth Retention

Investing in youth retention yields measurable returns across several dimensions:

1. **Talent Development & Workforce Planning:** Retaining youth allows organizations to develop internal talent and proactively plan for future leadership, enhancing sustainability and adaptability.
2. **Reduced Hiring & Onboarding Costs:** Lower turnover reduces the expenses associated with recruiting and training new staff, freeing resources for growth and innovation.
3. **Motivated, Growth-Oriented Workforce:** Youth are eager to develop their skills and often drive organizational progress, supporting peer onboarding and creating a positive work culture.
4. **Diversity & Innovation:** A youthful workforce contributes to greater diversity of thought, fostering creativity and competitive advantage in the marketplace.
5. **Increased Productivity & Profitability:** Youth's openness to learning and new technologies translates into higher productivity and, consequently, profitability.
6. **Stronger Employer Brand & Reputation:** Organisations that invest in youth retention are seen as innovative and socially responsible, attracting both talent and business opportunities.
7. **Socio-Economic Impact:** By offering stable employment,

businesses help reduce poverty and contribute to broader national development goals, building healthier, more resilient communities.

Ultimately, **youth retention strategies benefit both business and youth**: businesses enjoy operational and financial gains, while young employees experience job satisfaction, skill growth, and improved livelihoods. Retention is thus both a strategic investment and a cornerstone of inclusive, sustainable development.

### 2.3 Disaggregation of retention strategies

The research concludes that there is ample overlap in types of strategies for retention of youth in employment and leading to similar outcomes for youth across businesses. We define three categories of high impact strategies that help to overcome some of the main challenges to (youth) retention in employment as outlined below:



#### Career development

Opportunities for professional growth and career path development are key contributors to youth retention. There is no indication that retention strategies incorporating learning opportunities are sector or business model specific. Rather, it is universal and works best when learning opportunities are continuously offered. Strategies that include training, mentoring, either by a role model or a more senior staff member, and allowing youth to showcase their talents, enhance youth's vision and aspiration of growth.



#### Inclusive workplace culture

The inclusivity of a business's culture heavily impacts the likelihood of retention of their staff – in particular youth and women. Managers' positive perception of youth contributes to a more collaborative, supportive, and participatory management style. This type of management style fits youth's need for trusting their employer and contributes to a sense of belonging. A participatory and inclusive environment spurs social cohesion through open communication and intergenerational dialogue, and in support of good mental health. These generate higher job satisfaction and sense of belonging among youth.

Finally, strategies that specifically focus on including women may help shift gender norms that limit women's inclusion in the labor market. They may provide women with more independence and could lead to more equal gender relations in the home and within family life. There is a range of other business cultures and 'ways of working' factors that can influence retention of youth in employment. For example, in the agricultural sector, young people prioritise flexible payment schemes and transparency in payments. For young

women, safety and security is an important factor that supports their retention in employment. For single mothers, affordable childcare, cash transfers that enable them to afford childcare, and flexible working hours to balance career and motherhood contribute to their retention. For single fathers, financial incentives may positively contribute to the number of fathers in employment.



### Work-life support

Overall, youth say they enjoy the freedom that comes with remote work and the ability to schedule their own working hours.

Young women say it helps them balance household work or studies while generating an income.

Youth may be more conversant with technology than their older peers. This can be valuable, as many jobs nowadays require a certain level of digital literacy, mostly related to basic skills like using Microsoft Office, or more specifically: building dashboards, presenting data visually, and using AI and communication tools for process- and team management<sup>2</sup>. For sectors that value these qualities, such as service sectors like ICT, business process outsourcing and tourism, engaging youth may instead be a lower risk compared to their non-youth peers. In addition, it may offer freedom and flexibility in employment, leading to a better work-life balance, to which youth often aspire.

The employers interviewed as part of the study reported experiencing fewer sick days among employees working remotely or hybrid models, compared to previous in-office models. Studies show that in many cases – not all- remote and flexible work not only leads to fewer sick days among employees, but that employees also experience higher job satisfaction. Finally, businesses and organisations that allow remote and flexible work often enjoy a more diverse and larger talent pool of employees, which increases brand reputation.

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<sup>2</sup> See also CFYE's Report on 'DigitALL: Empowering Women in MENA's Digital Economy', available on <https://fundforyouthemployment.nl/digitall-empowering-women-in-menas-digital-economy/>

## 2.4 The Action Plan

This report aims to inspire employers and supporting partners to strengthen their retention strategies. There are several practical steps that organisations can and should take to get this process going. The section below describes the six basic steps from understanding 'Why' an organisation wants to do this, to what strategy/strategies they should implement.

The outcomes from these analyses provide an overall view and understanding of the context in which the business or organisation operates. Below is a concise action plan for the business or organisation looking to increase youth retention in employment:

# Step-by-Step Action Plan for Improved Retention



## Defining the Business Case

Determine why your organisation is keen on investing in youth retention. Please tick the boxes below to get a clear vision of your underlying objectives.

Benefits and Advantages of Retention	✓
<b>Financial Benefits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower hiring costs – retention is cheaper than recruitment</li> <li>Higher productivity – engaged youth contribute more</li> <li>Return on investment – retained employees maximise skill retention</li> </ul>	✓
<b>Strategic Advantages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future leadership pipeline – Youth grow into managers</li> <li>Innovation boost – Fresh ideas drive competitiveness</li> <li>Stronger employer brand – attracts top talent</li> </ul>	✓
<b>Social &amp; Economic Impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce poverty – stable jobs improve youth livelihoods</li> <li>Support national development – skilled youth workforce equals economic growth</li> <li>Enhance social cohesion – employment reduces youth disenfranchisement</li> </ul>	✓

	Retention			Turnover
Concept	Duration of employment	Employee satisfaction	Employee performance	Turnover rate
Tools	HR overview of employment duration for employees, incl. exited employees (based on contracts)	Annual employee satisfaction surveys	Employee Performance Management System, including Key Result Areas	HR overview on # and % of employees leaving employer
Frequency	Live	Annual	Annual	Live

## Analyse your Situation

Perform a situational analysis consisting of three elements:

**Gender analysis:** it is important to explore the differences in attracting and retaining men and women.

**Youth aspirations:** it is important to know what young employees are seeking and aspire to find in employment.

**All staff issues:** that affect turnover, irrespective of gender and age – should be analysed and strategies to overcome these challenges should be implemented.

Above is an overview of helpful tools for organisations to collect retention data and related indicators. It is advised that all tools are put in place if they are not available yet.

## Identifying Problems (and Opportunities)

Review the outcomes of the data tools above for the whole employee pool, including men, women, youth, and staff over 35 years old.

**Level 1: (tool 1, 3 & 4)** Identify the core issue: Are employees leaving within 1.5 years or underperforming due to low motivation? Is there a difference in retention between young and older staff, or between young men and women and if so, why?

**Level 2: (tool 2)** identify the underlying reasons for undesired staff turnover and behaviour. Frequently mentioned reasons for (youth) employees leaving are:

(Perceived) lack of career growth opportunities **(Solution track A).**

Insufficient engagement, like poor onboarding, weak mentorship and rigid work policies **(Solution track A & B).**

Financial and well-being pressures: many youths face low wages, and especially women struggle balancing work and family responsibilities **(Solution track C).**

4

**Track A: Career Development**

Mentorship programs

Upskilling and Youth Leadership Training

Clear promotion pathways

**Track B: Inclusive Workplace Culture**

Youth feedback mechanisms

Team building

Peer Learning

Structured onboarding processes

Inclusion & safeguarding programs

**Track C: Work-life Support**

Flexible/remote work options

Childcare & Healthcare subsidies

Mental Health & Wellness program

**Inspiration and Prioritisation**

Identify which package of retention solutions works best for your organisation. This is based on the organisation's objectives, challenges and willingness to invest time and resources. It is advised to select a maximum of 2-3 solutions across multiple tracks, to ensure optimal efficiency and adoption. These solutions are also relevant even if employee satisfaction, performance and retention are not (yet) problematic.

5

**Hacking a Plan**

After selecting maximum of 2-3 solutions, assign a dedicated retention working group to coordinate implementation, track performance and update design and operations where required. After initial piloting, usually amongst a small group of <50 staff, the retention solutions can be rolled out across the organisation.



6

**Keeping at It**

Key to ensuring consistent relevance of the newly implemented solutions and strategies is to make sure monitoring is done on a regular basis. It is crucial to continuously identify and explore problems and opportunities, prioritise and solutions, and adapt policies like gender inclusion, remote work, and compensation, as necessary. The action plan should not be implemented once-off but must be done continuously.

### 3 Effective Retention Strategies and Solutions

This chapter combines desk research with these IP's practical experiences in retention strategies and solutions. The table below summarizes our main insights in the key challenges and related solutions that help with youth retention and staff turnover. These have been grouped below under six building blocks that are part of CFYE's Journey to Quality Work<sup>3</sup>. All observations are discussed in more detail after the table.

	Frequently observed challenges	Observed best practices in retentions solutions
<b>Building Block 1 Youth Professional Development</b>	1. Work does not align with youth aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Get insight in and acknowledge youth's aspirations and seek to meet them.</li> <li>✎ Formalise youth's skills through the provision of certificates to strengthen their CVs.</li> </ul>
	2. Transitioning into employment takes time and calls for the accumulation of skills, experience and confidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ (Pre-employment) exposure to the industry ensures youth understand what the job market offers and what skills are required.</li> <li>✎ Supporting youth in improving their soft skills leads to more confidence in the workplace. Implement comprehensive training programmes that equip youth with skills to grow into (in-organisation) leadership roles.</li> <li>✎ Demand-driven career planning to ensure youth's hard and soft skills match the demand of the job market.</li> <li>✎ In-house training, either on the job or through internships, ensures cost effective demand-based skilling.</li> </ul>
	3. Negative perceptions of youth held by senior staff prevent youth from advancing in employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Develop in-company strategies towards positive perceptions and collaborations between young employees and managers.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 2 Peer Networks</b>	1. Youth feel unseen, demotivated, and alone, leading to lower retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Provide a flat management structure where there is collaborative decision making, where goals are clear and shared, and young employees feel they are part of a peer network.</li> <li>✎ Showcase successful women and provide women's mentorship programmes contributes to retaining and nourishing female leadership talent.</li> <li>✎ Work with a peer-based model to support young women's professional and personal growth, higher independence, and stronger positions in their communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 3 Space for Youth Voices</b>	1. Lack of dialogue leads to lower job satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Putting in place a meaningful youth participation strategy facilitates a participatory, inclusive working environment.</li> <li>✎ Create a responsive and transparent environment where youth feel heard through open dialogue.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> See page 4 for a more detailed description of CFYE's Youth Quality Work Journey and all its building blocks.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Stimulate open communication through tools like regular learning sessions and social gatherings using (Human Centered) Design Thinking to ensure the business model reflects the true interest and needs of employees and customers.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 4</b> <b>Youth-focused</b> <b>secondary benefits</b>	1. Lack of pay transparency demotivates youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Understand youth's payment incentives and implement a payment structure that works for them.</li> <li>✘ Offer retirement policies for future financial security.</li> </ul>
	2. Mental health unwell-being impacts youth's ability to perform well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Allow for greater job flexibility, like working remotely or in young employees' own time, ensure managers' buy-in for mental health policies, foster conversations between junior and senior staff, and be consistent in supporting mental health well-being.</li> <li>✘ Encourage bonding between staff by implementing a social committee that organizes social activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 5</b> <b>Gender-inclusive</b> <b>practice</b>	1. Young women face sociocultural pressures to prioritise domestic and maternal roles over professional demands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Engage men in the household that may oppose women working to challenge cultural norms and to encourage men's buy-in to women working.</li> <li>✘ Embed inclusive gender policies that offer childcare or support access to childcare services, enabling women to participate in the workforce without being hindered by caregiving responsibilities.</li> <li>✘ Create livelihood opportunities that can be pursued at or close to the home to allow mothers to work.</li> <li>✘ Invest in providing necessary tools to work to women working from home or in remote places to build trust and increase job satisfaction among employees.</li> <li>✘ Focus on output as opposed to physical presence at work to allow for flexibility in remote work policies.</li> </ul>
	2. Reintegration challenges for young mothers hinder retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Structure reintegration programmes for young mothers including training to young mothers in rural areas seeking to remain employed.</li> <li>✘ Align business policies to mothers' (and young parents in general) needs to increase their job satisfaction.</li> </ul>
	3. Stereotypes about gender roles within the work place, and in the household hinder equality in the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Support a gender inclusive mindset in the workplace by developing practical and easy to implement gender inclusion policies, including awareness raising campaigns and onboarding and refresher trainings for all staff.</li> <li>✘ Adapt the language used in recruitment processes to be inclusive of women in male-dominated sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Block 6</b> <b>Youth-focused</b> <b>Respect and Dignity</b> <b>at Work</b>	1. Traditional employment methods constitute barriers to decent employment and for capturing youth's aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Support the meaningful participation of youth by allowing them to exercise voice, make them visible, and let them influence decisions.</li> </ul>
	2. Sexual harassment creates a hostile and uncomfortable work environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✘ Create safe spaces for women by applying inclusive policies and practices and training leaders on tools to implement them.</li> </ul>

The findings and insights from this section were informed and validated by interviews with seven of CFYE's Implementing Partners, both managers and their young employees. Their insights can be found throughout the text below. For your understanding, please find a short description of these organisations and their business model and sector below.

CFYE Partner	Implementing Partner	Background to the organisation
<b>Outcess Nigeria</b> <a href="#">More info</a>		Outcess Solutions Nigeria Limited is an integrated customer engagement and business process outsourcing company. They deliver innovative digital solutions that empower and optimise the performance of people, teams and organisations. Through their project 'Do More 3000', the company aims to tackle youth unemployment in Nigeria, while breaching the gap in supply and demand of outsourcing.
<b>Thrive Agric Nigeria</b> <a href="#">More info</a>		Thrive Agric empowers young agents to provide rural agrarian communities with access to financial, market, and climate services through platforms used by Thrive Agric, namely Tradr, AOS, and Crust.
<b>Tagaddod Egypt</b> <a href="#">More info</a>		Tagaddod is a digital waste-collection solution that connects people who generate used cooking oil (UCO) with people who collect it. Their digital platform enables direct and indirect waste collectors to find and pick up scheduled requests in their area.
<b>Madfoatcom Jordan</b> <a href="#">More info</a>		MadfoatCom is an online, real-time bill presentment and payment system (EBPPS); which enables customers to inquire about and pay their bills and payments.
<b>Crystel Jordan</b> <a href="#">More info</a>		Crystel is a Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) company and the first independent, multilingual contact centre provider in Jordan. They strive to improve customer service solutions and improve business performances. As an employer, we aim to provide decent employment opportunities and improve existing jobs for Jordanian youth, especially women.
<b>Checkups Kenya</b> <a href="#">More info</a>		CheckUps offers a tech-enabled health benefits management platform, with care being delivered by a network of freelance dispatch nurses recruited from local communities.
<b>Generation Kenya</b> <a href="#">More info</a>	<b>Programme</b>	Generation Programme Kenya (Generation Kenya) is a nonprofit that delivers sector-leading employment and income results through skilling and placement. The organization supports youth who face the highest systemic barriers to employment to achieve economic mobility and a better life; training and placing them into careers that would otherwise be inaccessible.
<b>Horn Afrique Poultry Farm Ethiopia</b> <a href="#">More info</a>		HAPF supplies eggs and broilers to local markets and works – in addition to 'regular' employees in their production systems- with self-employed agents from refugee- and host communities.

## BUILDING BLOCK 1: YOUTH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Youth Professional Development – Challenge 1: Available work does not align with targeted youth' aspirations.**



This research found that youth aspirations are often not sufficiently met by the type and content of employment offered in the job market. The lack of adequate policies offered by the socio-political environment plays a big role in this as well.

Secondly, youth generally want to work in a safe environment that values diversity, provides decent pay, and supports personal development. According to the interviewed youth in Kenya, Nigeria and Jordan, most organisations' policies do not match with these aspirations. For example, the

youth interviewed wish that organisations would invest in skill-development that would support and prepare young people to navigate the labour market and encourage them to follow their aspirations.

#### YOUTH ASPIRATIONS



A range of social and cultural factors influence youths' aspirations for employment. These are, for example, gender norms and stereotypes, culture, community and family values, role models, or social rewards or sanctions.

Other aspects affecting youth aspirations can be the preferred location of work (urban vs. Rural), preferred sector/industry, a type of role, and what they value in the workplace, such as independence, camaraderie, management decision power or the opportunity to develop skills. As aspirations can be very diverse and are determined by different factors, successful retention requires strong research and understanding upfront. Therefore, it is crucial to include youth voices from the beginning of program planning. To do this, it is necessary to establish and maintain strong links with youth groups, where relevant, and understand which channels of engagement will be most effective.

#### FORMALISING SKILLS



Madfoatcom, an Implementing Partner in Jordan, recognises that youth have skills and experiences that are not necessarily listed on their CVs. Therefore, the company offers professional certifications, for example in project management, to support young employees in formalising their skills. According to Madfoatcom, these certificates boost young employees' confidence and provide them with the correct qualifications to advance in their careers.

#### **Youth Professional Development – Challenge 2: Challenges in transitioning into employment.**



One of the key challenges youth faces in the labour market is the transition period -the time it takes to accumulate the necessary skills, experience, and confidence to secure employment that aligns with their aspirations and potential. This transition is often not immediate. Sprints, an Implementing Partner in Egypt recognises that:

*'Many traditional training programs often fall short of delivering tangible results, equipping learners solely with hard skills, while neglecting the critical transition into the job market.'*

A factor that may exacerbate the challenge of transitioning into employment is the attitude and perception that managers, senior staff, or mentors have about young employees. Not only do negative perceptions and attitudes act

as a barrier for youth seeking employment, but it can also act as a challenge in accepting their added value to the workplace.

#### EXPOSURE TO THE INDUSTRY



Sprints organises retreats that provide future young employees with opportunities to connect with top tech companies in Egypt and worldwide. A participant said:

*'I had the chance to engage with many businesses and gain valuable insights about the career paths available in their organisations. I also learned about how recruiters think, received tips and techniques to master interviews, and gained a deeper understanding of the hiring process.'*

#### YOUNG TALENT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



According to the graduates from Generation Kenya, an Implementing Partner from Kenya, they previously struggled with confidence, especially with speaking to new people and sharing ideas and opinions. They explained that training their soft skills pushed them out of their comfort zone. The training was more than just theory. The participants frequently practiced interpersonal communication skills, networking, and owning their growth. The mindset sessions taught them to embrace challenges and not being afraid to make mistakes. The youth also practiced real past scenarios with customers and even had processes mimicking the pace and multitasking demands of the job. One of the participants explained:

*'Now as a digital customer service agent, the realities I face daily at work, e.g. dealing with complex customer issues across multiple digital channels simultaneously, under time pressure, the training I received helps me to remain calm, speak confidently to a frustrated customer knowing I've practiced this before while I was in class to be able to find a solution for the client or if I am not able to solve their complaints I don't freeze I instead escalate the matter with my supervisor.'*

Allowing young employees to showcase their leadership skills by giving them opportunities to act in higher positions is a powerful way to develop their potential and demonstrate trust in their abilities. This can involve assigning them to lead projects, participate in decision-making committees, or mentor junior colleagues. Such opportunities not only enhance their leadership skills but also increase their engagement and commitment to the organisation. Some organisations are also experimenting with "reverse mentoring" programs, in which young employees' mentor senior leaders on topics such as technology and social media.

## DRIVING EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION THROUGH THE OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH



Outcess, an Implementing Partner in Nigeria, is a Business Process Outsourcing company implementing a youth retention strategy focused on clear, transparent career progression pathway and leadership opportunities for youth. Recognising that growth potential drives employee satisfaction, the company invests in a comprehensive training program which all new hires undergo, equipping them not just for their roles, but for future leadership positions as well. This foundation enables Outcess to cultivate talent from within, with structured internal rotations and defined promotion ladders that drive high-performers from agents to team leaders to managers.

Outcess' internal talent development model cut down early-career attrition, with 50% of team lead roles now filled internally through promotion pathways. Outcess HR personnel notes:

*'When young talent sees a real path to leadership—not in years, but through proven performance—they don't just stay; they thrive. Promoting youth leadership isn't an expense—it's how we develop skills for the company in future.'*

Outcess accelerates young talent's professional development through a structured coaching and mentoring system, which is more cost-effective than one-off training given by an external consultant. Senior leaders provide targeted coaching to navigate career pathways, while collaborative peer youth mentoring empowers youth to share successes, tackle challenges, and drive workplace innovation together. This dual-tiered support system not only builds critical skills but also fuels engagement and retention by making growth intentional and communal.

Additionally, the company actively recognises their employees contributions through, for example, monthly cash rewards for top performers, public recognition via the 'Wall of Fame' photo gallery, and non-monetary incentives like movie coupons. These initiatives make young employees feel valued and invested in Outcess' mission.

The costs of training, coaching, mentoring and recognition programs are outweighed by outcomes of retained top talent, reduced recruitment spending, and a pipeline of young leaders aware of their company culture. Well trained talent has enabled a partner of Outcess with international clients to grow their business beyond Nigeria. Outcess youth retention strategy proves that in addition to improving employee satisfaction and skills, empowering ambition is good for business.

## DRIVING YOUTH CAREER PROGRESSION



Generation Kenya addresses youth unemployment through a demand-driven training model for youth employment and retention. A core strategy is the provision of tailor-made training, developed collaboratively with partners, encompassing both practical technical skills and essential soft skills like communication, networking, and professional etiquette.

At Generation Kenya, the training programs are tailored directly to match with employer needs and upcoming job vacancies. Their dual focus on training hard skills and soft skills is customised to fit employer/ role requirements. These skills significantly increase job placement and retention of the newly hired youth at the workplace as they meet employer needs and role requirements. Corrinne Ngurukie, CEO of Generation Kenya explains:

*'We do not skill youth unless there is placement from employers. At Generation Kenya we operationalise this through collaboration with employers before launching training cohorts, ensuring curricula are tailored to address specific skills gaps identified by hiring organisations.'*

Employers actively shape training content, participate in curriculum design, and commit to hiring graduates. This employer-driven approach ensures youth acquire precise, in-demand competencies, directly aligning with workplace needs which promotes retention.

For instance, a longitudinal study of Kenyan youth trained through Generation Kenya revealed sustained employment rates of 60% after two years, with some youth advancing within their roles and others transitioning to higher opportunities. This is evidence of how employer involvement in skilling reduces turnover by creating role-readiness. By embedding employers as co-designers and stakeholders in youth development, Generation Kenya has bridged the gap between training and retention, demonstrating that employer participation in skill-building is not merely transactional but a strategic investment for an organisation in workforce stability.

## TRAINING ON THE JOB



Training and mentorship can benefit youth in employment by empowering them and giving them a sense of ownership. An organisation can also train youth for specific skills needed for their current role.

Finally, young professionals who have grown in their roles can help and support new young employees joining the organisation, as they understand and know their needs better. This factor is closely linked to workforce development and planning for the sustainability of the organisation:

*‘Explaining career progression and its impact on career advancement, experience gathering, and personal development to youth is essential for retaining young talent. Young employees are often motivated by opportunities for growth and development.’*

A clear understanding of career pathways within the organisation can increase their commitment and engagement. Providing information on career progression, along with access to training and development programs, empowers young people to take control of their career trajectories and see a future for themselves within the company. Training and other opportunities to develop professionally should be continuous, in order to positively affect youth retention.

**Youth Professional Development – Challenge 3: Negative perceptions of youth held by senior staff prevent youth from advancing in employment.**



A common barrier to youth employment and retention is the negative perception held by more senior staff. These perceptions often include the belief that youth are high risk hires, because they do not have the required skills or experience, and training and mentoring young employees is slow or uncertain. Nurses working with CheckUps in Kenya also iterate that senior staff may resist change, youth may want to bring about. Hence, their negative perceptions and attitudes may hamper youth retention and challenge changes within the business or organisation.

**PERCEPTIONS AND COLLABORATION**



A solution to the challenge is to strengthen the link between youth employment retention and manager investment in professional development of youth, revealing that managers who actively engage in nurturing young professionals experience lower employee turnover risks compared to those who do not. There are two reasons for this: first, direct engagement of employers dismantles managers' initial biases as they witness the capabilities of youth firsthand, and second, these employers recognize that sustained support during the early stages of skill-building yields long-term returns in competence and productivity.

Encouraging managers to adapt their management styles, for example through training, to better suit the needs and expectations of younger generations is highlighted. This may involve shifting from a top-down approach to a more collaborative and participatory management style, providing more frequent feedback, and offering greater flexibility in work arrangements. Training programs for managers on effective communication and mentorship skills can be beneficial in this regard. A shift in management style can also involve providing opportunities for young employees to contribute to decision-making processes and take ownership of their work.

This may result in youth wanting to see their efforts grow and contribute to the business or organisations' success, consequently growing their loyalty to their employer.

## BUILDING BLOCK 2: PEER NETWORKS

### Peer Networks - Challenge 1: Youth are feeling unseen, demotivated, and alone.



Despite their importance, peer networks are often underrepresented in youth retention strategies. This may be because they are easily overlooked or assumed to form naturally.

However, when peer networks are absent, the workplace can feel isolating and overwhelming, especially for young employees who are still building confidence and navigating new environments. Without peer networks, employees may feel they are undervalued, unseen, and alone. It is with by creating peer networks, that an employee may become more and remain engaged, can receive the emotional support, and they may generate a sense of community.

## COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING



The few insights on this topic highlight the importance of peer networks for young sales agents and micro-distributors, like within Mombasa's micro-retail sector. Young sale agents thrive in an environment that has a flat management structure where there is collaborative decision-making and there are clear collective goals for the group. An effect was that young sales agents feel less like an employee and more like a partner in a growing enterprise. At LIVINC in Jordan, meetings are chaired on rotation, allowing for balanced decision-making and responsibilities. They say:

*'The active involvement of young individuals in decision-making processes, creative initiatives, and community development enhances the organization's ability to stay relevant and responsive to evolving needs.'*

## HARNESSING TALENT



Limited access to professional networks, female role models, and robust social capital creates significant barriers for women in the workplace, contributing to lower retention rates. Women's visibility and mentorship programs directly address these constraints. Mentorship programs intentionally connect young women with established professionals, often women, in their respective fields. This helps mentees, or young women employees, with direct access to the mentor's network, expanding their own professional connections, job opportunities, industry insights, and sponsorship for advancement.

For example, when Safaricom noticed that the business both lacked a strong talent pipeline and struggled achieving its gender diversity agenda, they launched a mentorship program to empower and support the advancement of young female talent within the organisation. The aim was to equip young talent with mindsets, skillsets, and toolsets to grow within the organisation, succeed in leadership roles and increase employee retention.

#### PEERS MENTORING PEERS



Women in Egypt face higher unemployment rates than men, especially in semi-urban and rural areas. Taggadod, as a strategy to actively support women in these areas, developed a peer-based model through their Women Ambassador Groups. This model focuses on recruiting and empowering young women aged 18-35 to act as ambassadors within their local communities to collect Used Cooking Oil for recycling.

Tagaddod actively engages women with minimal formal education requirements and supports them by building their capacity through workshops, peer mentoring programs and by offering flexible working models. This model helps women reaching higher independence, personal and professional growth, by developing sales and communication skills, and gain recognition in their communities. As a result, more women joined the women's ambassador network, specially through referrals, proving its success and recognition

#### BUILDING BLOCK 3: SPACE FOR YOUTH VOICES

**Space for Youth Voices – Challenge 1: Lack of dialogue leads to lower job satisfaction.**



When employment closely links to youth's aspirations, an indirect outcome of it is increased social cohesion, obtained through building trust and creating a sense of belonging. This outcome is also seen in the building block on creating a space for youth voices. Where dialogue between managers and employees is lacking, youth may decide to leave the job. Youth in Kenya, for example, say that when there is no dialogue, they feel disempowered and not recognized. These lead to lower job satisfaction among youth.

#### PUT IN PLACE A MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION STRATEGY



To address high unemployment issues in Nigeria, Thrive Agric has implemented a youth-centric retention strategy that prioritises youth space and voices by creating an inclusive workplace where young employees feel heard, valued, and empowered.

A key aspect of this strategy is fostering open dialogue and participation through initiatives like Thrive Talks, which are internal TED-style

presentations, and Quarterly Town Halls where employees engage directly with leadership. These platforms allow youth employees to share ideas, build confidence, and influence company decisions, reinforcing their sense of belonging. Additionally, monthly team-bonding activities and birthday celebrations strengthen interpersonal connections, making the workplace more engaging. Thrive Agric also emphasises mentorship, particularly for young women, preparing them for leadership roles and ensuring career progression.

By investing in youth development and amplifying their voices, Thrive Agric cultivates loyalty, reducing attrition to less than 3% annually. This approach not only retains talent but also drives innovation, as young employees contribute fresh perspectives that fuel expansion into new markets. Ultimately, giving youth a space to thrive is a low-cost, high-impact strategy that secures long-term growth and competitive advantage.

#### STIMULATE A CULTURE OF OPEN COMMUNICATION



Fostering open communication in a business or organisation allows for an environment that better suits the needs and expectations of younger generations. Open forums, platforms, regular social gatherings and learning sessions, and offline retreats or wellness days for employees to voice their views and grievances are vital for creating a transparent and responsive workplace. These platforms can be used to address concerns, gather feedback, and foster a sense of ownership and belonging among employees. Regular town hall meetings, suggestion boxes, and anonymous online feedback mechanisms are some examples of how organizations can facilitate open communication.

#### APPLY (HUMAN) DESIGN THINKING APPROACHES



Novus Agro in Nigeria engaged in research using the human centered design approach. It showed underlying biases and assumptions in the business model, which called for a transformative approach that could help them align to the specific needs of their target audience and make youth's perspective count as part of the cornerstone of their mission. They conducted interviews, surveys, assessments, and had feedback sessions with recent graduates from different backgrounds. They say it:

*'(...) enabled the programs to be responsive to the youth's needs and implement improvements to match their expectations. For example, after getting feedback from the pilot phase learners of the web development program they wish to add more sessions to better digest the content, Sprints added extra sessions to all the following rounds.'*

Similarly, learners hoped for a faster feedback session on their completed tasks and projects. To enable this, Sprints is working closely with CFYE to

build an automated scoring and reviewing system to boost the quality of the feedback and make it instant.

#### BUILDING BLOCK 4: YOUTH-FOCUSED SECONDARY BENEFITS

##### Youth Focused Secondary Benefits – Challenge 1: Unstructured reward systems.



Lack of transparency in pay can significantly harm both employees and employers. and lead to decreased employees' morale, foster mistrust among employees, and lower engagement in the workplace. Employees may also feel less satisfied with their job, lowering productivity, and increasing feelings of inequity and competition among colleagues. It compromises employee productivity and may negatively affect the business or organisations' ability to retain employees: Pay intransparency affects both the employee and the employer in a negative way.

#### PAYMENT INCENTIVES



It is important to understand youth's payment incentives for work. For example, youth working in agriculture were more likely to be interested in jobs that provided short-term cash returns, or lunch and travel reimbursements. Youth are more likely to prefer rapid income generation, linked to fast-growing fruits and vegetables with multiple growing cycles and cash crops with short maturity periods and ready markets, as well as exploring poultry farming and animal husbandry. The importance of transparency of payments and bonuses for agents working in sales in boosting trust in the employer.

Youth iterate that fair wages and fair pay are essential to maintaining youth employees:

*'I used to work online, but most of the online jobs I tried were not credible. I had a bad experience. After completing work, I found my salary was different from what we had originally agreed upon. Now, I receive my salary exactly as agreed. This credibility means a lot to me.'*

Payment schemes should be transparent and upheld. Youth, they say, are sensitive to receiving timely payment of salaries. A loyalty system set up by MGA in Kenya, recognizes the trust between the company and its registered waste pickers. This scheme guarantees that frequent waste providers are exempt from unfavorable market fluctuations and receive better prices for their products. MGA directly purchasing from waste pickers- avoiding intermediaries. Due to this mechanism pickers receive 20-30% higher prices than working with aggregators would.

Overall, developing a supportive, trusting, and fair payment scheme is key to retaining youth employees, because it fosters social cohesion through building trust, creating a sense of belonging and enforcing a sense of purpose among youth.

#### RETIREMENT POLICIES



Another interesting example of a financial incentive is introduced by our Implementing Partner CheckUps from Kenya. The CheckUps system allows nurses to earn additional income and to work in their own time. By offering training, nurses are seeing the benefits of the strategy, and some have gained permanent employment from it. In terms of secondary benefits, CheckUps is exploring the possibility of allowing freelance nurses to save for retirement, which is unique in the regional employment ecosystem.

#### **Youth Focused Secondary Benefits – Challenge 2: Mental health unwell-being impacts youths’ ability to perform.**



Mental health and mental well-being are recognized challenges, especially for youth starting out in employment. Research shows that pressures, like social pressures to gain employment and secure a steady source of income, lead to stress among youth, affecting their mental well-being. Youth reported a lack of emotional support, lack of ability to cope with stress, and low resilience in dealing with mental health and unwell-being. These effects were worse in cases where youth did not feel supported by the community or their families.

#### INVESTING IN MENTAL HEALTH



Greater job flexibility, like being able to work remotely or working at a chosen time, is associated with decreased odds of psychological distress and anxiety. Key interventions that may lead to increased mental well-being at work include (i) a business or organization must commit to becoming a mentally healthy organisation and this starts with its leadership, so ensure buy-in into mental health policies from managers and day-to-day decision-makers in the business or organisation; they should not rely on external support but should build a culture of mental well-being, (ii) foster conversations; to not limit the conversations to just youth, but to invite more senior employers to join, as they may share lived experiences, (iii) be consistent in interventions and approach to mental health at work, like in offering a healthcare coverage.

### LEADING THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE



Madfoatcom's employees elect a person from each department to sit on the social committee. This committee organises activities for staff to increase bonding, leading to staff retention.

Each employee has the option when they sign the contract to donate 2JDs of their salary each month, which goes to the social committee to organize activities that contribute to a sense of community and increase job satisfaction.

### BUILDING BLOCK 5: GENDER-INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

#### Gendered roles in the household.



Women often bear a disproportionate share of household chores and childcare responsibilities, limiting their time available to participate fully in the workforce. The burden of unpaid care work not only hinders young women's entry into the workforce

but also contributes to their higher attrition rates.

#### ACCESS TO CHILDCARE



Employer-supported childcare can be the result of voluntary gender policies or state regulation. It can also be the result of collective bargaining.

A coffee export company in Kenya is a good example. The collective bargaining agreement between the trade union Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union (KPAWU) and SOCFINAF stipulated that the company would provide a childcare centre and teacher for permanent plantation workers and community members. This meant that women did not have to carry their child on their backs during work, resulting in higher retention rates and increased productivity among women coffee pickers. The childcare service is also available to women in the community allowing them to dedicate time looking for other work opportunities or working as seasonal plantation workers.

It was observed that offering childcare, or supporting access to childcare services, may be effective in some contexts and less effective in others. For example, Implementing Partners from Kenya iterate that it is custom for family members to care for small children while parents are working, while it is not custom to leave the child with family members in Jordan. Similarly, women who moved from a rural to a urban area may not have family nearby, thus increasing the need for formal childcare.

## Workplace and gendered societal pressures.



Preliminary findings from a CFYE study on Women in Digital Jobs in the MENA region, in particular in Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan, and Morocco highlight key challenges to women's workplace retention rooted in gender-based obstacles and societal pressures. Across these countries, career gaps - including maternity leave - is non-beneficial to women, especially for those working in the fast moving and fast changing tech industry. And since continuous learning and training are really important to remain relevant in these sectors, when women step away, even for a short time, it is very difficult for them to re-enter the sector, due to real and perceived perceptions that their skills are no longer up to date.

### REINTEGRATING MOTHERS



In Jordan and Egypt, some businesses are starting to recognize the value of structured reintegration programs by offering training opportunities for returning mothers. Online platforms serve as crucial enablers for women working in the digital sector, particularly for mothers in remote or conservative areas where their physical movement may be restricted.

### SUPPORTING MOTHERS



In Jordan, there has been progress in implementing legislative measures to support mothers in the workforce, like extended maternity leave from 70 days to four months, restrictions on working past 7 PM, and an additional hour off for pregnant employees—policies that companies are actively implementing. These policies lead to greater retention, as policies aligned with mothers' needs increase employee satisfaction with the business.

## Single parenthood.



One of the major global family trends is the rise in single parenting, often resulting from factors such as out-of-wedlock births, divorce, separation, or widowhood. Single motherhood raises concern due to its strong association with economic hardship. Young mothers are especially vulnerable, as they often face limited access to affordable childcare, which restricts their ability to work. Despite being employed full-time, many single parents live below the poverty line, largely because they are constrained by the hours they can work and are more likely to hold insecure, temporary jobs. Maintaining employment often requires them to either reduce working hours or depend on childcare—both of which contribute to lower income levels.

## BUILDING BLOCK 6: YOUTH-FOCUSED RESPECT AND DIGNITY AT WORK

### Youth-focused Respect and Dignity at Work – Challenge 1: Traditional employment methods.



CFYE researched the impact of barriers to decent employment and to capture youth's aspirations. They found that youth in Kenya experience several barriers to (sustainable) employment.

Their aspirations are not sufficiently met by businesses and organisations, and they feel a lack of adequate policies that support youth in employment. In addition, they believe that the current socio-political environment upholds corruption, nepotism and tribalism, which prevents them from thriving.

Kenyan youth want to work in a safe environment, one that values diversity, provides good pay, and supports personal development, something they often struggle to find in their workplace. For example, youth highly value investments in skills development, like digital skills, that prepare them for their future and support them to further navigate the labor market in their search for what they aspire to.

### EMBRACING PARTICIPATION



CFYE defines Meaningful Youth Participation (MYP) as intentionally enabling diverse youths to exercise voice, visibility, and influence in decisions affecting them, rejecting tokenism for tangible outcomes. Central to this approach are satisfaction surveys or group discussions, ensuring that approaches and policies are still relevant, Youth Advisory Boards, including the Power of Youth Working Group, dedicated Youth Participation Advisors, which embed youth perspectives in strategy and implementation. Youth-inclusive policies use co-developed tools such as Group Compacts and Personal Support Plans to establish fair working norms and proactively tackle barriers such as digital access, gender norms, or socioeconomic constraints youth may face.

Accountability is strengthened through transparent feedback loops, ensuring youth input visibly shapes outcomes that youth relate with. An example of a feedback loop is participation of youth in a two-way exchange; youth co-leading initiatives, like workshops for marginalised groups, and informing processes through structured advisory roles, ensuring their perspectives are considered.

One of the main challenges that LIVINC, a CFYE Implementing Partner from Jordan, faced in allowing youth to participate was overcoming initial scepticism from those more accustomed to the stability of traditional employment models:

*'Many youths had reservations about the innovative self-employment narrative that LIVINC is reshaping within the creative sector, as they were more familiar and comfortable with the reliability associated with corporate job structures.'*

Lessons learned on how to generate meaningful youth participation are now actively shaping LIVINC's approach to youth involvement:

*'(We are)...ensuring that the organisation remains agile and responsive, ultimately contributing to a positive and transformative impact on the future of youth engagement.'*

### **Sexual harassment.**



Sexual harassment is an issue that contributes to lower retention rates of young women in the workplace. According to different studies across the African continent, in South Africa 77% of women reported experiencing sexual harassment at some point while in school and at the workplace, and in Rwanda, a baseline study showed that 55% of women reported that they were concerned about commuting from work after dark as they feared and experienced sexual harassment in public spaces, whether on the street, in and around work places.

These experiences create a hostile and uncomfortable work environment, often leading to feelings of fear, humiliation, and disempowerment. For young women, who may already face additional challenges in navigating professional spaces, sexual harassment can be particularly damaging: women who experience sexual harassment intend to leave their jobs, position and security even without another job opportunity.

### **SAFE SPACES FOR WOMEN**



The Support and Accelerate Women's Inclusion program, implemented in the MENA region, has established a transnational network of employers to develop, improve, and implement inclusive policies and practices for better recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in the workplace. Through trainings, employers come to understand unique challenges related to gender-based discrimination women face and adopt concrete policies that support harassment-free workplaces, offer daycare benefits, and establish transparent promotion opportunities for women.

For example, acknowledging the risk of harassment that women face during their commute, employers now offer employees free transportation to and from work, which is particularly valuable in areas of conflict and instability, or in rural areas. This has a positive impact on job retention, proving the value of promoting safety and gender-sensitive policies within the company.

### Sociocultural pressures.



Young women face significant sociocultural pressure prioritising domestic and maternal roles over professional careers:

*'(Young) women's skills and talents remain a source of untapped potential for many private sector entities.'*

The pressures young women experience manifest as an unsustainable conflict between workplace demands and deeply ingrained societal expectations. This conflict creates immense pressure leading directly to disengagement, decreased workplace commitment, and ultimately, attrition as young women feel forced to leave their jobs. For example, Jordan's prevalent "work or family" dichotomy combined with the disproportionate responsibility for household chores and childcare create unsustainable pressure on women to manage their care duties, cultural expectations and professional demands.

### REMOTE WORK AND FLEXIBILITY



Beyond approaches like childcare provision, solutions may entail creating livelihood opportunities that can be pursued at or near the home. For example, the *Opportunities for Youth Employment Biogas Program* in Rwanda exemplifies this approach by mapping employment areas, like plumbing, marketing, sales, and identifying those most accessible to young women.

Similarly, the above-mentioned women ambassadors' network contests gender-related social norms in communities. This type of work has proven attractive to young women due to its localised nature and flexible schedules. Tagaddod highlights how the network has organically grown through its network as other women in communities see the results of the work and join the network. Tagaddod highlights:

*'Women ambassadors show intrinsic motivation, energy, and focus. Their deep sense of purpose and responsibility towards their growth, families and environment translate into higher productivity and stronger community leadership.'*

Young women in this sector say they appreciate the possibility of being able to work locally and have flexible schedules that leave room for their domestic and child-care duties, while they organize themselves to work. This targeted approach recognizes and accommodates the specific needs of women, enabling them to participate in the workforce without compromising their family obligations.

## CULTIVATING FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS



Recognizing the disproportionate challenges young women face in the labor force, Crystel, a CFYE Implementing Partner in Jordan has deliberately cultivated flexible and remote work arrangements for its employees. 60% of the women working remotely expressed a preference for this model, because it helps them balance their professional responsibilities with family responsibilities.

To implement this remote work policy, Crystel invests in concrete tools: laptops, internet subsidies, and professional equipment for every remote worker. Beyond logistics, it has built trust and loyalty with its employees through actions like granting extended maternity leave that exceeds Jordan's three-month mandate with the assurance of returning to their position upon completion, directly countering the attrition risks young mothers face.

The results are tangible and transformative youth retention. For example, when COVID-19 triggered layoffs, Crystel's workforce emerged 100% intact with no employees losing their jobs, a situation that contrasted with widespread employee reductions observed globally across many organizations. This resilience proved the strategy's adaptability: employees' maintained productivity remotely with high retention rates, particularly among young women, who now view Crystel not just as an employer but as a long-term career partner.

Crystel sees this flexible approach as a smart investment, the small costs involved outweighed by the results: almost no young employees leave, operations keep running smoothly even during crises. Youth explain when COVID-19 hit, our remote-ready teams kept serving clients seamlessly – no disruptions, just business as usual from home. In a competitive job market, this strategy doesn't just keep young talent – it actively attracts ambitious young professionals, proving flexibility is both good for people and business.

## PRIORITISING FLEXIBILITY



Flexibility is a top priority for young employees, and particularly for young women. The idea of a rigid nine-hour workday is outdated in today's modern, fast-paced and information age. Inflexible work hour systems that do not prioritise individual productivity also foster employee frustration and diminish overall efficiency, impacting job attraction. This is also supported by research conducted by CFYE in Jordan. Initially, remote work facilitated women's entry into the workforce, but the revocation of these flexible arrangements is now compelling women to leave their jobs, as highlighted by one employee stating they would not have joined if the job did not offer flexibility.

Crystel's flexible remote work policy also supports young women with caretaking responsibilities, allowing youth to fulfill professional duties

effectively while managing critical family obligations. By focusing on measurable weekly performance targets rather than physical office presence, the policy enables youth to schedule responsibilities. A young woman explains:

*'Crystel's flexibility to work remotely was essential when I needed to care for my parents. Knowing I could meet my targets effectively from home, as confirmed in my weekly performance reviews, allowed me to schedule my family responsibilities and still prioritise my professional tasks.'*

Crystel's focus on output over physical presence in an office facilitates youth's long-term career progression at Crystel. Once the family situation stabilises, youth may transition to a more regular office presence, demonstrating increased availability and allowing them to progress professionally, regardless of difficult times. Such cases underscore that strategic remote work policies are not merely operational conveniences but tools that can be used for talent retention and enabling sustained professional development among young employees.

#### FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS



MadfoatCom in Jordan operationalises the e-payment service that allows for payment of bills. The benefits of their work modality are their flexible working conditions and an income based on commissions earned from each transaction. Though youth say that it may take a few months before their network is large enough to allow them to make a substantial number of transactions, they also say communities have become more cohesive as relationships are built and community networks become stronger. Some agents say they want to collaborate with other agents in the area and are saving to open a shop where they may offer the service of paying bills as well as selling small household items.

In a country where married women and mothers' main responsibility is to care of the house and the family, the e-payment service allows female agents to earn some money and to contribute financially to the household:

*'It's my first job after getting married. I have one child and needed to work from home to meet my family obligations. The flexible working hours suit my responsibilities perfectly. They're helping me improve my income, and there's no traditional workplace pressure. I can work anytime.'*

Finally, female students may earn money to pay for school fees, supporting their family to maintain their studies.

#### ONGOING OUTREACH AND SUPPORT



MadfoatCom's program managers support agents with regular visits and by offering ongoing training on how to use the system. Agents say this support is beneficial as it allows them to improve their capacities in computer literacy and in marketing, essentially supporting the growth of their network and the business, and impacting agents' retention positively.

#### GENERATING A SENSE OF SECURITY



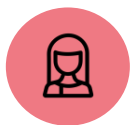
-The presence of female leaders emerges as a powerful retention driver, offering women hope for career advancement and demonstrating that employers value their growth potential. As youth noted, female leadership provides tangible evidence of career progression and crucial support networks provide emotional support, mentorship, and avenues for professional connection, demonstrably linked to women's decisions to remain with such an employer.

#### Exclusion of men.



In some contexts, efforts to promote gender equality have focused primarily on women's inclusion, often overlooking the importance of engaging men. This can lead to unintended consequences, such as reinforcing gendered expectations around work and caregiving. For example, when women are expected to take on both paid work and household responsibilities without shifts in men's roles at home, progress stalls. Promoting gender equity means ensuring men are not left behind, but rather actively engaged, both at work and in the household.

#### INCLUDING MEN IN THE CONVERSATION



Tchakka in Ethiopia recognized this trend in some communities lacking in active engagement of men in the household even if women do the work. They call for challenging cultural norms explicitly and without confrontation by gaining buy-in from men in women's surroundings, like government officials, cultural leaders, religious actors, and others. Men's buy-in leads to their increased support to women seeking and engaging in employment and more safe spaces where women are not subject of conflict or violence from men, because they work.

#### EMBEDDING GENDER-INCLUSIVE AND YOUTH-TARGETED LANGUAGE



Emphasising the business or organisations' gender parity makes a difference: job descriptions by Shortlist in Kenya highlight concrete gender-forward policies. Similarly, Sprints in Egypt seek to engage young women in tech training courses. To make the

training courses more appealing to young women, they adjusted the titles to 'Tech for Non-techies' and 'Career Shifters'. Novus Agro echo this need as they discovered that:

*'(...) while young individuals are eager to participate in crafting solutions that directly impact them, their decisions are often influenced by their families or authority figures. Therefore, to collaborate effectively with young people, engaging with the role models they respect is essential.'*

## 4 Solutions' cost-effectiveness

This chapter includes an overview of solutions' cost-effectiveness, which is vital to consider when determining which strategies and solutions a business or organisation should implement for retaining youth. To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of different youth and gender retention strategies we used insights gathered from CFYE implementing partners during an online sense-making workshop. One of the workshop's goals was to identify which strategies provide the best return on investment related to retaining youth employees.

### 4.1 Cost-effectiveness

Businesses do not make their decisions on retention of investments lightly. One of the core factors in their decision-making process is the cost-effectiveness of their investment in a retention strategy: 'How much will this cost?' and 'To what extent is the investment effective in benefitting the business through improved retention?' CFYE's Implementing partners emphasise the need to continuously analyse the cost-effectiveness ratio of strategies and solutions. They also state that strategies and solutions must be contextualised, as strategies may lead to different outcomes depending on who it is aimed at, and where they are situated.

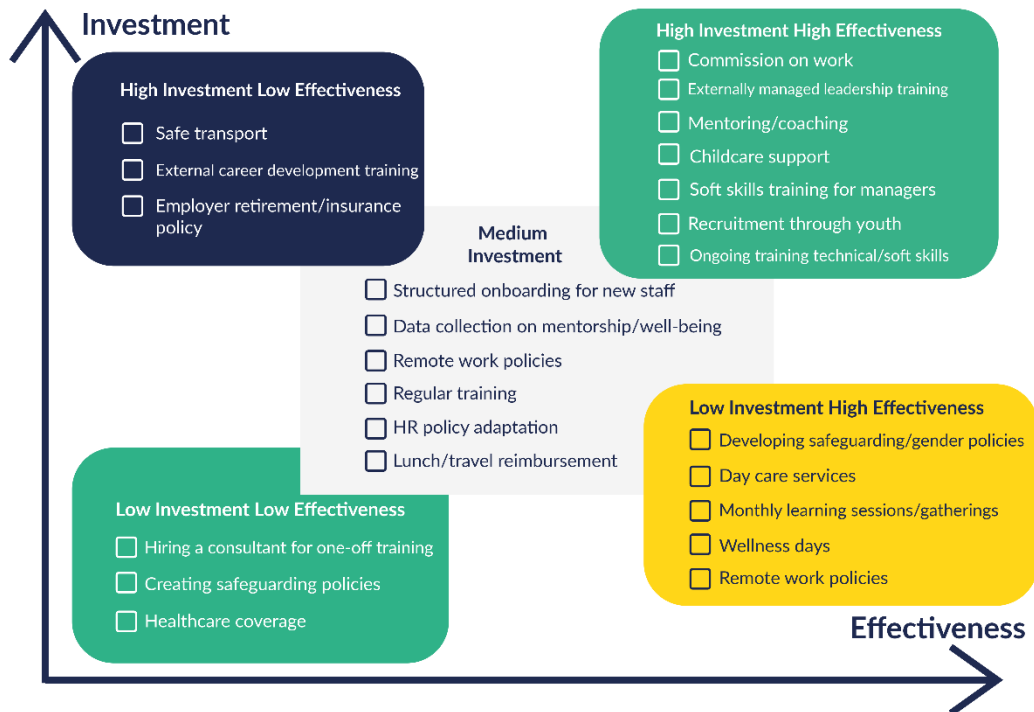
The following elements or factors of cost effectiveness can be considered by business and organisations in understanding whether an investment in (a) retention solution(s) is cost-effective or not:

- ✕ **Typology of key costs:** like in-house staff capacity, external expert capacity, capital investments, working capital costs
- ✕ **Dimensions of cost savings:** if applicable, which current costs will be saved on and in what way?
- ✕ **Type of desired retention impact:** staff wellbeing & job satisfaction versus staff performance. One or both impacts are possible.
- ✕ **Timeline:** when can impact be expected and what does the expenditure timeline look like?

Implementing partners highlight that while costs for retention are initially high, they decrease in the long-term, making retention strategies a strategic and cost-effective investment.

While some implementing partners mentioned high-investment strategies yield strong retention outcomes, like structured mentorship programs and childcare support, other implementing partners were keen to point out that certain low-cost interventions, like remote work policies and peer-learning initiatives, could also be highly effective. The following is a ranked compilation of solutions proposed by implementing partners - categorised as

low, medium, or high - along with an assessment of each solution's effectiveness in retaining young staff within the organisation.



Implementing partners and youth emphasize the importance of policies that support professional development, offer secondary benefits, and promote mental well-being. While these elements may fall under different organisational frameworks, they collectively contribute to effective staff retention. Such policies signal to young employees that their employers are committed to investing in their growth, fostering a culture of learning, and ensuring their continued engagement in the workplace.

The effectiveness of female leadership programs remains a topic of debate. Implementing partners acknowledge that these programs require significant investment, with outcomes varying depending on whether they are managed internally or externally. When delivered in-house, businesses often express concern over lost productivity, as participants may need to step away from their regular duties. As a result, many employers prefer externally managed programs, which minimise disruption to daily operations.

Similarly, the cost and impact of regular training vary based on its scope and content, with some categorized as medium investments and others as high. Remote work arrangements can also represent a higher investment, particularly when they require substantial technical upgrades. In contrast, policy development is generally seen as a low-cost initiative. However, the implementation of these policies involves a broader range of investments,

each offering different levels of effectiveness depending on the specific challenges they aim to address.

## 5 Conclusion

Youth retention is not only a strategic business imperative but also a catalyst for socio-economic growth and stability. Investing in youth retention generates multiple benefits, including reduced recruitment costs, enhanced productivity, innovation, and a stronger employer brand. These investments further contribute to national economic development, poverty alleviation, and greater social cohesion.

Effective retention strategies require a holistic approach addressing career development, inclusive workplace culture, and work-life balance. Successful practices include flexible working arrangements, structured professional development programs, and strong peer networks and communication channels that amplify youth voices and foster engagement.

For young parents and women facing unique sociocultural barriers, tailored support measures—such as employer-supported childcare, flexible remote work options, and structured reintegration programs—significantly enhance retention and job satisfaction. Companies should proactively embed these gender-inclusive practices within their organizational policies.

To sustain the effectiveness of retention strategies, ongoing monitoring, adaptation, and inclusive participation of youth in policy formulation are critical. This continuous engagement ensures retention practices remain relevant, inclusive, and responsive to youth aspirations and business needs. Ultimately, strategically investing in youth retention not only supports individual growth and company resilience but also creates a foundation for sustainable societal advancement.

## Annex 1: Approach to Literature Study and Qualitative Data Collection

### Approach to the literature study

The purpose of the literature study is:

- ✕ To understand the policy context of the CFYE program
- ✕ To identify effective youth retention and gender inclusion strategies employed by implementing partners and others in the sector
- ✕ To identify relevant practices that may inspire future strategies

Our approach to the literature study was three-pronged, namely to (i) review program-related documentation, (ii) a scoping review, and (iii) to synthesize findings into a draft literature study report.

The literature study was conducted using parameters regarding language, time span, key words and sources. It covered academic and policy papers published in English since 2015, which is when the specific attention for youth employment started to increase. These keywords were tested by a close check on a 0.5-1% sample of the initially obtained list of papers and reports to ensure that they adequately capture the relevant literature and will be adjusted accordingly, if necessary.

Keywords were tested by a close check on a 0.5-1% sample of the initially obtained list of papers to ensure that they adequately capture the relevant literature and will be adjusted accordingly, if necessary. We conducted a scoping review, rather than a fully systematic literature study, supplemented by a review of grey literature, like white papers, briefs and documents, to fill in any gaps in the literature. Where other sources fell short, literature published before 2015 was used as well. An overview of used sources and an evaluation of the quality of sources is included in the annex.

Considering the purpose of the literature study and the available time, we included a **scoping review**, rather than a fully systematic literature study, supplemented by a **review of grey literature**, like non-referenced policy reports, statistics and documents, to fill any gaps in the literature. The search was limited to the Horn of Africa, West Africa, and MENA regions. Key words used to search for relevant documents were:

- ✕ Youth employment strategies
- ✕ Retention strategies, employment
- ✕ Gender inclusion strategies, employment
- ✕ Business case for youth employment
- ✕ Decent work for youth
- ✕ Private sector and youth employment
- ✕ Digital and youth employment
- ✕ Gender and youth employment
- ✕ Young parent-specific benefits
- ✕ Young professional development opportunities
- ✕ Youth participation in employment
- ✕ Solutions for youth employment
- ✕ Quality of employment
- ✕ Functioning of employment
- ✕ Sustainable employment
- ✕ Dignity at work
- ✕ World Bank Group
- ✕ Mastercard Foundation
- ✕ International Labour Organisation

A biography is included in annex 1. All documents were assessed on completeness, including how relevant and appropriate the research, study, and brief or white paper was in answering the question or problem. The table is an external source and allows for simple yes, no, can't tell indications of the extent to which the criteria is upheld. See annex 2 for the assessment table.

## Approach to the Qualitative Research

Together with CFYE, we chose eight case studies from the CFYE portfolio, each linked to a specific building block within the Youth Quality Work Journey. Each case study represents an Implementing Partner that has a strong, interesting retention strategy in place that fits the building block. Each case study was researched in more depth by inviting implementing partners and youth to semi-structured interviews and online group discussions. In cases where it was not possible for youth to join online, a youth researcher collected data and shared it with us for analysis. This was the case for a case study in Kenya and one in Egypt. In Ethiopia, phone interviews were held with a select number of youths by a young researcher who was fluent in the local language.

Implementing partners who participated in the research include:

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ✕ CheckUps, Kenya         | ✕ Madfoatcom, Jordan    |
| ✕ Crystel, Jordan,        | ✕ Outcess, Nigeria      |
| ✕ Generation Kenya, Kenya | ✕ Tagaddod, Egypt       |
| ✕ Horn Afrique, Ethiopia  | ✕ Thrive Agric, Nigeria |

Questions asked during qualitative data collection were about understanding the retention strategy implemented by the implementing partner, the effects of the strategy on the implementing partner and youth, as well as their surroundings. A participatory workshop was conducted to validate preliminary findings and to discuss solutions' cost-effectiveness.

## Annex 2: List of Literature Explored

### Overview of used sources

AfD and World Bank: Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa

Chizoman N.L.F. and Nyasha M. (n.d.) "Single motherhood in Africa: Prevalence, associated factors and multidimensional deprivation"

Elsa R. Olaru & Emma Bolger (2022) "Meeting the career development needs  
Getting Africa's youth working. Taking a systems approach to create more & better jobs for young people in sub-Saharan Africa, p.7

The SAWI Project. Found on <https://aub.edu.lb/sawi/Pages/AboutSAWIinitiative.aspx>, as accessed on 6 February 2025.

ICReport (2024)

INCLUDE: Boosting Decent Employment For Africa's Youth

INCLUDE: Young, Female And African: Barriers, Interventions And Opportunities For Female Youth Employment In Africa

International Labour Organization 93rd Session, 2005; Youth: Pathways to decent work Report VI Promoting youth employment – Tackling the challenge

International Labour Organization: Extending childcare services to workers in the informal economy: Policy lessons from country experiences

International Labour Organization: Statistical Brief: The impact of care responsibilities on women's labour force participation

International Labour Organization: Youth Employment Interventions in Africa 2011 A Mapping Report of the Employment and Labour Sub-Cluster of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) for Africa

International Labour Organization: Youth Pathways to decent work, Report VI Promoting youth employment – Tackling the challenge

JA Africa: Youth Employment In The African Private Sector-Survey Results

MasterCard Foundation 'Getting Africa's youth working'

Mastercard Foundation 2018: Gender and Youth Livelihoods Programming in Africa

McKinsey&Company Article 2022: Network effects: How to rebuild social capital and improve corporate performance of single parents" Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling, issue 48. 10.20856/jnicec.4805

The PwC Publication: Diversity Journey Creating impact, Achieving Results

The business case for youth development

Un Women 2018: Towards an end to sexual harassment: The urgency and nature of change in the era of MeToo

UNECA: Africa's youth and prospects for inclusive development

World Bank, Policy Research Working Paper 8245: Gender and Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa

World Bank: Policy Research Working Paper 8245 Gender and Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa

World Bank| IFC| MIGA: Youth Employment Programs An Evaluation of World Bank and IFC Support

## Analysis of quality of sources

The table below shows the quality of the sources used. It shows that all sources used were of high quality:

First author	Year	SCREENING QUESTIONS		1. QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES					4. QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES				
		S1. Are there clear research questions? Is the purpose of the research clear?	S2. Do the collected data allow to address the research questions?	1.1. Is the approach appropriate to answer the research question?	1.2. Are the data collection methods adequate to address the research question?	1.3. Are the findings adequately derived from the data?	1.4. Is the interpretation of results sufficiently substantiated by data?	1.5. Is there coherence between qualitative data sources, collection, analysis and	4.1. Is the sampling strategy relevant to address the research question?	4.2. Is the sample representative of the target population?	4.3. Are the measurements appropriate?	4.4. Is the risk of nonresponse bias low?	4.5. Is the statistical analysis appropriate to answer the research question?
The LAB: Market systems development for decent work	2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
ICReport	2024	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
OECD	2017	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Mr. Keith Andre	2022	Yes	Yes						Yes	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	Yes
Gordon Betcherman	2007	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Thierno Malick Diallo	2023	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
CIPD	2012	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
CSW Corporation for a Skilled Workforce	n.d.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Joshua Omena	n.d.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa	2017	Yes	Yes						Yes	Yes	Yes	Can't tell	Yes
Oliver Wyman	2020	Yes	Yes						Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Deon Filmer	2014	Yes	Yes						Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
International Labour Organization	2024	Yes	Yes						Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Beth Vale	2022	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
International Labour Organization	2011	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Agnes Hussler	2016	Yes	Yes						Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Themrise Khan	2020	Can't tell	Can't tell	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
World Bank	2012	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Shubha Chakavarty	2017												
International Labour Organization	n.d.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
International Labour Organization	2005	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Alan D. Dodkovitz	2018	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Else R. Olaru	2022	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					
Ntoimo Lorretta Favour Chizoman	n.d.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					



## Europe

**MDF Netherlands**  
Ede, Netherlands  
[mdf@mdf.nl](mailto:mdf@mdf.nl)

## Africa

**MDF West Africa**  
Accra, Ghana  
[mdfwa@mdf.nl](mailto:mdfwa@mdf.nl)

**MDF Eastern & Southern Africa**  
Nairobi, Kenya  
[mdfesa@mdf.nl](mailto:mdfesa@mdf.nl)

**MDF Afrique Centrale**  
Goma, DRC  
[mdfac@mdf.nl](mailto:mdfac@mdf.nl)

**MDF Bénin**  
Cotonou, Benin  
[mdfbenin@mdf.nl](mailto:mdfbenin@mdf.nl)

## Asia

**MDF Pacific Indonesia**  
Bali, Indonesia  
[mdfpi@mdf.nl](mailto:mdfpi@mdf.nl)

**MDF Myanmar**  
Yangon, Myanmar  
[mdfmmr@mdf.nl](mailto:mdfmmr@mdf.nl)

**MDF Bangladesh**  
Dhaka, Bangladesh  
[mdfbg@mdf.nl](mailto:mdfbg@mdf.nl)