

World YMCA launches global 'Igniting Youth Futures' Programme to build a future-ready workforce

World YMCA will help 25,000 young people in 3 countries into future-proof jobs by 2028, and 100,000 in additional countries by 2030.

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, October 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- World YMCA is launching

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World YMCA recognizes the urgent need to help young people move beyond skills training into meaningful work. IYFutures is its global response: a commitment to transform the youth employment ecosystem.”

Carlos Sanvee, Secretary-General, World YMCA

Igniting Youth Futures ('IYFutures'), a global initiative to connect underserved young people with Meaningful Work—employment that is fair, fulfilling, and contributes to individual and community wellbeing. Backed by global partners and built on decades of experience in youth empowerment, the programme will address the root causes of youth unemployment through coordinated action at the local, national, and global level.

Impact & reach

IYFutures supports young people to secure jobs, start or grow businesses, and pursue self-employment. Over the next three years, World YMCA — together with YMCAs in

India, South Africa, and Spain — will support over 25,000 young people in accessing future-proof jobs. By 2030, the goal is to support 100,000 young people into employment across additional countries.

Partnerships & investment

The programme, which launched in June 2025 at YMCAs in India, South Africa, and Spain, is supported by Accenture and the Accenture Foundation with a grant and strategic pro bono consulting services, as well as access to its Learning to Earning portal, a free online platform designed to help individuals build skills and connect to employment opportunities. The initiative has also secured a grant from the Macquarie Group Foundation.

To ensure long-term impact, World YMCA will also embed innovative impact finance models — approaches that mobilize capital for projects delivering measurable social and environmental benefits alongside financial returns — which promote sustainability, accelerate youth

employment, and foster collaboration with strategic partners.

A pressing need

"World YMCA recognizes the urgent need to help young people move beyond skills training into meaningful work", said Carlos Sanvee, World YMCA Secretary-General. "With 20% of young people aged 15–29 not in employment, education, or training — most of them women and girls — the impact is both economic and personal, contributing to slower growth and rising mental health challenges. IYFutures is World YMCA's global response: a commitment to transform the youth employment ecosystem by combining proven approaches with new, carefully tested solutions, scaling initiatives that help young people engage fully and productively in the workforce.



Young leaders gather at YMCA New Delhi, India on 11 October at the Ympower Carnival, a job fair built around new pathways to learning, connection, and opportunity. "Today we learned that the Igniting Youth Futures programme is about believing in what we can become."

"We all know the scale of the challenge in supporting young people into employment that is purposeful and decent. At YMCA we define this as 'Meaningful Work.' Igniting Youth Futures reflects this ethos – to work in unison across the YMCA Movement and lockstep with multi-sector partners, building resilient, empowered young people, who are ready to take on global challenges, advance planetary sustainability, and promote inclusivity and environmental justice in their families and communities."

Programme approach

IYFutures strengthens the pathway from education to employment by:

1. engaging hard-to-reach, underserved youth with the mindsets and awareness to pursue Meaningful Work.
2. equipping them with essential skills and career planning to start or redirect their work journey.
3. supporting successful transitions from training to employment or entrepreneurship.
4. mobilizing innovative financing to ensure sustainability, expand inclusion, and attract collaborative investment in youth employment.

We invite employers, investors, educators, and workforce development organizations to join us in tackling youth unemployment with scalable, proven solutions.

Be part of the change. To explore partnership opportunities, contact Kathleen Elsig, Director of

Partnerships, at Kathleen@ymca.int.

About World YMCA and the worldwide YMCA Movement

A catalyst and a convenor, the World YMCA unites, strengthens and represents YMCAs worldwide, enabling them to deliver collective impact at scale, with and for young people and communities. YMCAs empower young people and communities to be and to lead the change they want to see. The global YMCA vision is of a world where every person lives in harmony with self, with society and creation. Its mission is to empower young people and communities worldwide to build a just, sustainable, equitable and inclusive world, where every person can thrive in body, mind and spirit. Founded in London in 1844, the YMCA Movement has grown to reach over 65 million people a year across 120 countries and 12,000 branches.

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