Invisible Lives: Youth Livelihoods in Ghana and Uganda
About Us

**Vision:** A world where everyone has the opportunity to learn and prosper.

- Created in 2006 by Mastercard International, the Mastercard Foundation operates independently under the governance of its own Board of Directors.
- One of the largest foundations in the world.
- Works almost exclusively in Africa.
- Focuses on access to education, skills training, and financial inclusion.
- Based in Toronto, Canada with an affiliate office in Kigali, Rwanda.
- 98 full-time employees.
Our work

25.1M
People reached through our work

US $2.1 billion
Financial commitments

33
Number of African countries in which we have worked

131
Partners to date

*Foundation figures (cumulative) as of the end of Q4 2017.

*Darker shaded areas indicate countries with highest financial commitments.
The Youth Employment Challenge in Africa

- Africa is the youngest and fastest growing continent in the world.
- There is a significant gap between the number of young people seeking work and the limited employment opportunities available to them.
- There is a mismatch between the skills of young people entering the workforce and the needs of employers.
- Without the right planning and policies, young people will struggle to find formal employment and a pathway out of poverty.
- Agriculture is central to many young people’s livelihood strategies.
What did we want to learn?

- How are mixed livelihoods integrated into young people’s lives?
- What livelihood approaches do young people use in their day-to-day lives?
- How does access to economic opportunity vary between young men and young women, in different countries and diverse regions?
- Given these livelihoods, how can we best design interventions for young people?
Engaging Young People in Research

- Diaries approach for systematic data collection over time (April 2015 – April 2016).
- 122 participants in Ghana and 124 participants in Uganda.
- Youth researchers conducted biweekly interviews with young people using smartphones.
- Very low drop out rate; research was meaningful to participants.
Profile of Participants

GHANA
- Total Females: 133
- Total Males: 113
- In School: 79
- Not in School: 167

Total # of Participants
246

Average Age
21

UGANDA
Young people have diverse livelihoods
Agricultural production is central to rural young people’s livelihoods
Who was most successful, and why?

Gross annual income - Ghana

Gross annual income - Uganda
Key Findings

- Young people have diverse livelihoods
- Agricultural production is central to rural young people’s livelihoods, but agricultural incomes are meagre.
- Both formal and informal wage employment is rare and sporadic, or elusive.
- Many young people are “invisible” to development agencies and programs.
- System-wide interventions are key to reaching young people at scale.
- Full report available [here](#).
Young Africa Works Strategy

We aim to:

• Improve the quality of education and vocational training so that it equips young people with the skills employers need;

• Leverage technology to connect employers and job seekers; and

• Enable entrepreneurs and small businesses to expand through access to financial services

Our Approach:

• Design country-specific strategies.

• Empower young women.

• Work with more African organizations.

• Use technology to drive impact and scale.

• Share more evidence-based knowledge and innovation.
Full report available on our website here.