

## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT, EMPLOYMENT, AND EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

*Founded in 1951 to meet the needs of the educationally disadvantaged, [World Education, Inc. \(WEI\)](#) catalyzes social change at the community level through programs that link education to health, economic, social, and civic development. We have worked in over 50 countries and today are reaching half a million children, young people, and adults in 25 countries. The Bantwana Initiative is a division of WEI established specifically serve the needs of vulnerable children and youth and their caregivers in East and Southern Africa, with a focus on wraparound, comprehensive support.*

### A Comprehensive Approach to Positive Youth Development

**W**hen given the right, resources, skills, technologies, and space, youth possess great potential to break the cycle of exclusion and disadvantage many of them face.

Our experience across East and Southern Africa has shown that young people need and want skills that will enable them to support themselves and their families in a rapidly changing economy. But they face daunting obstacles -- such as insufficient technical and/or work readiness skills, training that is either inadequate or not linked to market opportunities, and a lack of entrepreneurial training and support to take advantage of opportunities. Pervasive poverty, school dropout, HIV and AIDS, pregnancy and early marriage, gender-based violence, lack of access to services, and negative perceptions further undermine youth's aspirations.

World Education programs address such barriers through initiatives that:

- **Engage youth as partners, leaders, and catalysts for change** by investing in their strengths and empowering them to act on their own behalf.
- **Collaborate with communities, government, and business** to identify educational and economic opportunities for youth;
- **Enhance school, technical, vocational, and non-formal education programs** by helping to match skills-training to market demands;
- **Build essential "soft skills" and agency** with adolescents and young men and women, including communications, goal setting, planning, and entrepreneurial mindsets
- **Leverage private sector talent and resources** to help address workforce needs through apprenticeships, internships, mentoring and entrepreneurship; and
- **Support youth well-being** by facilitating access to needed services that help achieve their goals -- such as health care, child protection, legal and psychosocial support.

Through collaborative capacity-building with local agencies and government counterparts, WEI-Bantwana programs strengthen both *external* and *internal assets* that provide youth with safe spaces, supportive role models, and the development of hard and soft skills.



## Relevance of WEI-Bantwana Approaches in Tanzania

Tanzania has one of the youngest populations in sub-Saharan Africa, with more than 44.8% of the population under 15<sup>1</sup> and another 20% between 15 - 24 years old.<sup>2</sup> This second group -- made up of adolescents and working-age youth -- confront significant unemployment and underemployment, thus resulting in wasted potential for thousands of individuals and for the country as a whole. Even among youth who are employed, 82.3% are estimated to be in “vulnerable employment,” without access to benefits or social protection programs.<sup>3</sup>

Having worked in Tanzania since 2010, WEI-Bantwana is very aware of the challenges and potential of Tanzanian youth -- as well as the opportunities and support that are available to them through proactive and positive government policies and programs. With our wide regional experience, we to offer essential cross-cutting skills, scalable models, and collaborative approaches to address the education, economic, health and overall well-being needs of Tanzania’s youth.

Thanks to established relationships with government authorities from national to local level, and with NGO/CSO counterparts, we are well positioned to collaborate on **adapting and scaling up relevant, evidence-based models** that help to unleash the potential of Tanzanian youth. Across multiple countries, our positive youth development (PYD) programs have equipped thousands of young people with “soft” skills and protective assets as well as technical skills and economic assets.

- ⇒ As an institution, WEI-Bantwana is committed to its core mission of improving the wellbeing of vulnerable children and youth through a rights-based approach in a context of poverty, health and HIV risks, and other constraints.
- ⇒ As an implementing partner, we are committed to enabling Tanzanian youth to successfully **complete** their education in a safe, violence-free school setting or to **continue** their education through alternative pathways -- and positioning them to enter the workforce with key skills and knowledge to engage in value-adding, remunerative self-employment or jobs.
- ⇒ By actively engaging youth as well as their caregivers, educators, and communities in the effort, Bantwana believes that young Tanzanians can effectively take on leadership roles and act as agents of positive change, to improve their own lives and others.

<sup>1</sup> <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/tanzania-population>

<sup>2</sup> [Regional Analysis of Tanzania Demographics](#), Dfid, 2016

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

## Selected Examples of WEI's PYD Programming

**Our programs address** youth's comprehensive educational, economic, and social development needs across the continent, including digital and life skills, livelihoods support, vocational training, and basic education. These programs build the social and economic assets of young people from marginalized communities with limited education and economic opportunities, providing them with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and livelihood options.

### Waache Wasome

Tanzania (2017 - 2022)

This initiative supports education retention and addresses school dropout, especially for adolescent girls, through an inclusive process of building protective assets, transforming negative social norms, and developing skills among students as well as their teachers and parents/caregivers. Through Waache Wasome, WEI-Bantwana delivers a comprehensive package of knowledge, skills, and norms-change interventions in target areas. Multi-layered inputs are designed with and for girls and young women and include the following:

- **Social asset building for students**, through peer-led, adult mentored student clubs that build key life skills.
- **Economic asset building for parents and caregivers using WEI-Bantwana's LIMCA** community-managed savings and lending groups model.
- **Improving education environments** by addressing school-related gender-based violence, preventing student dropout, and widen interest in and access to science/STEM learning opportunities.
- **Supporting girls who have dropped out of school** to build economic independence and coping skills through "second chance" learning opportunities: Mentored and trained in safe spaces, these girls develop life and parenting skills, pursue alternative education, and develop income-generating and livelihood options to help rebuild their dreams.

In Arusha City, the OSSG intervention has been adapted to incorporate a **work-readiness focus** that links girls to apprenticeship/employment opportunities in pre-identified local economic growth sectors.



**16,902**

students (60% girls) equipped with protective assets through **Protect Our Youth Clubs**



**1,097**

out-of-school girls & young women equipped with **life & livelihood skills**

### Siyakha Girls Empowerment Initiative

Regional, multi-country; 2017 - present

The market-based Siyakha Girls model strengthens the economic resilience of vulnerable AGYW (ages 15-24) through financial literacy, savings groups, and vocational training, and mentored internships in high growth sectors, layered with social asset building and linkages to health and social services.

Bantwana initially piloted Siyakha Girls in Zimbabwe and it was adopted as a PEPFAR-approved, evidence based model in 2020. From a regional hub in Zimbabwe, the initiative now supports programs in six countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia) to apply the model in different national contexts in both rural and urban settings. Along with the [Siyakha Girls Toolkit and Guide](#), Bantwana offers a flexible package of remote and in-person technical assistance:

- **Expert advice for adapting and scaling** the model to specific contexts
- **Step-by-step technical support**, including for conducting a labor market assessment
- **Training of trainers** for delivering Siyakha curricula
- **Training local implementers** and monitoring their ability to apply the model with fidelity

The model has eight key steps sequenced to facilitate participants' retention in the program and set them up for sustainable livelihoods, combining their savings with start-up support. This graduated approach enables AGYW to successfully transition to full-time employment or entrepreneurship.



## African Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative (AYEDI) Better Outcomes for Youth and Children (BOCY)

Uganda (2013 - 2021)

The **African Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative (AYEDI)** project supported more than 4,000 vulnerable out-of-school adolescents, ages 15 to 17, along a pathway that provided education, vocational training, and decent work opportunities in eastern and northern Uganda.

Working hand-in-hand with government, development stakeholders, and funders, WEI-Bantwana supported adolescents to build skills and move away from engagement in hazardous labor. AYEDI's three-pronged approach comprised of

- Youth engagement in youth empowerment clubs;
- Pursuit of an educational pathway; and
- Access to a range of age appropriate decent work support interventions.

Youth were supported to choose from a range of vocational and entrepreneurial pathways that prepare them to find decent work and earn an income to support themselves and their families. They developed skills to enter Uganda's agribusiness value chain (in horticulture, poultry, piggery, among other sectors), or a vocational trade (such as hairdressing, catering, or motor mechanics). These components were complemented by targeted engagement and strengthening of family economic resilience through savings and lending associations.

The AYEDI model was extended under the **Better Outcomes for Children and Youth program**, where WEI/Bantwana and partners implemented Peer Economic Empowerment Clubs that combined HIV and GBV prevention with savings, financial literacy and livelihoods training. The project enrolled 35,000 youth in peer clubs, equipped 27,300 with livelihoods and leadership skills; and activated 12,000 youth as change agents.

### AYEDI RESULTS

- 90% of 4,227 enrolled youth graduated from AYEDI
- 90% of graduates passed national skills exams.
- 82% of AYEDI youth were earning income from decent work.
- ✓ **Continuous mentoring from business partners, caregivers, community members and other youth or "near peers" was identified as a key reason for the high retention and completion rate.**

## GHANA

- In Ghana, WEI leads the DFID-funded program ***Strategic Approaches to Girls' Education' (STAGE)*** (2018-2023) which is reaching 20,000 girls who dropped out of school with an accelerated learning program. In six regions, STAGE focuses on girls who are highly vulnerable and systematically marginalized due to factors such as early marriage, pregnancies, and disabilities. The program offers training in a variety of vocational skills taught by community-based master craftsmen who are trained and coached by WEI staff and partners. STAGE is also building literacy, numeracy and life skills that will allow the girls to enroll in a vocational training center or enter the world of work. A specific focus in this program is on promoting inclusive education and girls with disabilities are helped with specialized teaching and learning approaches.
- In both Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire, WEI has worked extensively with vulnerable cocoa farming communities. From 2009-2013, WEI led the WCF and USAID-funded ***Empowering Cocoa Households with Opportunities and Education Solutions (ECHOES)*** program. This project included community-managed functional and integrated literacy activities aimed at enhancing the education and skills development of out-of-school teens aged 12-17 across 30 communities.

## MOZAMBIQUE

- Youth Economic Strengthening (YES) Clubs reached more than 4,700 young men and women in Mozambique under the ***Força a Comunidade e Crianças (FCC)*** project (2015-2020). Across four provinces, the YES clubs sensitized and involved young men in reducing GBV while providing vocational training and foundational life, financial literacy, and business skills. Implemented in partnership with Young Africa and the National Institute of Employment and Vocations Training, the program linked youth to employment and apprenticeship opportunities with local artisans and business mentors.
- WEI worked with ***Gorongosa National Park*** in 2018-2019 to develop and implement a life skills program for 2,000 girls aged 10-16. Community-based promoters engaged the girls in a diverse program of soft skills (personal awareness, communication, time management) and hard skills (financial literacy, and functional numeracy). The curriculum made use of community assets and involved leaders, public services, and private businesses through site visits and guest speakers.

## REGIONAL

- Through the ***DREAMS Innovation Challenge*** in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Eswatini (USDOS, \$4.1 million, 2016-2019), WEI/Bantwana engaged more than 7,000 girls at risk of school dropout in POY Clubs (delivering life skills and protective assets) and set up study groups to help 300+ out-of-school young mothers to build social assets, participate in vocational training, or continue a formal education course, develop early child parenting skills, and benefit from Life Mentor Coaches. This model program engaged AGYW to develop their own curricula using the Population Council's Building Assets toolkit to identify the skills, assets and other needed supports.



## SENEGAL

- In Senegal, WEI's ***Securing a Second Chance: Improving Economic and Social Productivity of Youth in the Casamance project*** strengthened the capacity of 10 youth associations in this socially and physically isolated area. These associations functioned as a vehicle for promoting active involvement and leadership of youth in within the context of post-conflict reconstruction. In working in partnership with local NGOs, WEI provided youth association members with targeted training in leadership while equipping youth with the skills and knowledge they require in order to disseminate key information in their communities.

### *Developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and youth digital leadership*

World Education has established the EdTech center to roll out a digital strategy for learning and employment. The EdTech Center leverages technology to increase the reach and impact of education and workforce initiatives and to enable participants to thrive and be active, informed citizens in the new digital world. EdTech supports innovation and conducts research, identification, and testing of new tools, emerging practices, and delivery models. In various countries, WEI programs partner with private telecommunications companies and digital development organizations<sup>4</sup> to bring essential health and education content and messaging to young people via their mobile phones.

- In **Eswatini**, WEI/Bantwana implemented ***Go Girls Connect*** (2019-2022) in partnership with Cell-Ed. This project delivered the POY life skills and protective assets program directly to 1,650 girls on their mobile phones in an engaging, interactive format. The platform includes a digital early warning system self-screening tool for girls to self-identify being at-risk of school drop-out, and a GBV self-identification tool. Both tools include response protocols that link girls to services.
- In **Ghana**, the ***CocoaLink*** farmer education pilot project leveraged growth in the use of mobile phones in rural areas. World Education developed a mobile-based farmer education program that reached more than 44,000 cocoa farmers – targeting young farmers - and trained the project's government partner, COCOBOD, to maintain the CocoaLink technology after the pilot ended. CocoaLink continues today under COCOBOD's management, enabling cocoa farmers to use their mobile phones to request and obtain timely information to improve their incomes and livelihoods.
- In partnership with the Alcatel-Lucent Foundation, WEI led the global ***ConnectEd project in seven countries*** to address factors limiting work and life options of disadvantaged youth, especially girls and young women. ConnectEd focused on the use of technology to transform learning, work and life outcomes of youth, and demonstrated the importance of possessing basic ICT skills to foster inclusion, giving disadvantaged youth a better chance to close the opportunities gap and access more and better employment options. Over three years, ConnectEd reached 25,575 youth with a range of interventions from scholarships, coaching, life skills and personal development courses, to school re-entry classes and NFE programs for out-of-school youth, job skills training, work placement, and youth civic voice actions.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, Airtel and MTN in Uganda, Viamo in Tanzania, and Cell-Ed in the U.S. and Swaziland