



International
Trade
Centre



Ye! LOCAL CHAPTERS

**Youth representation,
community & capacity
building at the
country level**

What is a Ye! Chapter

About Ye! Community

Ye! Community is the global community just for youth entrepreneurs, managed by the International Trade Centre's Youth & Trade Programme. We connect young entrepreneurs between **18 and 35 years old** with opportunities, mentors, resources and peer. Ye! is home to more than **18,000 young entrepreneurs** and **300 expert mentors** and we are growing continuously. Ye! Community members come from more than **170 different countries**.

The online community is further supplemented by offline youth-led chapters, which aim to connect youth entrepreneurs at the local level to the ITCs diverse stakeholder network, including corporates, policy makers, and business support organizations.

What is a Ye! Chapter?

The **Ye! Chapters are peer-led, support networks** that aim to provide localized support to address the needs of young entrepreneurs. Ye! Chapters support young entrepreneurs by organising various events, activities and by providing access to networks and finance. They enhance youth entrepreneurs' capacities and potential to succeed. Ye! Chapters are jointly led by a Ye! Advisor- a local young entrepreneur who is part of the Ye! Community, and who is active in the local startup ecosystem and the Ye! Anchor, a local hub who works to execute activities in support of young entrepreneurs in the Ye! Chapter.



Why we build local Ye! Chapters

The Ye! Chapters are the backbone of the Ye! Community. Together, the Ye! Advisor and Ye! Anchor build a close-knit youth entrepreneur community in the country, which provides direct linkages between the services and expertise of ITC and other UN partners and our target group - youth entrepreneurs. Ye! Chapters offer youth entrepreneurs targeted in-country support. They are also better able to assist youth entrepreneurs in overcoming specific hurdles pertaining to the local context. Being part of the local community connects youth entrepreneurs to support, in-person events, experts and opportunities.



By connecting youth online and offline, young entrepreneurs who are part of the community can tap into opportunities and events at the local and the global level. Every Ye! Chapter is autonomous and can decide its own strategy and activities, based on the local context and needs of local entrepreneurs. Overall, the activities should serve the purpose of giving the entrepreneurs the possibility to engage, network, learn, contribute and gain exposure.

The ITC's mission in scaling the Ye! Chapters is to encourage youth to drive impact and build self-sustaining local support communities that youth entrepreneurs know they can turn to in times of need. Ye! Chapters further bolster the local startup ecosystem by enhancing network linkages and ensuring that youth across the country can tap into and benefit from the Ye! Community. It is through this process that ITC is able to engage youth at the policy level and to elevate their voices to impact change.

About Ye! Advisors

Ye! Advisors are well-connected entrepreneurs and changemakers within their local communities, who represent the Ye! Community on the ground. These young entrepreneurs are spearheading the Ye! Community's offline presence and lead in building and growing Ye! Local Chapters.

Ye! Advisors are driven by their desire to support other young entrepreneurs and build networks that enhance entrepreneurial growth. They work with ITC's Youth & Trade team to enhance the Ye! Community's local presence and to highlight the unique challenges faced by youth entrepreneurs in their country. They work to raise awareness on the value of the Ye! Community, build a local community and roll out a series of activities and engagements to ensure every youth entrepreneur has the opportunity to tap into services, resources, and networks. Advisors provide a direct link between ITC and the needs of young entrepreneurs on the ground.

Here are some of the perks that come with being a Ye! Advisor:

★ Tailored support for Ye! Advisors and first access to global events.

- Advisors receive tailored support from ITC's Youth and Trade Programme, such as first access invites to events, tailored services and workshops on management and leadership, and you will work with ITC to develop youth-led services and fine-tune the programme strategy.

★ Added exposure and more opportunities

- Through our close link with Ye! Advisors we are able to provide you with added business exposure and to recommend you for other programmes and opportunities offered by our partners

★ Contribute to reports and recommendations by sharing the challenges and opportunities of the local hub, which are presented to high-level stakeholders such as G-20, UN, UNCTAD and more

Growth of your personal network and opportunity to network with high-level stakeholders.

Youth leadership

When youth are empowered, the solutions they create are powerful. However, without the proper support and access, they are left to navigate systems and environments that are often not built with their needs in mind. For this reason the ITC's Youth & Trade programme works directly with youth entrepreneurs on the ground to empower them to build meaningful collaborations, pursue their visions, and to drive youth-led engagements. When youth are in the driver's seat, everyone wins.

In growing the Ye! Chapters, we have seen the impact that Ye!'s young leaders are having on their communities and through positioning them as leaders their voices are amplified and their solutions heard. From ministers to local NGOs, to multilateral agencies, Ye! Advisors work with decision makers and key ecosystem actors to drive impact. In their role as Advisors, ITC works closely with them to amplify their voices and move youth to the forefront of system change.

About Ye! Anchors

Ye! Chapters are supported by a local anchor. In anchoring each Ye! Chapter to a local organization, ITC ensures that Chapter activities are consistent, well-structured, and that local entities are empowered to better serve youth.

The Ye! Anchor is a multiplier whose work furthers the resources and networks offered by Ye! Community at a global level to the local context, where they can be tailored and expanded upon.

Together with the local Ye! Advisor, the Ye! Anchor enhances the entrepreneurship ecosystem by providing access to information, resources, as well as opportunities to grow, create jobs, and generate economic activity.

Which types of organizations can be a Ye! Anchor

The Ye! Anchor can be a hub, accelerator, incubator, chamber of commerce or any other type of business support organization (BSO). Anchors can also be NGOs, associations, or other types of capacity builders working to support youth entrepreneurship.

The anchor organization's aim must align with that of the Youth & Trade Programme in supporting local youth-led MSMEs and startups to build their capacities, scale up and be competitive in international markets.

Why work with local organizations?

Ye! works directly with local BSOs to enhance their capacities to support youth-led MSMEs and startups. Through joint collaboration, Ye! Anchors are able to support a greater number of youth entrepreneurs to reach scale.

ITC offers Anchors tailored support, technical assistance and institutional strengthening services. Furthermore, Ye! Anchors ensure that ITC's technical assistance is meeting the demands of local counterparts.



Encouraging a youth-led approach to ecosystem development

The ITC's mission in facilitating the creation of Ye! Chapters is to encourage youth to drive impact and build self-sustaining local networks that youth entrepreneurs can turn to in times of need. Ye! Chapters further bolster the local startup ecosystem by enhancing network linkages and ensuring that youth across the country can tap into and benefit from the Ye! Community.

In building Ye! Chapters, ITC is directly connected to its target beneficiaries and therefore able to engage youth at the policy level and to elevate their voices to impact change.

The G-Local Approach

Ye! Chapters connect the local to the global. They provide access to support, networks and capacity building that is tailored to the local context. Together, the Ye! Advisor and the Ye! Anchor build a community of youth entrepreneurs that are directly linked with the services and expertise of ITC and other UN partners. Being part of the Ye! Local Chapter connects youth entrepreneurs to support through in-person events, access to experts, training and workshops as well as links to relevant opportunities, and most importantly, to peer-to-peer support.

By facilitating the creation of such localized and youth-led communities, ITC is better able to assist youth entrepreneurs in overcoming specific hurdles pertaining to the local context. In linking the online and the offline, the local and the global, youth entrepreneurs who are part of the Ye! Chapter can expand their skills, scale up their businesses, tap into opportunities and events, both at the local and at the global level.

A Grassroots Approach

Every Ye! Chapter decides its own plan of action and set of engagements, based on the local context and needs of youth entrepreneurs. In general, activities give entrepreneurs the possibility to engage, network, learn, contribute and gain exposure. Every Ye! Advisor and Anchor determine their course of action collaboratively and with the final approval of ITC. They engage local and international experts to carry out their activities.

When locally-based organizations and youth drive engagements, they act in a way that meets their needs. ITC supports such a grassroots approach to overcoming environmental challenges to entrepreneurial success. We have seen that when youth are in the driver's seat, they take an active stance in supporting their peers and in enacting sustainable change.

Ye! Chapter activities

Chapter activities are agreed on, designed and implemented by the Ye! Anchor and Ye! Advisor, with guidance and technical oversight from ITC.

Ye! Chapter activities span many different themes and formats. Some examples of activities are:

- **NETWORKING EVENTS** i.e.
 - "marketplaces" with entrepreneurs and investors,
 - "co-founder speed dating" connecting entrepreneurs with potential team members.



- **INSPIRATIONAL TALKS**
TEDxstyle talk events in which experienced entrepreneurs, VCs, influencers share their wisdom with the community members.



- **TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS:**
 - Investor readiness
 - E-commerce
 - Digital marketing
 - Business plan creation
 - Web design



- **Youth challenges, like hackathons**

- **Incubation programmes**

- **Bootcamps**

- **Pitch practice nights/ pitch lab**



What's in it for Network Partners

Network partners can support local Ye! Chapter activities and therefore increase their connections with youth entrepreneurs. Together with the Ye! Advisors and the Anchor organization, network partners can build strong local ecosystems by working collaboratively and by linking the local to the global.

Here are some examples of partners enhancing the local Ye! Chapters:

2019

In 2019 and 2020, **Bowman's Law Firm**, a legal firm working across Southern and Eastern Africa supported the Ye! Chapter in Uganda by leading a series of workshops on legal, taxation and accounting. Bowman's experts led the workshops and answered critical questions and provided supporting materials that youth entrepreneurs in the Ye! Chapter could draw upon to enhance their knowledge of the legal system and its requirements.

2020

In 2020, Ye! collaborated with the **African Business Angels Network (ABAN)** to run a series of webinars on investment readiness in order to break down silos between investor knowledge and youth entrepreneurs. These webinars were organised in collaboration with the Ye! local Chapters in Kenya, Nigeria and Guinea. The Advisors moderated the sessions and ABAN provided the experts.

2021

In 2021, **The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)** jointly launched the NextGen Campus Innovation Challenge in Zambia, together with the anchor organization Jacaranda Hub. The "Next Generation Campus Innovation Challenge" is a programme targeted at college and university students, aiming to prepare the next generation of thinkers with skills for employability and entrepreneurship. Linking the challenge to COMESA's youth programme, their technical expertise, and to COMESA's expert network is pivotal in assisting aspiring youth entrepreneurs to shape their ideas into successful youth businesses.

In 2021, the Ye! Chapter in Pakistan collaborated with **Growth Tribe** to offer a virtual workshop on design thinking and growth hacking. The session theme was highlighted as one youth in the local Chapter were interested to learn more about. Experts at Growth Tribe led the discussion and continue to be in touch about collaborating to support other Ye! Chapters.



HEAR FROM OUR YE! ADVISORS DIRECTLY.



Ozaal Zesha

Founder of ClassNotes | Ye! Advisor Pakistan

"Ye! has been phenomenal in helping me connect with really good mentors from around the world and adding value to my entrepreneurial journey. I can honestly say that Ye! has helped me become a better entrepreneur by providing me with the insights, mentors, industry linkages, opportunities, and a global spotlight that every entrepreneur so desperately needs in the early days of their journey."



Aisha Aly

Founder of I-profile Foundation | Ye! Advisor Uganda

"The Ye! Community has given me the platform to use my voice to promote the needs of my own enterprise and that of my peers. Through the Ye! Community I have been able to connect with youth entrepreneurs in Uganda and around the world. With Ye!, I feel part of something bigger than myself."



Chino Atilano

Co-Founder & CEO of TimeFree | Ye! Advisor Philippines

"I have been a member of Ye! Community since 2015. It was 3 years after I launched my startup. Ye! was instrumental in helping me improve my entrepreneurial skill set. It also helped me link up with like-minded peers who I got the chance to meet in person during the Ye! events in Amsterdam, Sweden, and Riyadh. My international experience with the YE! program helped broaden my horizon. It helped me adopt best practices in other countries and share this with the rest of my colleagues back home. If you are a young entrepreneur who likes to share ideas and learn from your peers, Ye! Community is the perfect platform for you!"

HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED



Interested in starting a chapter to support your local youth entrepreneur community?

Write to us under youthandtrade@intracen.org or visit us under www.yecommunity.com.

