

# Pestalozzi International

*To nurture and develop*

## SkillsHub Zambia

Impact Update 2026



# The challenge in Zambia

**For many young people in Zambia, the transition from education into sustainable work is far from straightforward.**

Poverty and interrupted education can leave young people with gaps in literacy, numeracy and other foundational skills, while time outside education or employment can affect confidence, motivation and belief in what is possible. Limited exposure to employers, careers and professional networks narrows their options further, while the immediate pressure to earn can make continued learning difficult.

Together, these barriers can leave talented and ambitious young people with few

realistic routes into secure work or sustainable livelihoods.

SkillsHub was designed to address these challenges as a connected journey, recognising that vocational training alone is not always enough. The programme combines mindset development and foundational learning with practical vocational skills, while building direct pathways into workplace experience, employment, further education and entrepreneurship. The aim is not simply to help young people gain a qualification, but to build the confidence, capabilities and connections they need to turn their skills into greater economic independence.

## The problems we address: why a five-stage pathway is needed

### Under-education



97% of children in the lowest wealth quintile do not finish secondary school (UNESCO UIS, 2019)

### Informal labour



74% of these children will never be formally employed. (UNESCO UIS, 2019)

### Opportunity cost



<\$2 a day means staying in school is unaffordable when families depend on every hand to earn.

### Low confidence



Young people from low-status communities rarely put themselves forward.

### Low awareness of opportunities



No exposure to goal-setting, careers or pathways beyond the community.

### Government schemes miss them

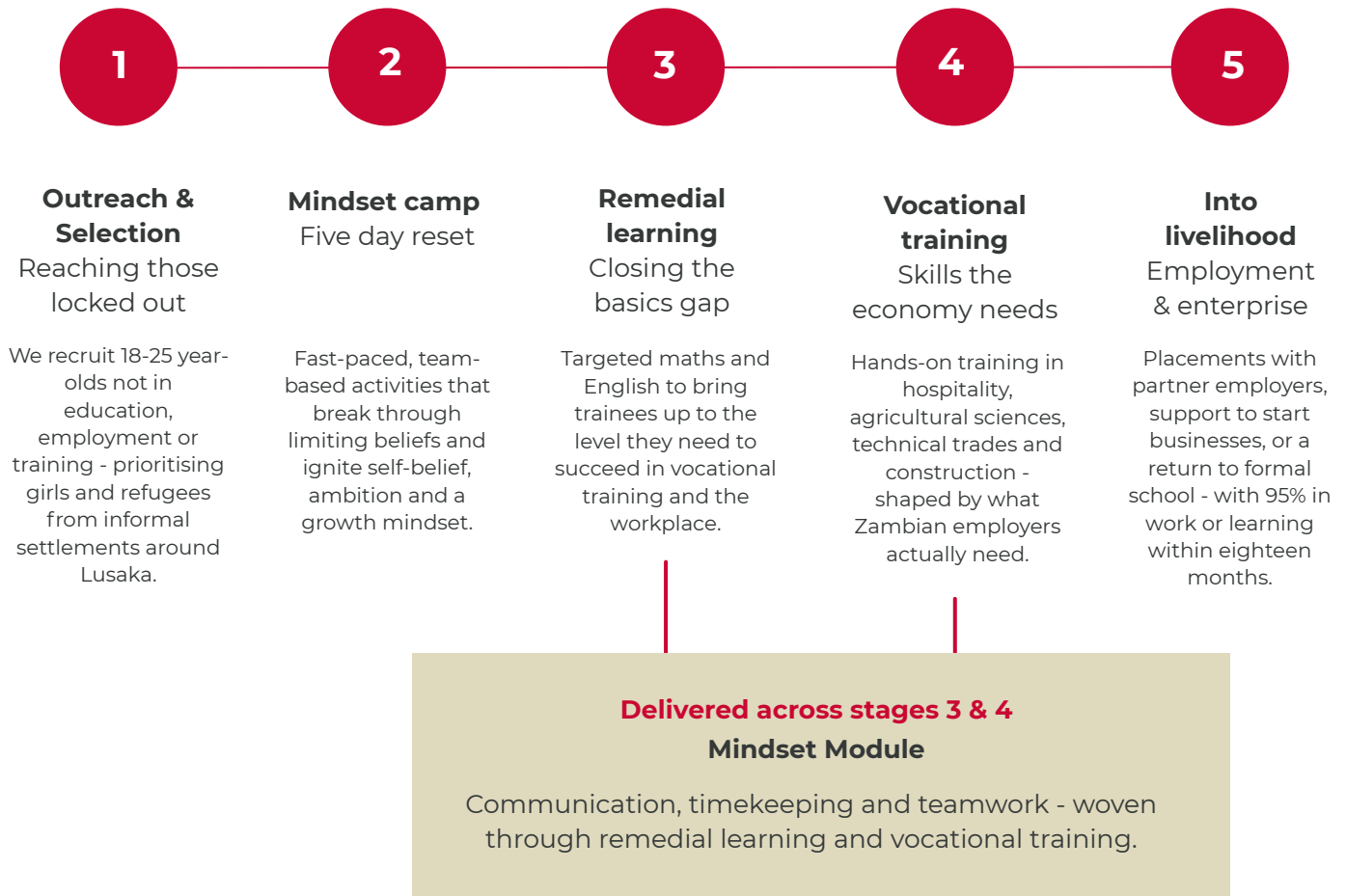


State vocational courses require a High School certificate - which they lack.



# SkillsHub Overview

## Five-stage pathway



## The intended impact: from a learner's gain to a country's growth

Each stage is designed to deliver a measurable change - stronger foundational skills, greater confidence, vocational capability and improved readiness for work. Together, these gains help young people move into employment, enterprise and further education, building greater economic independence and more sustainable livelihoods.

As more young people are able to earn, build businesses and contribute to their families and communities, that impact can extend beyond the individual - contributing over time to lower youth unemployment, reduced poverty and stronger, more inclusive economic growth.

# More than learning a trade

SkillsHub supports the whole person - combining foundational learning, mindset development and practical vocational training, so young people are confident, capable and ready for work, further study or to start their own business.



## Building foundations

Many of our learners have had interruptions to their education. We provide targeted support in Maths and English to build essential skills and help them get the most out of their training.

**46% → 66%**

Average numeracy score at entry and exit



## Building confidence

Our mindset development programme helps young people build resilience, communication, teamwork, problem-solving and workplace readiness – skills that last a lifetime.

**5.8 → 8.6**

Average confidence score at entry and exit (out of 10)



## Building practical skills

Learners gain hands-on training in one of 10 vocational pathways, with the practical skills, knowledge and experience to take the next step towards employment, further study or enterprise.

**10**

Vocational pathways

## Our vocational pathways

Training is shaped by what Zambian employers need, giving young people the best possible opportunities for the future.



### Construction

Bricklaying & Plastering



### Automotive Mechanics



### General Agriculture



### General Hospitality



### Power Electrical



### Cosmetology



### Fashion & Design



### Electronics



### Plumbing



### Photography

## A pathway into opportunity

SkillsHub doesn't stop at training. Learning is connected to real workplace experience, helping young people turn new skills into opportunities for employment, further study and enterprise.

**365**

workplace attachments

**116**

employer partners



# Beyond technical skills

SkillsHub goes further than vocational training. Through mindset development and remedial learning, young people are supported to overcome barriers, build confidence and strengthen the foundations they need to succeed.

## Remedial learning: Removing barriers to vocational training

For some young people, interrupted or incomplete education has left gaps in foundational Maths and English. Without the core skills required by many formal training routes, these gaps can continue to limit access to further education, vocational training and future opportunities.

Working with education partner Edulution, SkillsHub provides targeted remedial learning in Maths and English, strengthening the foundations trainees need to participate fully in vocational training, progress in their chosen pathway and prepare for the workplace.



## Mindset development: Building confidence that lasts beyond the classroom

The Mindset programme begins with an intensive, team-based camp designed to challenge limiting beliefs, build self-belief and encourage young people to think differently about what they can achieve.

Support continues throughout the SkillsHub journey, helping trainees develop resilience, communication, teamwork and problem-solving, alongside practical preparation for employment and enterprise, including career planning, CV writing, interview practice and workplace expectations.



### Closing the basics gap



Remedial learning is integrated into the SkillsHub pathway rather than treated as a separate intervention. Foundational learning continues into vocational training, so young people receive academic support alongside the development of their chosen technical skills.

### Support that continues



Mindset development doesn't end when camp finishes. Ongoing support continues alongside vocational training, helping young people translate growing confidence into the behaviours and practical skills they need in training, workplace attachments and beyond.

# From training to opportunity

SkillsHub is designed to help young people put their learning into practice. Workplace attachments provide real experience, build professional networks and create pathways into employment, further education and enterprise.

## Meet Miriam

Miriam joined SkillsHub after financial barriers prevented her from pursuing tertiary education.

Through SkillsHub, she completed agricultural training, developed her confidence and gained practical workplace experience. Her training included foundational learning at the Pestalozzi Organic Farm and Chipembi College of Agriculture, followed by a workplace attachment at Kasisi Agricultural Training Center.

**Her progress opened the door to further education. Miriam was accepted directly into the second year of a Diploma in Agro-ecology, with a 60% scholarship.**



**67%**

of learners are female

**Women are entering trades that are often male-dominated**



**80%** of hospitality entrants are female



Around **29%** of those in bricklaying & plastering are female

## Meet Priscovia

After completing secondary school, Priscovia spent almost three years trying to create a sustainable livelihood. She started a small second-hand clothing business, but struggled to make it profitable and earn a reliable income.

She joined SkillsHub and gained practical agricultural skills, mentorship and renewed confidence.

**She is now working with fellow trainees to develop a poultry business, putting her learning into practice and building a new pathway towards greater economic independence.**



# Partnerships that build sustainable livelihoods

Partnerships with specialist colleges, industry and employers connect young people with expertise, workplace experience and opportunities that reflect Zambia's labour market - helping create routes into employment, enterprise and further learning.



## Partnerships that open doors

SkillsHub works with specialist training providers and industry partners to bring established expertise, facilities and employer insight into the programme. This allows vocational pathways to respond to both trainee ambitions and the skills needed in Zambia's evolving economy, while giving trainees access to specialist learning and industry experience.

Employer partnerships help bridge the gap between training and work, creating opportunities for workplace exposure, placements, apprenticeships and employment.

## Some of our partners

Partners working with SkillsHub include Nandos, Shoprite, Spar, Choppies, Western Union, Zamtel, ZESCO, ZNBC, Trade Kings and Prudential, alongside hotels and lodges, and farms and agricultural colleges.

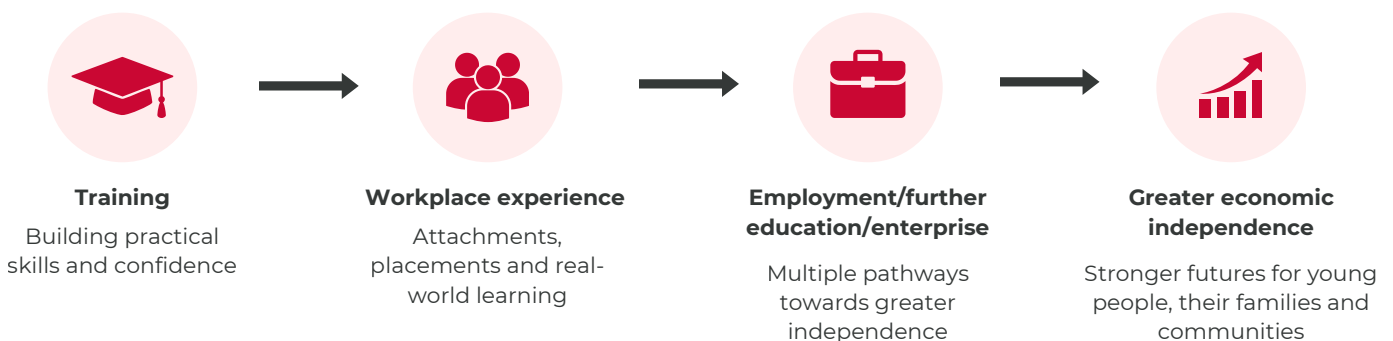
## Partnership in action

Our partnerships with local employers such as Fortune Chicken and BuildIt International strengthen the connection between training and employment, creating pathways into placements, apprenticeships and jobs while bringing direct employer and industry insight into programme delivery. Fortune Chicken operates across 30+ locations in five Zambian cities, while BuildIt International strengthens pathways into the construction sector.

## Towards sustainable livelihoods

There is no single route beyond SkillsHub. Graduates are progressing into employment, entrepreneurship and further education, with others combining different forms of work as they begin generating an income.

Graduate tracking helps us understand where opportunities are strongest across different vocational sectors. This evidence is used to refine course provision, strengthen employer engagement and improve support for young people as they move beyond training.





“

I am rising.  
My past does not determine my future.

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