



Ubuntu.Lab
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Ubuntu.Lab Institute Newsletter

Co-creating Africa's Future Through
Partnership and Collaboration

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Partnership and Collaboration

Co-creating Africa's Future

At Ubuntu.Lab Institute, partnership and collaboration are not simply strategies we employ; they are the very essence of who we are. The spirit of Ubuntu teaches us that as human beings, we are made for one another. We partner and collaborate because we believe that is how we become fully human and how we create the possibilities for a future that none of us could build alone. This is not a value we adopted for convenience. **It is the foundation on which Ubuntu.Lab Institute was built.**

When we trace our footsteps back to where our journey began, we find partnership and collaboration at every turn. Our very first cohort in 2018 came into being because individuals across our first 19 countries were willing to open their networks and collaborate with the faculty team preparing to deliver the programme. Through those early relationships, individuals who would become our National Coordinators helped us recruit facilitators, and create spaces for face-to-face learning across the continent.

We share this history not simply out of nostalgia, but to illustrate a simple truth: **the Ubuntu.Lab Institute approach has always been, and remains, built on collaboration and partnership.** As the Regional School for the Presencing Institute, we are also part of a wider global community. This network connects us to knowledge, practices and relationships from different parts of the world, strengthening our work across Africa while enabling us to contribute African perspectives to a global movement for systems change. For us, co creation is as much about learning from others as it is about building locally. Today, our network of partners and collaborators continues to grow, from our National Coordinators, facilitators, and programme participants, to fellow institutions across Africa and beyond, and the funders who make it possible for ideas to be tested and developed. **Our vision of co creating Africa's future is far too large for any one institution to achieve alone. We know this, and we embrace it.**



Partnership and Collaboration

Co-creating Africa's Future

In this issue, we are proud to share **the prototypes emerging from our Cohort 6 programme, delivered in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation.** These prototypes are more than ideas on paper. They represent people identifying real challenges in their communities, experimenting with new possibilities, learning through action and developing solutions with the potential to create meaningful change. Every participant who moves forward to implement their prototype becomes, in our eyes, a collaborator in the shared work of co creating Africa's future. They test their ideas in the real world, learn from what works and what does not, and refine their approaches. When a prototype demonstrates potential, the next opportunity is to ask: **What would it take to move this idea from a promising experiment to a solution that can reach many more people?** This is where partnership becomes even more important. Ubuntu Lab Institute sees great potential in facilitating partnerships for our alumni as they work to scale their successful prototypes. We recognise that moving from a tested idea to a scaled solution requires more than funding alone.

We therefore invite funding institutions, organisations and other potential partners who are interested in supporting the scaling of these prototypes to join us in exploring what might be possible. If you see an idea in this issue that resonates with your organisation's priorities, we would love to hear from you. Please reach out to our Co Executive Directors leading on partnerships:

Linda Mariwa Shuma:

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Aggie Kalungu-Banda:

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Together, guided by our Ubuntu philosophy and the Theory U framework, we can explore how your partnership can help promising ideas move from experimentation to scale, reach more communities and contribute to the future we want to see across Africa. **The future is too important to be left to chance and too large for any one of us to create alone. Let us co create it, together.**

Aggie Kalungu-Banda

Co-Executive Director

Refugee Employment Accelerator and Career Hub (REACH) – Uganda

From Lived Experience to Digital Opportunity

How did this journey start?

For Pech Lim Gatluak, the idea behind REACH grew from lived experience. After fleeing conflict in South Sudan, Pech spent more than 15 years living as a refugee in Uganda. Despite performing well in secondary school, he spent four years unable to continue his education or find employment, a reality shared by many talented young refugees around him. A turning point came when Pech bought a smartphone and began using it to access online courses, scholarships and other opportunities. It made him realise that the challenge facing many refugee youth was not a lack of talent or ambition, but a lack of access to technology, connectivity, skills, networks and opportunities. That insight helped inspire the Refugee Employment Accelerator and Career Hub (REACH), a youth-led prototype supported by the Ubuntu.Lab Institute's Transformative Leadership Programme, in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation.

From an idea to growing impact

Based in Uganda's Rhino Camp, REACH equips refugee and host-community youth with digital skills, entrepreneurship training, mentorship and pathways to employment.

The initiative has already reached more than 1,050 young people, with participants applying skills such as graphic design and entrepreneurship to generate income and strengthen their businesses. At the heart of the approach is a simple belief: refugee communities should not only be seen through the lens of displacement and vulnerability. With access to the right tools and opportunities, they can become spaces of creativity, entrepreneurship, innovation and leadership.

What comes next for REACH?

The next stage is about strengthening the ecosystem around young people. REACH is seeking partnerships that can expand access to reliable internet and computers, strengthen mentorship and digital-skills programmes, create employment pathways and build sustainable funding networks.

Recent engagements, including a learning exchange with Cohere, are helping open conversations around future collaboration. **His journey carries a powerful message: talent exists everywhere opportunity should too.**

[Learn more](#)

Integrated Zero Waste – Kenya

Turning Waste into Food, Learning and Opportunity

How did this journey start?

The idea began during the COVID-19 period, when lockdown forced the founder of Mazingira Urban Networking Organization to close a small business and return home. Chicken rearing became one way of supporting the family, but the high cost of feed presented another challenge. Experimenting with composting and maggots as alternative chicken feed sparked a bigger question: **could waste be transformed into a resource that creates food, income and opportunity?**

What started as a household solution gradually became a community vision. Despite early difficulties convincing others to believe in the idea, the work expanded through environmental activities and began attracting young people and professionals interested in contributing their own skills.

What is the prototype building today?

The Integrated Zero-Waste Rabbit Farming Prototype now connects environment, livelihoods, education and inclusion. Its circular approach explores how suitable organic waste can become useful inputs, while rabbit farming generates food and income and manure supports gardens and urban agriculture.

The prototype connects four programmes: Mazingira iHUB, TANIPA/Trash Mtaani, Jijenge Online Tutoring and the Green Young Champions Network. Together, they create opportunities for practical farming and entrepreneurship, waste management, early learning and youth leadership. Young people can progress from participants to trainers, coordinators, community leaders and partner representatives, developing leadership and entrepreneurship skills along the way.

What comes next?

The ambition is bigger than rabbit farming. The team is building a partnership platform for zero-waste, youth-led urban resilience, where waste becomes a resource and local solutions create economic, environmental, educational and social impact. Funding remains a major challenge, and stronger partnerships will be important in helping the initiative scale its ideas. The vision is to create something future generations can carry forward: where young people lead, children learn through practical experiences and locally available resources become building blocks. [Learn more](#)

Young Girls' Empowerment Through Skills Training (YGEST) – Ghana

Empower Yourself. Build Your Future.

How did this journey start?

The idea for YGEST began with personal experience. After completing senior high school in 2023, its founder discovered how difficult it could be to find work, particularly employment that provided reasonable income and a positive working environment. At only 18 or 19, she began imagining a different pathway: a community where young women leaving school could learn practical skills and create opportunities for themselves rather than depending entirely on scarce formal employment. That vision became reality when YGEST officially launched on 3 August 2026, creating a space for young women to develop practical capabilities and greater independence.

More than skills training

YGEST is being built as more than a place to learn practical skills. The founder wants participants to experience a sense of community and sisterhood, with opportunities to talk, support one another and grow in confidence. **The programme will also incorporate entrepreneurship and financial literacy**, helping participants understand money management, pricing and how to turn their skills into sustainable sources of income.

Mentorship and life-skills sessions will focus on confidence, communication, decision-making and personal development. After training, YGEST hopes to follow participants' progress, create opportunities for them to showcase their work and connect them with potential customers.

Building a community that lasts

The long-term vision is to create a network of former trainees who can encourage and mentor new participants, allowing the impact of YGEST to continue beyond the training period. Partnerships will be important to achieving that vision. Ubuntu has been central to supporting the initiative so far, while future connections could help expand skills training, mentorship and economic opportunities for participants. Ultimately, YGEST is about equipping young women not only to learn, but to believe in their abilities, earn from their skills and help others do the same. **"Empower yourself. Build your future."** And for its founder, the mission is personal: **"I am building opportunities, one young woman at a time."**

[Learn more](#)

Regional Insights: Voices from the Community

Powered by National Coordinators Across Africa

Zimbabwe

Building a More Connected Pan-African Community

"The Ubuntu Lab Institute represents a Pan-African community with enormous potential to connect people, ideas and initiatives across geographical and national borders. There is great value in creating spaces where Africans can learn from one another, share experiences and address contemporary challenges through perspectives rooted in African knowledge and values. Physical borders and logistical challenges should not isolate communities that are working toward similar aspirations.

There is an opportunity for ULI to bring together initiatives from countries such as Zimbabwe, Kenya and Nigeria and create stronger relationships between people and communities across the continent. Technology can help overcome distance and make these connections more meaningful, consistent and accessible. Cross-border collaboration can become an important strength for the movement, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, mutual learning and collective action.

The Ubuntu Lab community has the potential to become an increasingly connected Pan-African network in which people from different countries contribute their experiences, learn from one another and build something larger than any individual national chapter."

Mutsa Samuel, Zimbabwe

Senegal / Francophone Africa

Strengthening the Francophone Voice

"The Ubuntu Lab Institute has an important role to play in creating opportunities for young Africans to learn, connect and contribute to the development of their communities. Experience through the Conservation and Biodiversity Leadership Labs demonstrates that young people respond positively when programmes are relevant to the realities they face in their own countries. There is significant potential to build on this by strengthening relationships with colleges, high schools and youth organizations and creating spaces where young people can engage meaningfully with one another and with experienced leaders.

Regional Insights: Voices from the Community

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The Francophone community is an important part of the wider ULI family, and stronger communication and accessibility can help ensure that members are able to participate fully. There is an opportunity to build a more connected regional community where people share experiences, learn from one another and develop initiatives together. With greater visibility, stronger partnerships and programmes grounded in local realities, ULI can create meaningful opportunities for African leaders and young people while strengthening the sense of belonging to a truly Pan-African community."

Grâce Victoire Gueye, Senegal / Francophone Africa

Cameroon
Reigniting the Ubuntu Spirit in Cameroon

"The Ubuntu Lab Institute community in Cameroon has a strong foundation of people who have already experienced the training and remain interested in the direction and future of the movement.

The continued curiosity among trained members about what comes next reflects a desire for connection, purpose and meaningful participation. This existing community represents an important resource for strengthening the wider Pan-African movement. The relationship between ULI and institutions such as the YMCA also demonstrates the potential to reach many more people through established African networks and communities. When members are given a clear sense of purpose and meaningful opportunities to engage, the potential exists to transform a network of trained individuals into an active community of people learning from and supporting one another.

ULI's strength lies in bringing together people from different generations, professions and countries around a shared belief in the values of Ubuntu. The Cameroon experience reflects the wider opportunity to reconnect alumni, strengthen relationships and create a greater sense of momentum across the Pan-African community."

Eugene Mbee, Cameroon

Regional Insights: Voices from the Community

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Sudan

Reconnecting Across Borders - Renewing Sudan's Place in the Ubuntu Community

"The Sudanese community within the Ubuntu Lab Institute represents an important part of the wider Pan-African family, with an opportunity to reconnect members who have become dispersed and strengthen the sense of community among them. Even where circumstances have made local connection difficult, the existing alumni network provides a valuable foundation from which relationships can be renewed.

Reconnecting members, rediscovering their experiences and bringing people together can help create a stronger sense of belonging and a renewed connection to the wider ULI movement. The stories, experiences and perspectives of Sudanese members also have an important place within the broader African conversation. Platforms such as the ULI newsletter can give communities across the continent an opportunity to share their experiences and learn from one another.

The strength of a Pan-African community lies not only in the number of people connected to it, but in the relationships, knowledge and shared sense of purpose that connect them across borders. The Sudan experience offers an opportunity to renew those connections and strengthen the wider Ubuntu Lab community."

Lena Mahgoub, Sudan



Growing Together

What's coming up next?

Upcoming Learning Journey: Ubuntu.Lab Facilitators' Training (2026–2027)

Ubuntu.Lab Institute, in partnership with The Presencing Institute, invites changemakers and emerging leaders across Africa to an immersive online learning journey focused on practical facilitation, collaboration and collective leadership. **Running from 19 November 2026 to 11 March 2027**, the training combines live online sessions, Ubuntu Cafés and practical application within participants' teams, organisations or communities. Participants will deepen their facilitation skills to help groups think better together, build trust and create meaningful change, while connecting with a growing pan-African learning community.

On completion, **participants receive certification as qualified facilitators** from the Presencing Institute and Ubuntu.Lab Institute. Programme **packages range from USD 100–500 per person**.

Registration closes 12 November 2026.

Full details: <https://tinyurl.com/2txnxz44>

Register now: <https://tinyurl.com/4fp9smb4>

The Presencing Foundation Program (PFP 2027) – Kenya

We're excited to share that planning is underway for the 2027 Ubuntu.Lab Institute Presencing Foundation Program (PFP), set to take place in Nairobi, Kenya from 14th to 17th March 2027

Ubuntu.Lab Institute and The **Presencing Foundation Program (PFP)** bring the Presencing Institute's flagship programme into the Ubuntu.Lab Institute vision of cultivating transformative leadership across Africa. This four-day immersive, experiential retreat guides changemakers through the U-Process to explore collective leadership methodologies for sensing and facilitating profound innovation and change, while equipping participants with practical tools to lead meaningful transformation at personal, organisational, and societal levels across the continent.

Learn more: <https://tinyurl.com/f5dx72yh>

Register now: <https://tinyurl.com/uy9x9j5y>