



A LEARNING SERIES

WORKING TOWARDS AGILE AND RESPONSIVE SKILLS AND (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA

A Systems Approach to Addressing Youth Unemployment

ORIENTATION

DA-NEPAD









A Compilation of Learning Briefs Spotlighting Innovation, Impact, Tips & Strategies

ORIENTATION



Published by:

Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) An initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)

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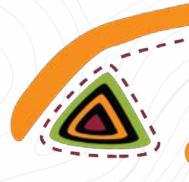
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Sharing of Learning Briefs is one of the roles of the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA). SIFA is an initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) supported by the German Government and the European Union. SIFA promotes the occupational prospects of young Africans through the support of innovative skills development programmes, and close cooperation with the private sector as a key player in job creation.

African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (ASPYEE) is a knowledge platform managed by SIFA, built on the principles of collaboration, knowledge sharing and co-creation. Its aim is to foster peer learning, knowledge exchange, and capacity building on the continent. African innovation and good practices are a basis from which to learn lessons that influence future practice, and present opportunities for replication and scaling.



CONTENTS PAGE



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ACRONYMS



ASPYEE	African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency New Partnership
SIFA	Skills Initiative for Africa
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training



The 'Gift of Work' should not be exclusive of education, background, age, gender or culture.

WHO IS THIS LEARNING SERIES FOR?

This Learning Series is aimed at African practitioners and policymakers interested in good practices, successes, and lessons learnt regarding women and youth unemployment and underemployment.

The series speaks to those involved in **Technical and Vocational Education and Training** (TVET) systems, youth development and support, technical and occupational skills development, and employability initiatives. Your perspective might be that of a policy maker, a training provider, a researcher, a funder, an implementer, an evaluator, or a beneficiary in the key thematic and intervention areas identified in the **Continental Education (CESA)** and **Continental TVET Strategies.**



Everything comes to us that belongs to us if we create the capacity to receive it.

INTRODUCTION

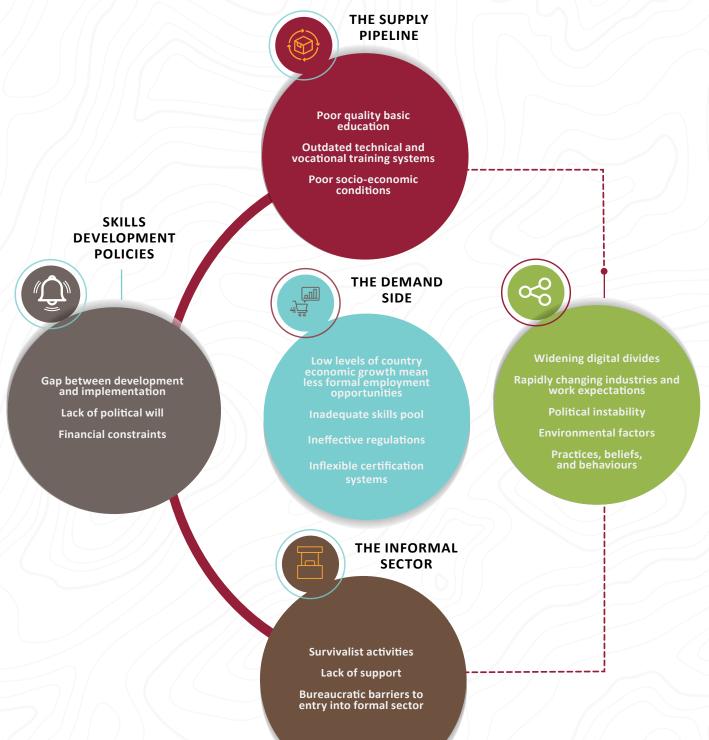
Skills development refers to the full range of formal and non-formal vocational, technical, and skills-based education and training for employment or for self-employment and entrepreneurship. Learning can happen in many contexts, through formal, non-formal, informal, and on-the-job settings.

A vibrant and productive workforce is a crucial element in a country's overall prosperity and the security of its citizens. Work is key to self-actualisation, helping us develop and access the insights, tools, disciplines, relationships, and competencies essential for personal growth and well-being. At the same time, a thriving economy requires a skilled labour pool that is accessible, competent, and varied. However, across the continent, the many challenges that exist in relation to unemployment, in particular in relation to youth and women, are well documented. Equally, many economic sectors face workforce skills gaps which are detrimental to growth and inhibit innovation and development.

Growing the skills of those who cannot access sustainable work is acknowledged as the

best route to tackling the complex challenges relating to opportunity, economic growth, and development on the African continent. The question many countries face is how to align supply and demand in ways that benefit all. The barriers to a productive interplay between skills, opportunities and the needs of economic sectors are many, and often relate to the broad skills development ecosystem. An ecosystem is a group of entities and factors that interact with and influence each other in a specific environment. The skills development ecosystem exists at many levels and is influenced by factors ranging from national policies and public budgets to local contexts and pressures. This ecosystem's various entities and factors are interlinked but often work in fragmented and counter-productive ways. Some examples are highlighted below.

INHIBITING FACTORS IN THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM



You cannot tackle hunger, disease, and poverty unless you can also provide people with a healthy ecosystem where their economies can grow.

AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

This Learning Series is framed by recognising that skills development programmes, initiatives and training organisations exist within an ecosystem that can enable or hinder the achievement of their goals. Skills are integral contributors to the ecosystem. Since there are linkages and connections across the ecosystem, there is a need to create alignment and synergies, work in collaboration and create partnerships.

Understanding this helps skills development agencies navigate and influence their ecosystems for impact. What are the enablers that can unblock the system? How can these be leveraged to replicate and scale good practices? Who are the primary stakeholders that need to be engaged? How can practical contextual barriers to youth employment be reduced?

The six ecosystem components illustrated below are drawn from the many good practices shared in this Learning Series and a common set of "conditions" observed across all of them. They are therefore suggested as a starting point for growing this understanding and will be explored in relation to each of the Learning Briefs in the series.

ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS

ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS

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Explore each of these components in relation to a specific programme or intervention. Example topics are given for each.

BENEFICIARY GROUP

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Profiles, needs, pain points. barriers, attitudes

RESEARCH

Policy & regulatory environment, data on supply & demand on your offering, certification routes

PARTNERS

For specific resources, technology, work placements, subsidies

ACCESS REQUIRED

To markets, to information, to transport, to support

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Government agencies at different levels, funders, industry bodies

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RESOURCES

Physical spaces, Human resources, Equipment, Training Materials, Communication platforms A LEARNING SERIES: ORIENTATION



Brief descriptions of each of these ecosystem components are given below, linked to examples of what they might look like when considered in the context of a particular skills development initiative.

ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS



BENEFICIARY GROUP

Direct project beneficiaries are those who will benefit from direct participation in the project. It is essential to understand their general circumstances and the pain points and challenges they are dealing with, as these may affect programme implementation and outcomes.

Examples

- Interrupted schooling (e.g., pregnancy rates in girls and young women).
- Gender stereotypes leading to a lack of willingness to hire women.
- Lack of inclusivity and challenges for those with disabilities.
- Foundational skills gaps, such as functional literacy, numeracy, and digital skills.
- Attitudes towards entrepreneurship or trade skills.

RESEARCH

Data collection and analysis will strengthen your contextual understanding of the landscape in which your programme takes place, as contextual factors may affect the success of your programme. In addition, a project that takes data and evidence into account is more easily replicable and scalable.

Examples

- Supply and demand in relation to the skills development programmes (e.g., technical, vocational, entrepreneurial) you offer.
- Availability of relevant industries, companies, or markets nearby that could absorb your trainees.
- National or local legislation that may affect employability or entrepreneurship, either positively or negatively (e.g., corporate or sector social investment requirements, municipal by-laws).
- Potential qualification or trade certification pathways for beneficiaries.
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of your programme, including postprogramme tracking and feedback so that programmes can be adapted.



KEY STAKEHOLDERS

These essential actors and agencies influence the skills development landscape, and their roles must be understood. Initiatives that are divorced from broader stakeholder engagement are not sustainable.

Examples

- Identify those who are stakeholders and those who are potential partners.
- Stakeholders include government agencies at various levels (e.g., provincial, state, municipal); your funders and investors; and industry bodies interested in skills development in their sectors.
- Partners can be identified for specific needs and projects (see below).



RESOURCES REQUIRED

Any skills development initiative requires resources various resources, which can be maximised through the ecosystem of collaborations and partnerships.

Examples

- Physical spaces for training, studying, networking, and setting up work. These 'hubs' can be used for various purposes and shared by different beneficiary groups.
- Communication resources for beneficiaries include toll-free numbers, free mobile data, and WhatsApp bots.
- Training equipment and materials
- Human resources: technical trainers, coaches, mentors

ACCESS REQUIRED



Identify and define the kinds of access needed by your beneficiary group – access to what, and how is this enabled? Use the ecosystem to assist them.

Examples

- Access to markets (e.g., micro-enterprises may need help with registration and compliance to access potential markets).
- Access to additional training, such as digital skills.
- Access to information (e.g., job opportunities through different online recruitment platforms).
- Access to transport to get to training centres and job interviews.
- Access to support for interview preparation (e.g., CV preparation, clothing for interviews).



PARTNERS

Partners are those with whom you enter into collaborative agreements, usually with a mutual benefit to those involved. The right partners can help with any of the components listed above, especially with resources and access.

Examples

- Partnerships with nearby growth-oriented small or medium businesses to absorb artisan programme graduates.
- Partnerships with corporates with policy commitments such as Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance [ESG] requirements.
- Partnerships with businesses and workplaces for defined placements, such as workers with disabilities, including appropriate settings for these new entrants.
- Partnerships with other bodies for supplementary certification agreements (e.g., for Information Communication Technology (ICT) short courses with providers to supplement any additional training received).
- Partnerships with government agencies or ministries (e.g., for trainee stipends or linking with youth unemployment government initiatives).
- Partnerships with government agencies for verification or accreditation of programmes.
- Agreements made with service providers for subsidised data or technology.



Work gives life meaning, helps us connect with our purpose, helps us find our tribes and makes life better.

THE LEARNING BRIEFS

Each Learning Brief discusses illustrative lessons learned and tips and strategies for different components grounded in programmes, learning experiences and innovations. These are made real through inspiring success stories of how beneficiaries have taken forward the opportunities provided through skills development engagement.

FOUR FOCUS AREAS

This Learning Series is a compilation of four Learning Briefs based on four focus areas identified as critical fields for effective skills development to address youth unemployment.



LEARNING BRIEFS AS A METHODOLOGY

Learning Briefs distil the lessons learned and evidence gathered by people working on the ground. The sharing of evidence-based knowledge, real experiences, case studies, success stories and effective strategies across the continent promotes better planning and implementation of developmental interventions.

Each Learning Brief speaks to one of the Focus Areas listed above, presenting insights concerning various ecosystem components and practical solutions to problems encountered. Each part of the series is a chance to learn about common and unique challenges and new tools and solutions already being applied by practitioners in distinct public and private sectors across Africa.

SOURCES FOR THE LEARNING BRIEFS

The Study Tour

On a three-day Study Tour in Johannesburg, South Africa, delegates from seven organisations which have implemented good practice skills development initiatives in six African countries shared lessons learned from their country programmes and visited pioneering South African examples of skills development programmes in Johannesburg. Reflections captured during facilitated sessions inform different Focus Area Learning Briefs.

Over the three days, activities included:

WORKSHOPS

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- Organisational pitches and information sharing from delegates
 - Challenges and best practices from own work Reflection and review of learnings from site visits

SITE VISIT PROGRAMMES

- Viewing of space and activities
- Explanatory presentations
- Beneficiary meet and greet
- Opportunities for Q&A

NETWORKING OPPORTUNTIES

- Between delegates
- With AUDA-NEPAD and SIFA staff
- With other skills development innovators

Other Sources

Disseminating information on good practices in skills development across the continent is an ongoing process, enabled not only by activities such as peer learning through study tours but also through webinars and the sharing of other case studies and learning briefs.

Voices from the Ground: Illuminating the Focus Areas

The Study Tour programmes, host sites and other sources have been linked to a particular focus area according to their main defining feature, interest area or theme.

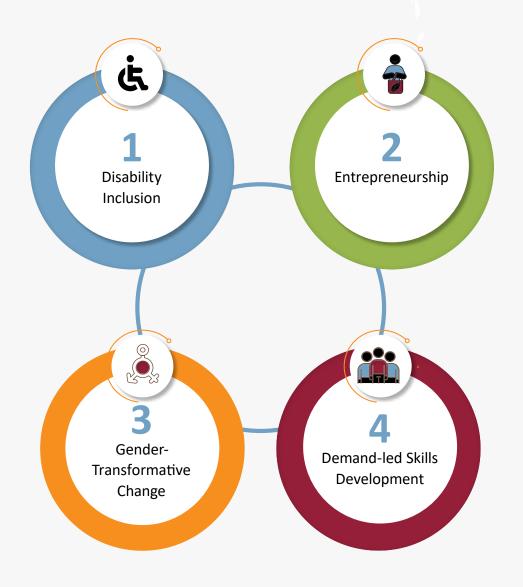
	FOCUS AREA	LEARNING BRIEF SOURCES
1	Disability Inclusion	Study Tour Delegate Initiatives
		The Sightsavers IT Bridge Academy: Bringing people living with disabilities into IT jobs through partnerships and access
		Mbouo Bandjoun Multipurpose Centre: Promoting agripreneurship in Cameroon
		Webinars/Case Studies/Research
		Research - A Study on the inclusion of persons with disabilities - strengthening inclusion within TVET institutions in Africa
2	Entrepreneurship and the Informal Sector	Study Tour Delegate Initiatives
		The Lagos State Employability Trust Fund (LSETF) Employability Support Program: Creating an enabling environment for job and wealth creation!
		National Youth Exchange Association: Creating a supportive Network of Enterprising Youth
		Study Tour Site Visit Organisational Initiatives
		The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator at the Ekurhuleni West TVET College
		Webinars/Case Studies/Research
		Case Study - Recognition of Prior Learning in Kenya: Pathways to the Informal Sector
		Guideline - A Guideline on Fostering Entrepreneurship through the TVET sector

3	Gender- Transformative	Study Tour Delegate Initiatives
	Change	Development Aid from People to People (DAPP Malawi): Mobile Vocational College Empowering Malawi Youth
		Youth Empowerment Systems (YES): Vocational Training and Recognition of Prior Learning for Vulnerable Youth in Marginalised Communities
		Webinars/Case Studies/Research
		Case Study - Gender makes Business Sense (GmBS): An innovative approach to entrepreneurship that works
		Webinar: Driving gender transformative approaches for Africa: Strategies to empower women and girls in the world of work through TVET
4	Demand-led Skills Development	Study Tour Delegate Programmes
		Generation Programme Kenya (GPK): You Employed! Matching supply and demand, delivering high-quality blended training to youth and matching graduates to decent work
		Study Tour Site Visit Organisational Initiatives
		Harambee: Accelerating Youth Employment through Partnerships and Technology
		Yes4Youth: Yes for successful employment journeys
		Yes4Youth: Yes for successful employment journeys Webinars/Case Studies/Research

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USING THE LEARNING SERIES

This orientation section has outlined the background to the suite of Learning Briefs on the topic of skills development and set out the conceptual lens through which the challenges, lessons and recommendations for each focus area are explored. You can select the Focus Area that interests you by clicking on the relevant link, as illustrated below.









A LEARNING SERIES

WORKING TOWARDS AGILE AND RESPONSIVE SKILLS AND (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA

A Systems Approach to Addressing Youth Unemployment

LEARNING BRIEF 1 DISABILITY INCLUSION

DA-NEPAD







JDA-NEPAD IN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

A Compilation of Learning Briefs Spotlighting Innovation, Impact, Tips & Strategies

LEARNING BRIEF 1 DISABILITY INCLUSION



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ACRONYMS



ADA	The Africa Disability Alliance
ADF	The African Disability Forum
BRIDGE	Building resilient IT skills supply through demand-generated ecosystems
СВО	Community-based Organisation
CINA	The Congo Innovation Academy
CPF	The Mbouo Bandjoun Multipurpose Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CWDs	Children With Disabilities
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EAC	East African Community
ECDD	The Ethiopian Centre for Disability and Development
ERGA	Experience Reflection Generalisation Application
FBO	Faith-based Organisation
FUWAVITA	Furaha Ya Wanawake Wajasiriamali Kwa Viziwi Tanzania
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
NAWWD	The Network of African Women with Disabilities
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NITA	The National Industrial Training Authority
	Organisations of Persons with Disabilities



РАСА	Pan-African Congress on Autism
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
REPSSI	Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative
SAE4D	South African Employers for Disability
	Couthows Africa Fodowstice of the Dischlad
SAFOD	Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
SAFOD	Students With Disabilities
SWD	Students With Disabilities
SWD TVET	Students With Disabilities Technical and Vocational Educational and Training

SETTING THE SCENE: DISABILITY INCLUSION IN AFRICA

The United Nations report on the "Realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with persons with disabilities" (2018) provides compelling data to show the many ways in which people with disabilities (PWDs) are disadvantaged when it comes to finding and retaining sustainable employment. Exclusion from opportunities, especially in developing countries, often begins with a lack of access to basic education. This, in turn, impacts post-school education and

other skills development training options and, from there, entry into the workplace. PWDs are often perceived as 'unemployable,' even when their disability does not affect their ability to work and do a job successfully.

Barriers faced range from general challenges (such as lack of education, health issues or access to transport) to physical requirements (like ramps or modified facilities and equipment) for which employers may not be willing to pay, and, critically, negative attitudes and stereotypes around the capabilities of those with disabilities.

For these reasons, skills development initiatives for PWDs need to be multifaceted and include several forms of support beyond mere technical or entrepreneurial training. Equally important is the involvement of other stakeholders. Key examples would be government-linking government funding to policy mandates and prospective employers, concerning creating awareness around the potential return on investment in the employment of PWDs; for example, modification costs might be recouped through a corporate social investment tax benefit. In addition, businesses may see PWDs as an asset to the workforce, as suggested by a participant in a disabilityinclusion workforce project. Persons with disabilities are proved to be more committed to their work and are an asset to any organisation.

Quoted in TVET Reform: Designing an inclusive skills development programme. International Labour Organisation. Bangladesh Office, 2012. Page 23



ABOUT THIS LEARNING BRIEF

This is Part 1 of the Learning Series **WORKING TOWARDS AGILE, RESPONSIVE SKILLS & (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA.** The Learning Series is a compilation of four Learning Briefs based on four focus areas identified as critical fields for effective skills development to address youth unemployment.

DISABILITY INCLUSION

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- ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR
- 🔮 🔰 GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE
- DEMAND-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Disability Inclusion is a vital component of any country's TVET and skills development landscape, tapping into a pool of potential skills often neglected. In addition, targeted efforts at this beneficiary group promote greater economic participation across all sectors of society. Initiatives for PWDs may also cut across the other three critical fields noted above.

This Learning Brief on Disability Inclusion discusses illustrative lessons learnt and tips and strategies for different components grounded in programmes, learning experiences and innovations. These are made real through inspiring success stories of how beneficiaries have taken forward the opportunities provided through skills development engagement.

This Learning Brief further explores the solutions for the inclusion of

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people with disabilities in TVET institutions, looking at a study conducted by **GP Inclusion commissioned by BMZ**, which focuses on Kenya and South Africa. The research provides recommendations on how to address PWD needs in TVET institutions better.

The **Sightsavers IT Bridge Academy** programme described in this Learning Brief ticks many of the good practice boxes noted in the UN report – especially in its focus on promoting digital capacity – and provides several concrete solutions to some of the challenges stated above.

This Learning brief also looks at the work done by the **Mbouo Ban Djoun Multipurpose Centre,** which trains young people and PWDs with practical agro-pastoral skills that allow them to enter the agrarian sector, focusing on combining relevant agro-pastoral practices with financial management skills ensuring that participants leave the training with a clear picture of how to run a successful agribusiness.

AN **ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO** SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

This Learning Brief is framed by recognising that skills development programmes, initiatives and training organisations exist within an ecosystem that can enable or hinder the achievement of their goals. Since there are linkages and connections across the ecosystem, there is a need to create alignment and synergies, work in collaboration and create partnerships.

Understanding this helps skills development agencies navigate and influence their ecosystems for impact. What are the enablers that can unblock the system? How can these be leveraged to replicate and scale good practices? Who are the primary stakeholders that need to be engaged? How can practical contextual barriers to PARTNERS youth employment be reduced?

The six ecosystem components illustrated below are suggested as a starting point for growing this understanding and will be explored against each of the good practices in this Learning Brief.

ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS

Explore each of these components in relation to a specific programme or intervention. Example topics are given for each.

BENEFICIARY GROUP

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Profiles, needs, pain points, barriers, attitudes

RESEARCH

vironment, data supply & demand n your offering, pertification route

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

ernment agencies : rent levels, funder industry bodies

RESOURCES REQUIRED

sical spaces, Human resources, Equipment, Training Materials, Communication platform

LEARNING SERIES : DISABILITY INCLUSION

ACCESS

LEARNING BRIEFS AS A METHODOLOGY

Learning Briefs distil the lessons learnt and evidence gathered by practitioners working on the ground. The sharing of evidence-based knowledge, authentic experiences, case studies, success stories, and practical strategies across the continent promotes better planning and implementation of developmental interventions.

Each Learning Brief speaks to one of the focus areas listed above, presenting insights concerning various ecosystem components and practical solutions to problems encountered. Each part of the series is a chance to learn about common and unique challenges and new tools and solutions already being applied by practitioners in distinct public and private sectors across Africa.

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A STUDY ON INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - STRENGTHENING INCLUSION WITHIN TVET INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA

Introduction

This study explores solutions for including PWDs in TVET institutions in Africa, focusing on the contextual barriers within policy and practice in Kenya and South Africa. It provides hard data to elaborate further on the complex challenges faced by initiatives like Sightsavers, Kenya, in achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4.5).

For the purposes of this Learning Brief, the pertinent discussion concerning PWDs, respectively – and the disability inclusion issues that shroud the basic education system elaborated on in this study will not be explored. The study will highlight observations and findings of the current state of the Kenyan and South African TVET systems and how they prioritise job creation and income generation for PWDs compared with target SDG 4.5. Access the complete study on ASYPEE.

STUDY BACKGROUND

TVET systems are a priority for **job creation and income generation**.

Though PWD rights are recognised, they still need to be better integrated into:

- Inclusive implementation plans,
- Budgetary allocations,
- Figure 2 Content Mechanisms, and
- Solution States and St
- PWDs face barriers to accessing TVET systems,
- 🕅 🖊 Low completion rate,
- Higher risk of dropping out.

of the African population experience some form of disability

COMMITMENTS

UNCRPD: Comprehensive human rights convention. Signed and ratified by 40 African states, December 2021.

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mployment

ong PWDs

ADP, Article 19 calls for the right to decent work and protection against unemployment for every PWD.

KENYA

- Kenya is a signatory to the <u>UNCRPD</u> and <u>SDGs</u>; however, there are no specific legal and policy frameworks for implementing <u>UNCRPD</u> at lower government levels.
- The Kenyan 2010 Constitution supports the inclusion of PWDs as guarantees of citizens' equality and addresses PWD employment matters, but the impact is minimal for PWDs primarily due to budgetary constraints.

SOUTH AFRICA

- Disability rights are enshrined in the equality clauses of the <u>South African</u> Constitution.
- PWDs were included in employment equity targets set out in the Employment Equity Act of 1998, with an inclusion target of 2%.
- South Africa was among the first countries to ratify the <u>UNCRPD</u> in November 2007.
- A White Paper on The Rights of PWDs was published in 2015 to "establish a national education system where SWDs can learn with learners without disabilities, with appropriate support in place".
- A <u>draft framework was gazetted in November 2016</u>. One of its central tenets was the need for standardisation across the PSET system by developing standardised models for monitoring and evaluation, funding, reporting systems, and classifications.
- A White Paper on PSET and the 2018 Strategic Framework on Disability in the PSET system have clearly outlined implementation plans.

KEY CHALLENGES & IMITATIONS IN KENYA AND SOUTH AFRICA



POLITICAL UNREST

• Violent conflicts result in limited access to sanitation, clean water, nutritious food, and safe living conditions contributing to high numbers of PWDs and caregivers of PWDs.

POLICY AND PRACTICE

- Disability is not perceived as a critical policy priority.
- A lack of clear guidelines on how TVETs and the world of work should administer adaptive skills and equipment, such as sign language interpretation and assistive devices, e.g., brail.



- Inadequate funding to implement disabi
- Inadequate funding to implement disability inclusiveness policies in TVET colleges and facilities that cater to various types of disabilities.

EDUCATION

- Insufficient trained TVET trainers and facilitators.
- TVETs do not have **policies that cater to PWDs**, and where disability policies exist, there is poor implementation.
- Management of disability in post-school education remains fragmented and separate from existing transformation and diversity programmes at the institutional level at most PSET institutions.
- Disability inclusiveness has not yet been extended to curriculum development, teaching, and learning environments.
- **Course choices** for PWD trainees in TVETs are based on the PWDs' disability type, and not interests.

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DATA

- Poor and inaccurate data collection on PWDs leads to dismal dissemination of critical information, leading to a lack of awareness among PWDs.
- PWD employment data is not readily available.

DISCRIMINATION

- Misconceptions, stigma, and discrimination against PWDS are concerning and contribute to employment limitation.
- PWDs, women or girls, migrants, internally displaced people, and members of the LGBTQI+ community face additional barriers and **multiple layers of discrimination.**

PUBLIC SPACES

- Inaccessible public spaces create employment and economic and logistical challenges.
- Public infrastructure at most TVETs and companies physically inhibit PWD movement and learning.

INFORMATION

- Most PWDs lack information about existing opportunities.
- Information dissemination models are not accessible to PWDs.

EMPLOYMENT

• The **formal sector does not create sufficient jobs**, with most PWDs employed in informal sector enterprises.





WHAT'S WORKING IN KENYA AND SOUTH AFRICA

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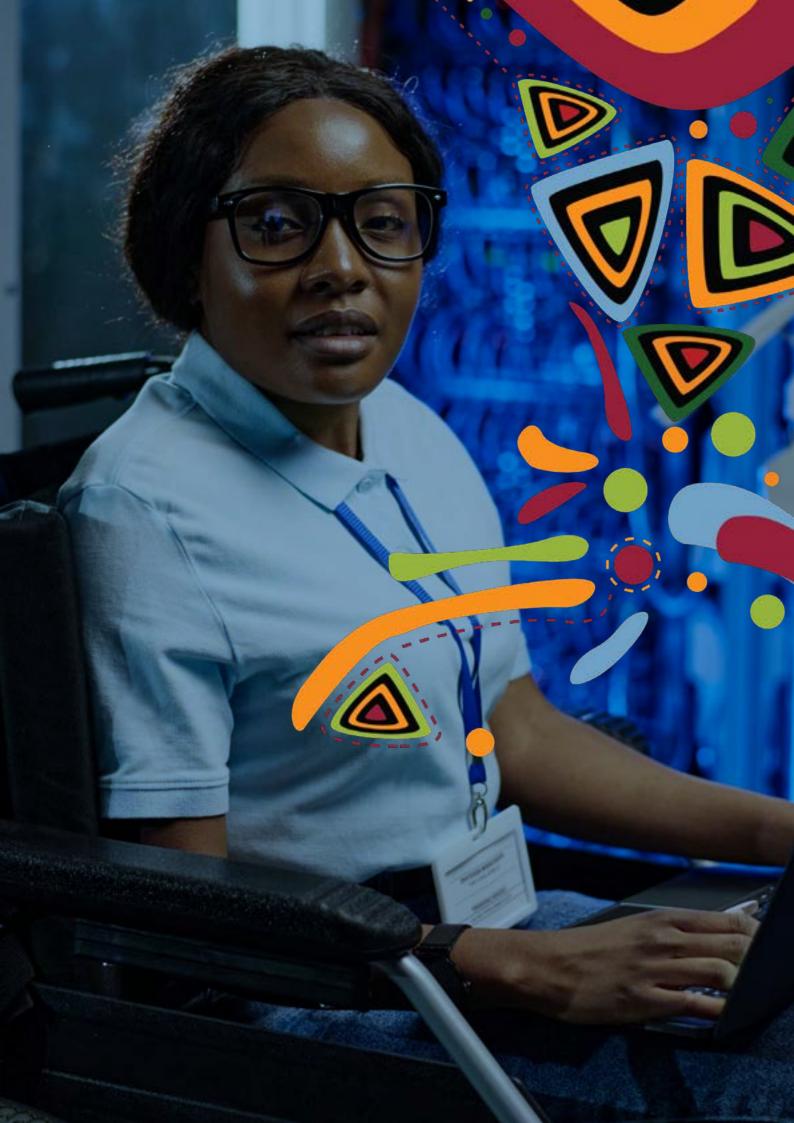
- Many employers provide inclusive employment through Corporate Social Reponsibility programs.
- An Inclusive data charter action plan was ratified in 2021 by the Kenyan Ministry of Public Service, Gender, and Senior Citizens Affairs to take on the national disability census for accurate data on PWDs.
 - From a policy perspective, the evolution of **South Africa's DHET policy framework** over the past 6-7 years looks promising, and TVET colleges are obligated to implement these policies.
- Kenya has boosted financial and material provisions to six (TVET) institutions and three teacher training colleges that admit trainees with disabilities.
 - NGOs, CSOs, CBOs and FBOs have been instrumental in increasing the number of PWDs in TVETs and other post-school learning institutions.

Concerted efforts by the South African DHET in recent years have started to **include TVET colleges in their policy-making processes** around disability inclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AFRICA

- Inclusion is multidimensional and calls for an **integrated approach**, and implementation needs to catch up to the policy defined.
- There is a need for an **increase in funding** for the development of sound policies for early inclusion of PWDs.
- Installation of a simple **monitoring tool** for all <u>AU</u> member states to measure the impact of their disability policies and programmes.
- Increase collaboration between organisations, governments, and development institutions regarding training, curriculum development and career guidance.
- Highlight the value of PWD employees,
- Provide disability awareness training and opportunities for PWD to assess capacities.
- Support <u>AU</u> organs to establish a database on PWD inclusion.
- Support more public and private sector partnerships.
- Include the work of disability experts in practice.
- Align available donor funding to government priorities and policies.





THE SIGHTSAVERS IT BRIDGE ACADEMY: BRINGING PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES INTO IT JOBS RESPONSIVE TO THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (4IR) WORLD OF WORK

Introduction

This initiative fulfils several good practice skills development ecosystem criteria in that it draws in and on a range of partners, including government, funders and employers, and pays specific attention to beneficiary needs. It also addresses a significant economic driver for both the supply and demand side of employment in its focus on digital capacity building and responsiveness.



In Kenya, **Sightsavers** is training young people with disabilities (PWDs) in Information Technology (IT). Many PWDs face various barriers to work, including stigma, discrimination and a lack of accessible training or workplaces. That is why Sightsavers Kenya, GIZ, and Safaricom established the <u>IT Bridge</u> <u>Academy</u> together.

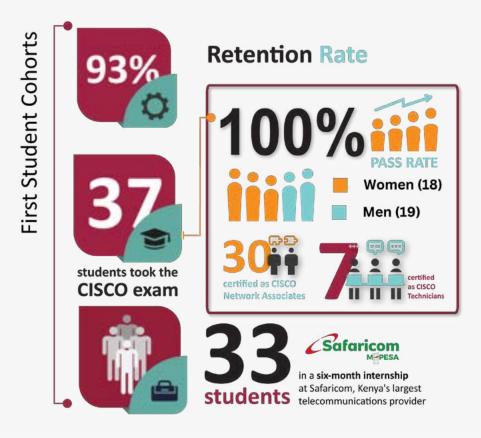
The IT Academy offers young jobseekers with disabilities the chance to train and get hands-on experience in the IT sector. Learners are provided accommodation on campus throughout their studies.

The inclusive <u>IT Bridge Academy</u> model for PWDs was a massive success in North America and Europe, with over 90% of trainees graduating and finding employment. The academy was established under the project "Building resilient IT skills supply through demand-generated ecosystems (BRIDGE)", launched in 2020.

The innovative model uses an adapted version of the CISCO curricula, training young PWDs in high-demand IT skills so that they can launch their careers in Kenya's growing IT sector.

The IT Bridge Academy's Impact

1



The Challenge

Approximately four million PWDs live in Kenya's population of 54 million. This demographic is hugely underrepresented in the labour market.

16

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This disparity exists despite the constitutional mandate requiring every employer to have a staff component of at least 5% of employees with disabilities.

Young PWDs face significant barriers to inclusion. Due to several factors, they may miss opportunities to access educational, technical, and vocational programmes. This leads to a lack of work-readiness skills and the confidence to pursue the employment they aspire to. Attempts to enter the job market are often unsuccessful due to stigma and discrimination surrounding PWDs, based on a lack of awareness around disability issues.

The disparity in general employment figures is exacerbated for women with disabilities, as shown by 2009 census data.

of women with disabilities have worked for pay compared to 14% of men with disabilities.

Sightsavers Solution

The **IT Bridge Academy** is a 'bridge' between job-seeking young PWDs and employers willing to become more disability inclusive.

The academy creates opportunities for young PWDs who aspire towards formal employment and equips them with industrycertified hard and soft skills to be employment ready.

Concurrent with skills-building for PWDs, the **IT Bridge Academy** collaborates with employers to build their understanding and confidence in dealing with PWDs in the workplace.

How the IT Bridge Academy Works

The **IT Bridge Academy** process follows five key steps. The academy provides students with crucial market-appropriate skills and certifications, providing work experience with a reputable employer through a six-month internship programme. The **IT Bridge Academy** ensures that students are well-prepared to join the workforce successfully. This is all done within a skills development ecosystem.



O I

CISCO Networking Academies curriculum adapted for people with disabilities. Students learn about in-demand IT skills that equip them for starting their careers in the technology sector.

CERTIFICATION

After examination, students graduate as CISCO Certified Network Associates (CCNA) or CISCO Certified Technicians (CCT), qualifying students to enter well-paid entry-level jobs.

SOFT SKILLS

Accenture's Skills to Succeed learning modules develop the "soft skills" of job seekers: CV writing and job readiness, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and entrepreneurship modules.

04 MENTORSHIP

Mentors and guest speakers provide orientation, career advice and motivation to inspire and support students to pursue the career they aspire to.

05 INTERNSHIP

A six-month internship at private sector partner Safaricom rounds off the students' experience, and they leave the academy with invaluable work experience with a reputable employer.

Sightsavers' IT Bridge Academy Ecosystem: Good Practices

The project's success depends on various ecosystem factors, including funding, stakeholder involvement, collaborative partnerships, and resource access. **Creating Partnerships** and **Providing Access** to beneficiaries are the two critical elements in Sightsavers' approach.

Creating Partnerships

GIZ and Sightsavers are addressing the market and training gaps as this plays out through a disability lens in Kenya's skills development ecosystem, focusing on leveraging a unique multi-stakeholder model. With solid partnership engagement from the outset, the programme stakeholders have become true strategic partners and consistently support and engage with the <u>IT Bridge Academy.</u>

The figure below presents an overview of the partnership ecosystem within the <u>IT</u> <u>Bridge Academy</u> processes. Four partnership categories were identified and served to support and enhance the function, operations, and sustainability of the Academy's objectives.



- Through collaboration with private and government partners, the IT Bridge Academy provides quality instruction for PWDs and access to the market in which their newly developed skills are sought. By making IT training accessible to PWDs, the model generates a supply of the skills demanded by the sector.
 - <u>Safaricom</u> offers 6-month internships for graduates. In cohort 1, they took on 33 of the 37 graduates.
- To ensure participation and cooperation, partners meet bi-weekly to report progress, discuss issues and identify bottlenecks. <u>Three Talents</u>, the originator of the concept in North America, gives invaluable advice regularly. Through this ongoing collaboration, Sightsavers can generate solutions to challenges as soon as they arise.
- Broader stakeholder participation is crucial to ensure that expertise and varied perspectives are included in strategic plans. The Cabinet and Permanent Secretaries from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection attended the launch and graduation event of the <u>IT Bridge Academy.</u> Their support is pivotal for the long-term sustainability of the academy.
- Various partnerships were established at the start of the project to ensure programme quality and sustainability.

The National Industrial Training Authority (NITA): The IT Bridge Academy is located at the NITA campus. Through its partnership with NITA, the IT Bridge Academy was able to gauge the interest of the Kenyan government and the private sector. The Academy worked with NITA to facilitate the inclusion of students on campus. Throughout the process, accommodation was provided, from recruitment to class attendance, and through collaborative efforts with NITA, physical and institutional barriers to disability inclusion were addressed.

- Two <u>CISCO</u>-certified instructors with experience in disability-inclusive education were appointed to ensure the students received quality instruction.
- With the assistance of an exam service provider, the <u>IT Bridge Academy</u> ensured that the assessment platform was accessible to students.
- The United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK) was a crucial partner in the process. The Academy was supported in its recruitment and selection process by the national OPD to create and implement a fully inclusive selection process tailored to the individual needs of the candidates.

Providing Access

The <u>IT Bridge Academy</u> is committed to including PWDs in all their diversity. Barriers to access are a vital concern when working with PWDs. As PWDs, any physical barrier (e.g., visual, auditory, motor) that might undermine a student's learning ability need to be removed; the learning environment needs to be conducive to learning; and students need to be able to use all training resources, digital tools and equipment and participate fully in the training which will provide them with in-demand skills. In addition, it is a priority for this project to achieve gender parity and recruit more women into the programme.

These barriers, both in terms of access to resources and training and physical barriers, were addressed by the Academy through collaboration with various partners.

To address physical barriers to access, an accessibility audit was conducted using the principles of the <u>Sightsavers accessibility</u> standards.

An<u>audit pack</u> can help develop national accessibility standards, assess existing infrastructure, and guide the development of new facilities. Based on these guidelines, the physical environment at the campus was adjusted accordingly. Throughout the programme, reasonable adjustments were made to the physical environment at the NITA campus to accommodate students with disabilities. Wheelchair ramps were installed, restrooms were renovated, and dorms were adjusted. Additionally, an individual needs assessment was conducted for each student to ensure the course was accessible. For example, screen readers were purchased for students with visual impairments. Interpreters are also made available for students with sensory impairments. However, inclusion does not stop at making the physical environment accessible. Barriers to access also manifest within the stigma and underestimation of PWDs. The project team works towards making the students with disabilities feel welcome on campus, instilling confidence in them and creating an environment of acceptance and inclusion from their peers.

C Daniel Otumba

Disability is a just a perception; if you can do only one thing, just one, then you are needed by someone.

Daniel is a certified Security Engineer and Author with a BBA in Accounting. He is a Cybersecurity Analyst and an advocate for Persons with Disabilities (PWD). Daniel joined the first cohort in 2021 and graduated as CISCO Certified Network Administrator. He finished a 6-month internship and was hired by Safaricom as a Cyber Security Operations Centre Analyst. His first salary is around € 1,200.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Ť Meet the Nairobi IT Bridge Academy students
- ÷ Inclusive Futures
- Meet the students of the IT Bridge Academy
- - The IT Bridge Academy: What's next for students?
- What it's like to look for a job when you have a disability in Nigeria and Kenya
- - Creating a more disability-inclusive workforce in Kenya: Inclusivity

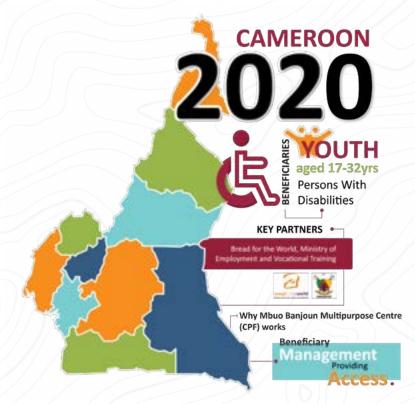
A LEARNING SERIES : DISABIL



MBOUO BANDJOUN MULTIPURPOSE CENTRE: PROMOTING AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN CAMEROON

Introduction

This initiative illustrates two primary success factors. First, it is located within the agricultural sector, where a large portion of the population derives their income. Second, it is a multi-layered initiative that includes various support forms to ensure post-training sustainability. The initiative is unique in that it has integrated training for PWDs into the programme.



The Mbuo Banjoun Multipurpose Centre (CPF)

provides training opportunities for young people and PWDsh disabilities in Cameroon (ages 17 to 32) within agro-pastoral practices. The project seeks to tackle unemployment in the country by addressing two fundamentally identified causes: job creation and insufficient or ineffective training. Through a theoretical and practical training programme, **CPF** empowers Cameroonian youth to find gainful employment in agro-pastoral practices while contributing to national skills capacity within the field. **CPF** training emphasises the acquisition of practical skills in young people and aims to make them immediately operational at the end of their 12-month training. The project has trained 28 young people residing in disability centres in agricultural practices, resulting in 8 people with disabilities being recruited by their centres to continue agro-pastoral production activities.

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Mbuo Banjoun Multipurpose Centre's Impact

The CPF has trained, integrated, and monitored more than 200 young agripreneurs, more than 80% active in their business projects, employing many other young people.

The Challenge

The inefficiency of training programmes and the lack of job creation within the country exacerbate Cameroon's unemployment problem. High unemployment, coupled with a growing population and environmental shocks, has resulted in severe poverty and food insecurity within the country.

LA L

According to the World Food Foundation 37.79

of the population is severely impoverished, with poverty being exceptionally high in rural areas.

The agricultural sector dominates the Cameroonian economy, presenting an opportunity for young people to contribute to the GDP, address poverty, and find gainful employment. Most young Cameroonian graduates face unemployment at the end of their training due to a lack of opportunity and inadequate training systems. It has been observed that the lack of exercise and opportunity has resulted in young Cameroonians turning towards hazardous sectors of activity and being exposed to many social scourges. In recent years, there has been a substantial shift of young people towards driving motorcycle taxis, a dangerous sector where young people are highly exposed to accidents and aggression.

Mbuo Banjoun Multipurpose Centre's Solution

The **CPF** provides hands-on training according to the Experience Reflection Generalization Application (ERGA) approach, providing beneficiaries with practical agricultural skills with training and post-training initiatives included. **CPF** trains, integrates and monitors beneficiaries using a well-adapted organic agro-pastoral training curriculum that integrates basic financial education within the training process. The **CPF** is recognised by the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, with which it collaborates permanently. The training follows the Experience Reflection Generalisation Analysis ERGA approach. This approach puts the learners at the heart of the training practices by sharing their experiences, successes, and failures.

The learners propose solutions to various problems, and the trainers guide and synthesise the proposals. The training is done in alternation with 70% practical and 30% theory for two weeks, and an internship of 2 weeks is provided with a referent who is a former learner in the field. This process is continued for 12 months. Each learner has a plot of land for applying the organic agro-pastoral

practices learnt in theory. The practical organic agro-pastoral activities conducted by the trainers are organised according to the methodology of guided and autonomous techniques.
The approach of analysing the agroecosystem is integrated into practical activities. Following the 12-month training, each learner produces a project, which is enhanced, reworked, and subsequently financed to initiate their business venture.

CPF has identified that training without post-training initiatives does not lead to sustainable outcomes. With this in mind, the project ensures the integration of learners with a monetary fund converted into equipment to propel the young person at the start of his activity, which is rare in the Cameroonian training system. Additionally, permanent monthly follow-ups are arranged with learners post-training, and a functional exchange network is established between entrepreneurs and consumers.

How Mbuo Banjoun Multipurpose Centre Works

The **CPF** process can be summarised in four key steps: training, internship (which occurs alternately for 12 months), project financing, and post-training. This process ensures that learners are supported throughout their handson training and the first two years of their business endeavours.



Mbuo Banjoun Multipurpose Centre's Ecosystem: Good Practices

Numerous factors may influence the success of a project, including beneficiary engagement, stakeholders, funding requirements, collaborative partnerships, and access. Within the **CPF**, **Beneficiary Management and Providing Access** are of crucial importance.

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Beneficiary Management

The **CPF** ensures that its beneficiaries are not isolated post-training. One way they do this is by including previous learners within the project process. Previous learners serve within a supervisory capacity for current students, establishing a supportive network of **CPF** beneficiaries.

Providing Access

CPF provides its beneficiaries with training and resources otherwise unavailable to Cameroonians. PWDs are included in their beneficiary profile as well. The provision of expert guidance, supervision, and training results in well-trained agricultural practitioners able to participate in the Cameroonian agricultural sector. Additionally, **CPF** provides students access to funding opportunities to initiate their enterprises, with the promise of consistent support.





LESSONS LEARNT, TIPS & STRATEGIES

This Learning Brief has been written for practitioners and policymakers interested in good African practices, successes, and lessons learnt regarding **Disability Inclusion** in the context of "Working towards agile, responsive skills and (self) employment ecosystems in Africa."

Your perspective might be that of a policy maker, a training provider, a researcher, a funder, an implementer, an evaluator, or a beneficiary in the key thematic and intervention areas identified in the **Continental Education (CESA)** and **Continental TVET Strategies.**

This section draws lessons from the experiences of initiatives and programmes highlighted in this Learning Brief for application in your varying contexts. With an appreciation of the challenges, stories of success, research and observations shared by practitioners across the continent, lessons are generalised for ease of replication. Building on these lessons, the section further provides a set of tips and strategies that you are encouraged to apply to your context where possible.

These are selected and generalised from the initiatives for Disability Inclusion described in this brief.



LEARNING SERIES : DISABILITY INCLUSION

LESSONS LEARNT

Key Stakeholders

Onboarding employers, and stakeholders can be tricky: To scale up and provide more internship opportunities for students, it is essential to secure employers early on to ensure high engagement and support with the curriculum.

Access Required

Making changes to workplaces and providing reasonable accommodation for PWDs takes time but is more rewarding when employers build their disability confidence and go the extra mile to support students with disabilities.

Resources Required

Practical application is vital to the success of a PWD programme. Trainees should be given the opportunity to use what they learn and adapt and review their projects at different stages of the programme.

For trainees to convert training into ongoing income generation, learners need help in the form of finance, equipment and ongoing monitoring.

Beneficiary Group

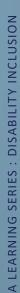
Linking learners with previous trainees 'makes it real' - learners can relate more easily to their peers and work with increased motivation because of successful role models. In addition, a support network is built up continuously through this mode.

TIPS & STRATEGIES

- Promoting awareness around the potential of PWDs to contribute to employer demand and economic growth, in general, is vital. Awareness-raising (both within institutions and workplaces) should include changing mindsets regarding working effectively with PWDs. There are two important factors here:
 - Onboarding all participants (such as employers or mentors) in any Disability Inclusion programme needs to include this element.
 - Trainers and TVET college lecturers need to understand any pedagogical implications for their work with PWDs.
- Costing for accommodating PWDs (in terms of infrastructure and training resources) needs to be accurate, detailed, and regularly updated. This element of any programme should be made explicit and shared upfront, whether for an institution such as a TVET college or a potential employer partner.
- Programmes which include successful alums who can provide peer-to-peer guidance can increase trainee motivation.
- Disability Inclusion programmes need to be multi-layered. In curriculum terms, this means that they should not be limited only to technical training, but may need to address foundational skills gaps (literacy, numeracy, financial or technical literacy) that PWDs

may lack due to other basic education challenges. In resource terms, this could mean access: for example, to information, to finance, to contextually suitable opportunities. The fundamental strategy here is to partner with those who can fill the gaps that your programme may not be able to address.

- Strategies for post-training sustainability are vital to ensure that the skills development initiative impacts the individual trainees and the relevant sectors. Strategies may include some form of financial support for any incomegenerating activity, provision of equipment or resources, or the maintenance of an advisory support network, even for those who have entered formal employment.
- For the Disability Inclusion skills development sector as a whole, gathering data relating to reach and impact is essential. Individual initiatives also need to monitor and track the progress of their trainees both during and after training. Ideally, all this data should feed into a centralised monitoring and evaluation system at a country level to inform policy and practice.





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AUDA-NEPAD would like to express its most profound appreciation to all those who made the completion of this Learning Brief possible through their direct or indirect contributions.

Study Tour delegates who shared their work, experiences, and lessons while

Mbouo Bandjoun Multipurpose Centre, Cameroon



Sightsavers, Kenya

Site visit organisations that opened their doors for knowledge exchange and sharing.

The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) team for organising and facilitating the dialogue and knowledge sharing event.

The Learning Brief also draws from expertise and knowledge sharing through **case studies**, webinars, and research papers.

Research: Study on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities by GP Inclusion

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A LEARNING SERIES

WORKING TOWARDS AGILE AND RESPONSIVE SKILLS AND (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA

A Systems Approach to Addressing Youth Unemployment

LEARNING BRIEF 2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP & THE INFORMAL SECTOR



JDA-NEPAD IN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY





A Compilation of Learning Briefs Spotlighting Innovation, Impact, Tips & Strategies

LEARNING BRIEF 2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP & THE INFORMAL SECTOR

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Disclaimer:



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CONTENTS PAGE

ACRONYMS

	ADS	Social Development Agency
	ANEM	National Employment Agency
	ANGEM	National Agency for the Management of Micro-credit
	ANSEJ	National Agency for the Support of Youth Employment
	GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
	LSETF	The Lagos State Empowerment Trust Fund
	MJS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
	NAYE	National Association of Youth Exchange
	SMMEs	Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises
	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

SETTING THE SCENE: ENTREPRENEURSHIP & THE INFORMAL SECTOR IN AFRICA

The informal sector includes a wide range of situations and activities across the globe. The term 'the informal economy' refers to activities that generate income and have market value but frequently operate outside the formal structures and regulations relating to taxation, licensing and industry standards. It is estimated that informal activity contributes to up to a third of low-income countries' economic activity. In the informal sector, the average 'business' is established for survival, and

its owner may lack natural entrepreneurial skills and insight.

Because of the well-documented challenges youth in many countries face in entering the formal economy – and the limitations on the ability of the formal economy to absorb all job-seekers – the promotion of entrepreneurship is seen as a critical lever to address unemployment, and to stimulate economic growth by creating jobs through supporting micro-enterprises. The ultimate goal of skills development innovations focused on entrepreneurship is to straddle the divide between the informal and formal sectors. Successful micro and medium enterprises can transition into the formal economy and, in turn, create jobs for others, thereby contributing to economic growth.

> Successful entrepreneurial skills development initiatives need to be multi-layered. They usually include scaffolding processes, such as access to finance, links to supportive agencies, local government structures or related businesses, and incubation processes. Training curricula must address a range of competencies, including mindsets, basic financial literacy, and regulatory frameworks, and provide content training linked to the entrepreneurial offering and its value chain. Another critical element is the development of support networks, from peers involved in similar endeavours to phased mentorship throughout training and post-training. While the initiatives showcased in this Learning Brief are based on different models and delivered through several types of providers, they all touch on these elements.

ABOUT THIS LEARNING BRIEF

This is Part 2 of the Learning Series **WORKING TOWARDS AGILE, RESPONSIVE SKILLS & (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA.** The Learning Series is a compilation of four Learning Briefs based on four focus areas identified as critical fields for effective skills development to address youth unemployment.

🔮 DISABILITY INCLUSION

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

DEMAND-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Projects promoting **entrepreneurship and the informal sector** are becoming increasingly important in addressing youth unemployment, given that the informal sector can provide some form of livelihood for those excluded from formal employment. The goal of skills development in this area is to improve prospects in the sector. This can be done by equipping youth with the entrepreneurial skills which will enable them to grow successful micro or small businesses in the sector, and transition to the formal economy if they so wish.

This Learning Brief on entrepreneurship and the informal sector discusses illustrative lessons learned and tips and strategies for different components grounded in programmes, learning experiences and innovations. These are made real provided through skills development engagement.

In this Learning Brief, **The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF)** in Nigeria shows how strategic partnerships can accelerate youth employment opportunities when creatively coupled with practical training approaches.

The Study Tour site visit initiative, **The Ekurhuleni West TVET College Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator** in Johannesburg, presents a strong case for long-term one-on-one business development support and financial backing to maximise business outcomes for SMMEs.

National Youth Exchange Association in Algeria exemplifies how creating a supportive network for small businesses and entrepreneurs can foster a resilient and enterprising spirit in young Algerians.

The Case Study with Discussion Paper on **Recognition of Prior Learning** in Kenya explores various pathways to the informal sector, also known as the *Jua Kali*.

AN **ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

This Learning Brief is framed by recognising that skills development programmes, initiatives and training organisations exist within an ecosystem that can enable or hinder the achievement of their goals. Since there are linkages and connections across the ecosystem, there is a need to create alignment and synergies, work in collaboration and create partnerships.

Understanding this helps skills development agencies navigate and influence their ecosystems for impact. What are the enablers that can unblock the system? How can these be leveraged to replicate and scale good practices? Who are the primary stakeholders that need to be engaged? How can practical contextual barriers to youth PARTNERS employment be reduced?

The six ecosystem components illustrated below are suggested as a starting point for growing this understanding and will be explored in relation to each good practice in this Learning Brief.

ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS

Explore each of these components in relation to a specific programme or intervention. Example topics are given for each.

BENEFICIARY GROUP

nNa

Profiles, needs, pain points. barriers, attitudes

ACCESS

RESEARCH

upply & demand your offering. pertification route

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

ernment agencies a rent levels, funder industry bodies

RESOURCES REQUIRED

ical spaces, Human resources, Equipment, Training Materials, Communication platfor

LEARNING BRIEFS AS A METHODOLOGY

Learning Briefs distil the lessons learned and evidence gathered by people working on the ground. The sharing of evidence-based knowledge, real experiences, case studies, success stories and effective strategies across the continent promotes better planning and implementation of developmental interventions.

Each Learning Brief speaks to one of the focus areas listed above, presenting insights concerning various ecosystem components and practical solutions to problems encountered. Each part of the series is a chance to learn about common and unique challenges and new tools and solutions already being applied by practitioners in distinct public and private sectors across Africa.



THE LAGOS STATE EMPLOYMENT TRUST FUND (LSETF) EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME: FACILITATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR JOB AND WEALTH CREATION

Introduction

The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund focuses on technical and vocational trade training in skills areas which easily translate into entrepreneurial activities and small businesses. Beneficiaries who aim to be self-employed through one of these trades are supported in terms of access to finance, links to potential markets, some work exposure and a relevant starter kit to set up their venture.



The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) in Nigeria was established by the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund Law 2016 to address unemployment and promote entrepreneurship in Lagos State by empowering its residents with job and wealth creation opportunities.

This goal is attained by improving access to finance, strengthening the institutional capacity of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, and formulating programmes/policies designed to improve the business environment in Lagos State. The dual vocational training approach ensures that beneficiaries under the project are provided with job placements and funding opportunities (for those who chose the entrepreneurial route) to practise the acquired skill and knowledge. The LSETF Employability Support Project is an 18-month project designed to help address the unemployment scourge among the youth by assisting them to gain requisite knowledge and skill through vocational training and subsequently helping them get job placements. The project aimed to train 10,000 young people to gain skills in 6 sectors – Manufacturing, Hospitality, Entertainment, Construction, Health and Garment Making- to help place them in line for immediate employment. As of 2022, the first batch of youth trained at eight vocational training centres across the state have graduated.

Lagos State Employability Support Programme's Impact

The programme has achieved significant impacts in supporting the training of young people for the market.



Vocational training centres with access to infrastructure

Supported over

The Challenge

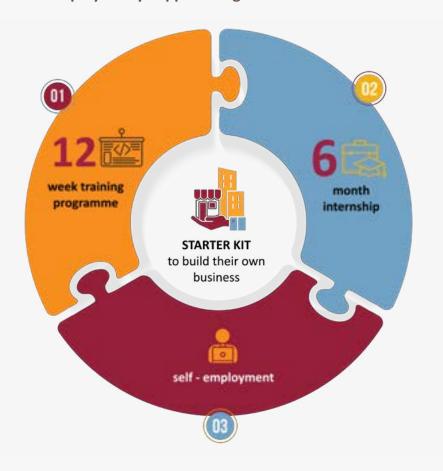
Youth unemployment is a major developmental challenge in Nigeria, with the unemployment rate at 42%, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

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The root cause of unemployment in Nigeria is anchored by the shortage of satisfactory jobs and the fact that job seekers lack the skill required to secure gainful employment in the labour market.

Lagos State Employability Support Programme's Solution

The Employability Support Programme aims to develop the skills and competencies of Lagos State youth across various in-demand trades such as plumbing, fashion designing, beauty, solar installation, agent banking and waste recycling, among others. At the end of the 12-week training period, beneficiaries are placed in internships or given starter kits to start their own business.



How Lagos State Employability Support Programme Works

The 12-week training programme aims to provide beneficiaries with the requisite skills to succeed in a 6-month internship arranged by the programme or, with the assistance of a starter kit, to continue toward a path of self-employment.

An example of this process within the construction sector sees students being trained in masonry, formwork, carpentry, and bar bending courses. Students received hands-on training sessions at major construction sites within the state facilitated by the **Deque academy of design.** Manufacturing courses facilitated by **Gabson Engineering** include mechanical engineering and metal arc welding. This training provides students with critical market-demanded skills allowing them to find gainful employment or start their businesses.

Lagos State Employability Support Programme's Ecosystem: Good Practices

The success of any project is predicated upon various ecosystem components. These include the identification of beneficiaries and their needs, stakeholder engagement, collaborative partnerships, and sufficient resources to meet project objectives. Of particular concern for **LSETF** is fostering collaborative partnerships and effective beneficiary needs analysis to ensure the needs of students are met.

Creating Partnerships

The unique approach to TVET involves a holistic end-to-end pathway from skills to satisfactory jobs. At the programme's inception, consultation sessions were held with a consortium of business partners to support the programme by offering co-development, delivery, and placement opportunities. With inputs from business partners, the programme worked with **Arc Skills**, a globally recognised capacity building and skills solution provider, to develop industry-focused curricula for the various sectors to address the industry skills needed.

To ensure quality delivery of the programme, funding and infrastructure were provided to partner vocational training institutions. The improvement of existing infrastructure and the acquisition of new tools and equipment allowed for quality instruction. The provision of reskilling and upskilling sessions for trainers further enhanced institutional capacity. Lastly, access to decent jobs was embedded into the programme, providing job placement and entrepreneurship opportunities post-training. Working with business partners is invaluable as they offer internships and placements to certified graduates of the programme.

Partnering with the right people and building an ecosystem around what you do is essential. The programme has been successful because they have found partners to match and increase their impact.

Managing Beneficiaries

Listening to what is needed and starting programmes based on the need and the market is vital. The programme was designed with feedback from industry engagement sessions with stakeholders from the six key sectors of the economy. The forum identified job roles with significant skills gaps and guided in developing an industry-relevant curriculum that would empower young Nigerians while providing a skilled labour pool to reinvigorate the Lagos business ecosystem. Through this needs analysis, students are trained for identified needs within the business ecosystem, increasing the potential for gainful employment of students post-training.

Providing budding entrepreneurs access to infrastructure through traditional job hubs is also vital to the programme's success. The hub is a physical location where businesses with similar product or service offerings are aggregated to form a solid synergic ecosystem that serves customers' needs. Three Hubs were identified for the pilot phase of this programme, and are:

- Fashion & Creative hub
- 🕅 Laundry & Cleaning hub
- Catering & Kitchen hub

Through its engagement with key stakeholders and partnerships, the programme can meet the Nigerian market and its beneficiaries' needs. Through its need-driven approach, training within identified fields allows Nigerian youth to develop crucial and market-demanded skills to find gainful employment.

Stories of Success

Sangotayo Gabriel Iseoluwa

Meet Sangotayo Gabriel Iseoluwa, A beneficiary of the Lagos State Employability Initiative

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Lagos State Employment Trust Fund Website
- Training Website
- LSETF/UNDP Graduation Ceremony
- LSESP Testimonials

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & THE REORMAL SECTOR



A LEARNING S



EKURHULENI WEST TVET COLLEGE CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP RAPID INCUBATOR: MOVING YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS FROM JOB SEEKERS TO JOB CREATORS

Introduction

The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator is a flagship programme providing a viable alternative route for TVET graduates. While those with TVET certification certainly have higher employment prospects than those with only a school leaving certificate or less, many still find it difficult to find jobs in the formal sector. This programme links the technical and vocational skills already obtained to entrepreneurial knowledge and skills through the incubation programme, which provides a rich context in which TVET graduates can develop business ideas and start-ups.



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The Ekurhuleni West TVET College is one of the 50 TVET colleges in South Africa funded and maintained for training and upskilling community members with skills and trades needed in industry, manufacturing, and infrastructure development. The college has been hosting numerous novel programmes in artisanry, vocational training and dual trade programmes in the country. The college is host to The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator.

The Rapid Incubation programme allows student graduates an entrepreneurial platform to commercialise their vocational skills and move them from "job seekers to job creators."

The programme seeks to use the skills of TVET graduates to encourage and promote entrepreneurship culture and provide the student incubates with the necessary tools and techniques to establish their businesses, thus contributing to economic growth and job creation.

The Rapid Incubation Programme is part of the Department of Small Business Development's programme to address the issue of youth unemployment in South Africa. It is the first incubation programme in South Africa to offer seed funding to the incubates through structured pitching sessions, for which the incubates can apply.

The Challenge

South Africa's development primarily depends on the industrialisation and the capacitation of its youth's critical and competitive technical and vocational skills and trades. With a population of 60 million, 35% is youth with an unemployment rate of 60% amongst those aged between 20 and 35.

Many small businesses fail because they lack the capital and support to accelerate their business growth. Each entrepreneur's uniqueness can be captured through business incubation, receiving support and customised services to maximise business potential.

The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator's Solution

The college, through its numerous delivery sites, is one of the Department of Higher Education and Training in collaboration with the Department of Trade and Industry's response to the growing issue of unemployment. Through affordable skills and trades, the college seeks to equip those seeking upskilling, trades and vocational training through three different streamed approaches to studying: National Certificates, Nated programmes, short courses

and occupational programmes. Through rigorous training in any of the abovementioned vocations or trades, students are equipped with skills that enable them to either secure employment, create employment or further pursue educational interests of their choice. Through the colleges' quality and risk assurance department, there is a consistent quality education and training for students, the college, and the industry.

Incubators are seen as a powerful tool for supporting Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) growth and various socio-economic needs, such as job creation, technology transfer, reviving economic activities at the local and regional level, poverty alleviation and economic integration of previously disadvantaged groups.

Minister Lindiwe Zulu of Small Business Development launched **The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator** at the college on 14 June 2018. Through the centre, young entrepreneurs, and small business owners from Katlehong and surrounding communities have access to infrastructure, networking, and mentoring. The centre seeks to assist up-and-coming entrepreneurs in overcoming barriers identified in their entrepreneurial journey and reducing youth unemployment. The centre is a source of hope for the people and a tool to fight unemployment, poverty, and inequality. The centre is a partnership between the Small Business Development Department, through Seda, and the **Ekurhuleni West TVET College.** The centre is furnished with state-of-the-art equipment, an ideas lab and a Maker Space and is aimed at providing support to youthowned enterprises, which often have little to no capital or funding. The model has unique support instruments, like idea pitching and polishing, and a dedicated seed fund for viable ideas or business models with good market traction.

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While the Rapid Incubator focuses on the college, it also services all sectors and small businesses in the Katlehong catchment area to unearth innovative ideas and assist business ventures run and owned by the youth.

How The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator Works

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The Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator Ecosystem: Good Practices

Providing Access

Through the provision of in-demand skills and trades, many college graduates can find employment in the abovementioned industries or instead opt for self-employment, having attained the needed skills. This implies better and improved social mobility and the creation of value chains in communities of origin upward. The college's location in the Ekurhuleni metro means a constant demand for vocational and trade-trained graduates. This is due to the heavy presence of the industry in Johannesburg. In addition to this is the college's proximity to other industrial hubs such as Sasolburg and Vereeniging in the South of Gauteng and the Mpumalanga mining and Eskom power production and mining economic corridor. The college serves as a feeder for many manufacturing, industrial, processing, steel works, petrochemical and plants.

Creating Partnerships

The college, its staff and its curriculum are under the regulation and oversight of the Minister of Higher Education and Training. Through youth skilling and training, the college collaborates with the Department of Trade and Industry. This occurs through the provision and attainment of in-demand industry-specific trades and qualifications. The college has collaborated on a joint trial run of a dual vocation programme with the German government and the department of Trade and Industry.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION





NATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION: CREATING A SUPPORTIVE NETWORK OF ENTERPRISING YOUTH.

Introduction

The **Bab El Amel** programme targets an area often neglected (or developed post-training) in TVET and skills development focused on entrepreneurship. This is to harness the power of a network or professional community to provide targeted guidance and technical support to young entrepreneurs. Many networks in skills development for entrepreneurs consist of alumni or peers who connect informally or according to to need; in this example of innovation in this focus area, however, the spotlight is on sharing key information in structured ways to those who aspire to set up microenterprises, and linking them into the relevant network for administrative and technical support and, potentially, further training or employment opportunities

SECTOR

THE INFORMAL

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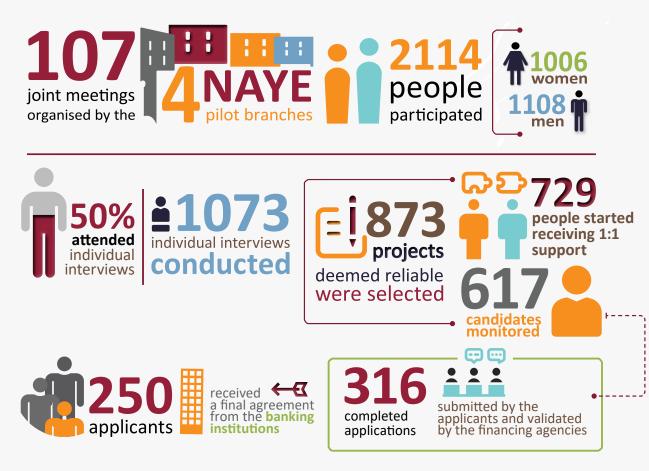
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

LEARNING SERIES:



The **Bab El Amel** pilot project aims to integrate enterprising youth in Algeria into professional networks to support micro-enterprise establishment. Through the provision of seminars and training opportunities, the project, under the umbrella of the **National Association of Youth Exchange (NAYE)** through the support of its partners, aims to address the unemployment of young people under the age of 35 in Algeria.

Bab El Amel's Impact



The Challenge

Despite the progressive policies applied by the Algerian state, youth unemployment is a significant challenge in Algeria. The private and public sectors cannot generate sufficient employment opportunities to meet the challenge of integrating the flood of new entrants into the labour market each year. Official national statistics reflect the extent of young people's vulnerability in the labour market. Additionally, insufficient systems exist to integrate enterprising young people into professional networks.

In Algeria, in 2013, the unemployment rate in the 15-24 age group stood at 24.8%, one in four young people. It affects 21.9% of young men and 39.7% of young women. The phenomenon is all the more worrying socially since 45% of young people aged 15 to 24 are in the labour force or have left the school system to work (10% for young women). Therefore, the 15-34 age represents 82% of the total unemployed.

The Bab El Amel Solution

Initiated in 2011-2012, the pilot project **Bab El Amel** enabled the establishment of a technical support system for young people who aspire to create a micro-business.

The initiative, supported by the **National Association of Youth Exchange (NAYE)**, aims to address the unemployment issue within Algeria through the professional integration of young, enterprising individuals. The **Bab El Amel** project is a nonfinancial reception and support system. Its mission is to identify, inform, and provide technical and administrative support to young people who aspire to create micro-enterprises within Algeria.

The **Bab El Amel** project aims to offer struggling young people with existing projects reception, support, and accompaniment structures. In this way, targeted individuals can be directed towards training courses leading to qualifications or the creation of their income-generating activities. **Bab El Amel**, through a free support-advisory framework, provides beneficiaries with individualised training and mentorship. The project provides aspiring entrepreneurs with training related to the creation of micro-enterprises, assists in the design of reception structures, provides meeting opportunities for beneficiaries to develop strong professional and collaborative networks, and finally ensures the connection of beneficiaries to carriers of projects. The initiative's success has resulted in acclaim from the Algerian community as a novel approach to employment support. The project has reinvigorated the Algerian State's commitment to providing technical support for creating micro-enterprises and considering partnering with and directly funding the project. The success of the piloted project further allowed for the establishment of a sustainable, scaled funding strategy through the grant provided by the Social Development Fund of the French Embassy in Algeria and the financial support of the Fondation De France.

The project has, therefore, provided an opportunity to create income-generating

activities for the Algerian youth and started a national commitment to support professional integration and technical support services for enterprising youth within the country.

On a global level, the project has been able to have its relevance recognised by the public authorities and has contributed to making the NAYE a respected interlocutor. The appointment of the NAYE as a member of the ad-hoc committee for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the resolutions taken during the National Socioeconomic Youth Conference organised by the Ministry of Youth in November 2014 is a good illustration of its success.



How Bab El Amel Works

The Bab El Amel project provides beneficiaries with the technical support required to develop their micro-enterprises successfully.



The Bab El Amel Project Ecosystem: Good Practices

Any initiative's success depends on a range of factors within an integrated ecosystem. It requires the consideration and management of beneficiary needs to access complex stakeholder engagements, collaborative partnerships, and resource requirements. Of particular interest for the **Bab El Amel** project, is **Providing access** and **Creating partnerships**.

Providing Access

The concept of access within the Algerian employment ecosystem is particularly interesting to the **Bab El Amel** project. The project addresses the unemployment of Algerian youth and the lack of technical support and professional integration services within the country. Beneficiaries are provided access to support for developing technical and economic studies to launch their micro-enterprises. The project directs beneficiaries toward existing support mechanisms and provides training and mentorship to ensure that their business plans are effectively drafted for success with financing agencies.

Creating Partnerships

Through partnerships with various financing agencies, the **Bab El Amel** project provides beneficiaries with relevant training and mentorship to prepare them for the development of microenterprises. The expertise provided by the partners allowed for developing training materials pertinent to the needs of beneficiaries and offering quality personalised support to project leaders wishing to compile credit application files.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

National Association of Youth Exchange Website

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DISCUSSION PAPER: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) IN KENYA - TRANSFORMATION IN AN INFORMAL ECONOMY

Introduction

The Jua Kali informal sector predominantly drives the Kenyan economy. 84% of the Kenyan working population is employed in the informal sector. The name Jua Kali, "fierce sun" in KiSwahili, is derived from the thousands of workshops where people manually work on auto parts, furniture, metal wares and handicrafts under the hot sun daily because of a lack of premises. Gradually it came to refer to anybody in self-employment. Kenya has a large reserve and talent pool of informally skilled and trained persons. This pool of workmanship thrives in the Jua Kali. Despite Jua Kali's prolific contribution to the economy, the sector is plagued by systemic challenges that prevent the achievement of its full potential. Challenges include access to the market, access to relevant financial services such as pension and insurance, lack of infrastructure, recognition of learnings, and skills upgrading framework.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has been identified as a relevant tool for addressing the existing shortage of quality skilled workforce. The approach works through the exploitation of the island of untapped potential of the unrecognised, disadvantaged and discouraged skilled persons who acquired competencies through informal and nonformal means but cannot be certified to practice.





Informal SMEs accounted for

83.6% ^{or the} 840.6 thousand new jobs created in 2018. - KNBS 2016, SME Report

Constitute

Overview

This discussion paper is a semi-condensed presentation of findings elaborated through various sources, including Community of Practice presentations, interviews with key stakeholders in the education, private and informal sectors of Kenya, case studies, media reports and additional desktop research to invite discussion and stimulate debate.

Contribute

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This paper includes a series of questions about the role of RPL as a pathway for persons operating in the informal sector to attain sustainable (self) employment while addressing the skills shortage in the formal sector. The discussion questions aim to guide thinking and stimulate engagement amongst practitioners, the private sector, researchers, and scholars who are already active or specialists in the fields intersecting skills development (technical and vocational education and training) and labour to engage in and help shape debate.

The Jua Kali informal sector predominantly drives the Kenyan economy. RPL has proven to be a relevant tool for addressing the existing shortage of quality skilled workforce, and the experiences of the key players in the RPL ecosystem, during the recent piloted phase (2021-2022) highlight some of the successes. It is however vital to also unpack some of the key learnings to spotlight opportunities for further collaboration and engagement by all ecosystem players to reap the full rewards of the new RPL framework.

In the journey to explore RPL as a tool to enable access to viable pathways to sustainable (self) employment in Kenya, this discussion paper unpacks the following vital questions-

- How does the Jua Kali fit into the National Big Four Agenda?
- How can skills involved and utilised in the informal sector be recognised as formal skills and trades, worthy of utility in the formal sector?
- How does RPL work in Kenya? and how does the KNFJKA fit into the ecosystem?
- What can we learn from the KNFJKA members' experiences in the RPL pilot process?
- What are the opportunities for growth and development?

How does the Jua Kali fit into the National Big Four Agenda?

The Government of Kenya prioritised the implementation of the '<u>Big Four Agenda'</u> in the development period between 2018-2022 which comprises Food Security; Affordable Housing; Manufacturing and Affordable Healthcare.

The role of the TVET sub-sector in creating jobs under this agenda is premised on a solid linkage of TVET programs to the informal Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) or *Jua Kali*.

The Ministry of Education's State Department of Vocational and Technical Training (VTT) has initiated dialogue with the KNFJKA and other actors in the informal sector intending to explore targeted collaborations between the informal Jua Kali/MSMEs sector and TVET institutions in teaching and learning to benefit both students and existing workers in the Jua Kali sector.



How can skills involved and utilised in the informal sector be recognised as formal skills and trades, worthy of utility in the formal sector?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process used to identify, access and certify a person's knowledge, skills and competencies acquired in non-formal and informal learning.

This includes work or life experiences matched against prescribed standards or learning outcomes. The process weighs skills and talents used by those involved in the informal sector, without prior or limited formal training, on function, practice, and production to determine the scale and value of work to obtain formal accreditation. This is important as it enables growth in value chain-driven labour and improves access of those in the informal to the formal market. The process further facilitates the upskilling and recognition of labour and value contribution of a population cohort that possesses the capacity to perform work based on informally acquired skills but has never had the opportunity or privilege to obtain formal training or education.



How does RPL work in Kenya?

anchored in the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF). The **10 Level Qualifications Framework** is broadly segmented into four sub-sectors: Basic education, TVET sector, University education sector and Industry/Skills Sector. Under the guidance of respective sector regulators, the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) coordinates these sectors. Through RPL, artisans can get tested in their vernacular language for the

best assessment. The RPL process involves proper assessment and certification of individuals by gauging their skills and relevance in the job market.

In the past, training and assessment systems have predominantly focused on academia, but through RPL, assessment is based on

the individual's ability to solve real-time industry problems. This also ensures a demand-driven approach to skills development in the sector. Additionally, in the past, aspects like expression through English and KiSwahili were heavily weighted in assessment, but over time it has been understood that in addition to language skills, greater focus must be placed on ensuring that those being certified should fully demonstrate the skills being sought by the industry. The assessment process also considers the potential employers' input during upskilling stages to ensure a comprehensive approach. Individuals being assessed must also produce a portfolio of evidence - a package of information given to an assessor from a qualification awarding institution. Artisans are provided with support in the compilation of their portfolios. Moving forward, assessments will consider tests in vernacular languages to get the full scope of the artisans' knowledge and accurate placement

Key Players in the RPL ecosystem

Crucial relationships are at play in skills compliance and trade recognition through RPL. These include but are not limited to:

- The national government through the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour.
- The National Qualifications Authority under the ministry of education and the National Qualifications Framework.
- Kenya National Federation of Jua Kali Association (KNFJKA) and its respective members.
- International Rescue Committee (IRC) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) through the inclusion and refugee lobbying.
- The Private sector through organisations and companies such as <u>Base Titanium</u> that have vouched for the skilling and participation of employees in the program.
- German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Union through the lobbying and fund provision for the standardisation and formalisation of RPL in contexts such as Kenya.

How does the Kenya National Federation of Jua Kali Associations (KNFJKA) fit into the RPL ecosystem?

The Kenya National Federation of Jua Kali Associations (KNFJKA), established in 1992, is the largest umbrella membership organisation representing skilled Jua Kali artisans organised in registered Primary Jua Kali Associations across 18 sub-sectors of the informal sector in Kenya. The members operate in common clusters called work sites across the country. The Federation works closely with The national, regional and continental institutions, including the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Business Council, Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the private sector, civil society, and development partner organisations. Examples of sub-sectors include, but are not limited to, Clay/Pottery crafts, Herbalists and Environmental Conservationists, Automotive Engineering works, and Electrical/Electronics and ICT device repair trades. For a complete list of sub-sectors, visit their website.

> j 1673 registered

Primary Jua Kali Associations

General membership

Impact



artisans

35

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Their main objectives include:

- Protecting, representing, and developing the interests of the Jua Kali artisans in registered primary associations.
- Acting as the primary vehicle for consultation, experience exchange and coordination between donors, Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Non-governmental institutions.
- Promoting in conjunction with other stakeholders an environment conducive to developing a vibrant Jua Kali sector in Kenya.
- Promoting capacity building in management skills among the Jua Kali artisans in member associations through training, seminars, and any other means.
- Sensitising the Government and interested bodies on the needs, opportunities, and responsibilities of the Jua Kali sector.
- Assisting the Government in identifying and reviewing relevant laws that hamper the growth of the Jua Kali sector in Kenya and the East African Community region.

- Providing a forum for the continuous consultation and monitoring of the implementation of Jua Kali programmes and reviewing relevant policy implementation strategies.
- Promoting the formation and registration of primary Jua Kali associations along the clustered industrial sub-sectors and as per applicable guiding policies and legislations.
- Enhancing the participation of women in the Jua Kali sector.
- Facilitating the transfer of appropriate technologies and protecting innovations and inventions by the Jua kali artisans in registered primary Jua Kali associations from piracy and encouraging their commercialisation where possible.
- For more information about the KNFJKA programmes, visit their website.

What can be learnt from the KNFJKA member's experiences in the RPL process?

The KNFJKA has embraced RPL. Collaborating and partnering with the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA), a Qualification Awarding Institute (QAI) on RPL. 400+ members participated in the RPL pilot project between 2021 and 2022. Graduates received a skills certificate from NITA after undergoing rigorous tests and assessments and went through the first-ever graduation for all RPL beneficiaries countrywide in July 2022.

> "The idea behind the Recognition of Prior Learning is to recognise key economic drivers in the country. People who are rich in skills but lack requisite papers."

- Dr Juma Mukhwana, Director General Kenya National Qualification Authority (KNQA)





Experiences & Opportunities for Development

The following table summarises the KNFJKA members' experiences linked with opportunities for improving the RPL process in Kenya.

EXPERIENCES OF MEMBERS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH
Language as a barrier to skills expression: In the informal Jua Kali environment, there is no requirement to know how to communicate in a basic language like English or KiSwahili. Most Federation members have not had the privilege to access or complete basic education and come from significantly marginalised and difficult social backgrounds. This made the language barrier a great challenge.	Conducting facilitation and assessments in vernacular languages
Communication and awareness limiting understanding: There needs to be more awareness about RPL. Many key stakeholders and media members need help understanding the procedure, processes, requirements and standards.	Increasing RPL awareness among the RPL stakeholder ecosystem including Government, scholars, practitioners, industry and potential candidates.



When something is good, everyone wants to join:

Actors are rushing in to seek to be involved. However, without the knowledge that they need to be involved from the point of their mandate. Harmonization mechanism of the education and training sector operating in different Ministries;

Strengthening the RPL legal and institutional frameworks

Integration of the RPL system with the legal framework for the education and training sector and the social-economic policies in the country

Increased industry involvement in the education and training sector in Kenya

A National Skills Development Council to oversee the operations Sector Skill Councils in implementing RPL

The Federation has already started to look for alternative funding opportunities to continue the RPL process.



THE ROLE OF THE TVET SECTOR IN FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Introduction

A Guideline on Fostering Entrepreneurship through the TVET sector was developed by GDI - Global Development Incubator with the support of representatives from GIZ. The guideline highlights the importance of entrepreneurship as a driver of economic growth. It presents a model for fostering youth entrepreneurship looking at how TVETs fit within this model and their role through existing case studies across the continent. Access the complete guideline in English and French.

Entrepreneurship: A critical driver of growth for African economies

Many African economies struggle to integrate working-age youth into waged labour, resulting in graduates seeking employment in the informal sector. TVET colleges present an opportunity to train future entrepreneurs who can sustain themselves and become employers of labour.

A model for fostering youth entrepreneurship that works

There is a significant discrepancy between jobs generated in Africa and the number of individuals entering the workforce (7 to 9 million). TVET colleges aim, through a focus on training students for self-employment or nano-enterprises (1-5 workers), to meet the seven needs of entrepreneurs (developed through the Global Development Incubator):

Access to market information and linkages: Allows entrepreneurs to identify and meet market needs, identify and connect to economic growth areas, form connections with actors along the supply chain, and guidance on the procurement of contracts.

- Skills development: Developing hard and soft skills and providing work-based learning opportunities.
- Access to finance: There exists a financing gap for micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. Entrepreneurs require various financial services, including awareness of financing options available, facilities for making deposits and payments, and opportunities for accessing credit, equity and guarantees. It is also essential that the structure and terms of funding be favourable to encourage entrepreneurship.
 - Motivation and attitude toward
 entrepreneurship: Negative socio-cultural
 perceptions of entrepreneurship must
 be overcome. Additionally, potential
 entrepreneurs must be made aware of
 the practicalities of starting a business
 and developing a long-term business
 orientation.

- Mentorship and access to networks: Access to experienced partners is crucial for developing leadership skills.
- Personalised coaching and technical assistance: Provides entrepreneurs with support regarding the day-to-day challenges of starting and maintaining a business.
- Favourable policy and regulatory environment: Successful entrepreneurship requires an environment that supports business creation. Administrative burdens should be kept at a minimum, requiring a policy and regulatory framework which is easy to navigate.

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Where do TVETs come in?

TVETs are considered one of the most practical solutions to the employment gap, providing graduates with the necessary skills to start their businesses and providing training for future entrepreneurs. This is supported by the African Union's Continental Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Strategy. TVETs cannot meet all entrepreneurs' needs. This requires buy-in from a variety of actors.

- Policy: requires execution by national governments, the AU and RECs.
- Finance: requires engagement and execution by the diaspora, private equity funds, business angels, donors, and development banks.
- Human capital: actors include primary and secondary schools, universities, and TVET institutions.
- Support services: actors include donors, foundations, NGOs, startups, hubs and incubators.

The goal is to ensure that all TVETs include entrepreneurial training within current programmes and to launch and scale an integrated suite of support. TVETs cannot deliver their full promise through training alone and organisational and programmatic changes to unlock their full potential. Three such contributions have been identified:

Deliver: TVETs must deliver specific interventions themselves, capitalising on their direct engagement with entrepreneurs and their primary expertise in training. Courses should provide technical and practical skills related to particular fields and financial, accounting, and management skills required to start a business.

Coordinate: TVETs should coordinate stakeholder efforts to ensure collaboration and synergy. Leveraging stakeholder connections to meet the identified entrepreneurial needs is crucial.

Advise: TVETs do not have the authority to influence the outcomes of various processes. Where this is the case, TVETs should play an advisory role, and other actors (such as the government) must take responsibility for their actions.

Access the <u>complete guideline</u> in English and French.



LESSONS LEARNT, TIPS & STRATEGIES

This Learning Brief has been written for practitioners and policymakers interested in good African practices, successes, and lessons learnt regarding **Entrepreneurship and the Informal Sector** in the context of "Working towards agile, responsive skills and (self) employment ecosystems in Africa."

Your perspective might be that of a policy maker, a training provider, a researcher, a funder, an implementer, an evaluator, or a beneficiary in the key thematic and intervention areas identified in the **Continental Education (CESA)** and **Continental TVET Strategies.**

This section draws lessons from the experiences of initiatives and programmes highlighted in this Learning Brief for application in your varying contexts. With an appreciation of the challenges, stories of success, research and observations shared by practitioners across the continent, lessons are generalised for ease of replication. Building on these lessons, the section further provides a set of tips and strategies that you are encouraged to apply to your context where possible.

LESSONS LEARNT

Partners

Solid partnerships can ensure buy-in and collaboration from industries, companies in the private sector and trade associations to create a true pathway - from the classroom to employment or income generation.

Creating an ecosystem within the larger skills development ecosystem is key. It is this network of key contributors (such as high-level government partnerships, institutional and business partnerships, and international donors) that can allow for success.

Access Required

A physical Hub where youth working in different trades can meet supports **sharing of services** and strengthens entrepreneurial capacity.

Appropriate physical location near industrial hubs works as an enabler for ideas generation and uptake.

The programme needs to provide **varied forms of support**, ranging from pitching skills to mentorship to physical resources such as equipment.

Beneficiary Group

For young entrepreneurs, information needs to be mediated. Structured, planned and facilitated workshops are the best ways to help youth understand the factors that will impact their enterprises.

> Simply providing the information is not always sufficient. Follow-up activities help beneficiaries use what they have learned to their own contexts, whether his is to apply for credit or to link into other forms of support such as funded training.

Promote success by providing strong support to entrepreneurial start-ups; support need not be limited to finance only.

Research

In support of **entrepreneurship in the informal sector**; it is best to focus on vocational training in trades easily managed by a micro-enterprise. This means conducting research about what works and what does not work.

Tracking of participants from start to finish of the programme and beyond provides data to inform future incubator models and further skills development interventions in entrepreneurship.

Key Stakeholders

The success of a pilot project needs to be widely shared so that funded upscaling can happen.

Resources Required

Long-term investment in small business development programmes is a condition for success and impact. Programmes need to offer different forms of support at different phases, in order to ensure that a sustainable business is created.

TIPS & STRATEGIES

Formalising entrepreneurial training and skills development by embedding these programmes in public institutions allow for greater government engagement, public funding, and upscaling.

Entrepreneurial training programmes that create sustainable impact are usually integrated, long-term interventions. Entrepreneurial skills are not successfully internalised in stand-alone programmes delivered in isolation from a context in which they can be applied. Some features of successful programmes include

- Embedding training in entrepreneurial behaviours and foundational skills (such as financial literacy or business management competencies) in a specific vocational or industry context.
- Running entrepreneurial modules in tandem with technical training.
- Moving beyond theory modules to practical application and delivery within a project or an incubation model.
- Allowing sufficient time for ventures and start-ups to progress through different stages, given that there are different things to be learnt as a micro-enterprise or incubated venture evolves.

- One of the most important outcomes of any intervention aimed at promoting entrepreneurship is to enable youth to access what they need for success. This includes access to market-related information, to supply chain contacts, to potential partners or to financing options.
- Successful programmes use a number of **different mechanisms** to promote understanding, application and know-how in entrepreneurship. These include handson training, mentorship, personalised coaching, and setting up opportunities for relevant work-experience which can then be transferred to the entrepreneurial context.
- Government needs to be drawn in to provide enabling policies and incentives for the development of micro-enterprises in the informal sector.
- For skills development in entrepreneurship to show meaningful impact at scale, a range of key stakeholders need to be involved in active partnerships. This includes government at national and local levels, the private sector, employer and industry bodies, the formal and nonformal training delivery providers, local and international donors, and professional bodies and networks.

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National Youth Exchange Association

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The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) team for organising and facilitating the dialogue and knowledge sharing event.

The Learning Brief also draws from expertise and knowledge sharing through case studies, webinars, and research papers.

A Guideline on Fostering Entrepreneurship through the TVET sector





DA-NEPAD



A LEARNING SERIES

WORKING TOWARDS AGILE AND RESPONSIVE SKILLS AND (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA

A Systems Approach to Addressing Youth Unemployment

LEARNING BRIEF 3 GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE







JDA-NEPAD IN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

A Compilation of Learning Briefs Spotlighting Innovation, Impact, Tips & Strategies

LEARNING BRIEF 3 GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE



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CONTENTS PAGE

ACRONYMS



A LEARNING SERIES: GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE-CHANGE

SETTING THE SCENE: GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN AFRICA

It is vital to spotlight the importance of work-based learning and vocational education and training to increase the participation of women in occupations where they are currently underrepresented, to foster entrepreneurial skills and to raise awareness on skills development opportunities to empower girls and women.

Within the crisis of high youth unemployment across the continent, women face additional challenges. Whether trying to get access to education and training or working in various contexts in the informal sector (most frequently in subsistence agriculture in low-income countries), women and girls typically combine these activities with a disproportionate share of other responsibilities. These include chores such as cooking and cleaning, childcare and care of others in the household.

In addition, women and girls have several socio-cultural and systemic obstacles to navigate. In many African countries, decision-making may still be vested in the men in the family, and young women

have to give in to certain expectations about their roles (such as early marriage). For those women with an entrepreneurial bent, systemic challenges due to their gender may include difficulties in getting loans or legalities around ownership of resources. While many countries have enabling policies regarding female empowerment, there is frequently a gap between policy and implementation. Finally, there are contextual factors, such as physical safety issues (for example, when using public transport).

For these and many other reasons, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) defines the gendertransformative approach as

> "actively questioning and critically analysing established norms and gender stereotypes and focusing on dismantling existing structural inequalities" to "transform unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and support for women's empowerment"

ABOUT THIS LEARNING BRIEF

This is Part 3 of the Learning Series **WORKING TOWARDS AGILE, RESPONSIVE SKILLS & (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA.** The Learning Series is a compilation of four Learning Briefs based on four focus areas identified as critical fields for effective skills development to address youth unemployment.

😭 👘 DISABILITY INCLUSION

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ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR

GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

🔮 👘 DEMAND-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Gender-Transformative Change takes its place in the series as a critical economic lever in effective skills development policies and practices for economic growth. Young women make up a significant percentage of unemployed youth; and girls and women play a central role in family stability and progress in education and opportunity for the next generation. Ensuring that women can become employed or generate income in sustainable ways that increase their confidence and independence can only benefit all of society.

The initiatives discussed in this Learning Brief recognise the need for an integrated approach to women empowerment through skills development. Technical skills are essential, and the conditions under which these skills are exercised are equally so.

This Learning Brief will explore and discuss efforts of gender-transformative initiatives implemented across Africa, specifically **Gender makes Business** Sense (GmBS), The Youth Empowerment System (YES) in Burkina Faso, The Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) in Malawi and a panel discussion from a webinar hosted by GAN Global on gender-transformative approaches in the world of work.

The Gender Makes Business Sense (GmBS) programme uses partnerships to ensure female trainees' access to finance and markets. The Youth Empowerment System (YES) programme has made its traditionally more male-oriented TVET offerings in sectors such as construction more attractive to girls and women. The Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) programme provides on-site and accessible training with equipment to its beneficiaries, and the panel discussion covers gender-transformative skills development from several angles, focusing on digital empowerment.

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AN **ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

This Learning Brief is framed by recognising that skills development programmes, initiatives and training organisations exist within an ecosystem that can enable or hinder the achievement of their goals. Since there are linkages and connections across the ecosystem, there is a need to create alignment and synergies, work in collaboration and create partnerships.

Understanding this helps skills development agencies navigate and influence their ecosystems for impact. What are the enablers that can unblock the system? How can these be leveraged to replicate and scale good practices? Who are the primary stakeholders that need to be engaged? How can practical contextual barriers to youth PARTNERS employment be reduced?

The six ecosystem components illustrated below are suggested as a starting point for growing this understanding and will be explored in relation to each good practice in this Learning Brief.

ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS

Explore each of these components in relation to a specific programme or intervention. Example topics are given for each.

BENEFICIARY GROUP

nNa

Profiles, needs, pain points. barriers, attitudes

ACCESS

RESEARCH

upply & demand your offering. pertification route

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

ernment agencies i rent levels, funder industry bodies

RESOURCES REQUIRED

ical spaces, Human resources, Equipment, Training Materials, Communication platfor

LEARNING BRIEFS AS A METHODOLOGY

Learning Briefs distil the lessons learnt and evidence gathered by practitioners working on the ground. The sharing of evidence-based knowledge, authentic experiences, case studies, success stories, and practical strategies across the continent promotes better planning and implementation of developmental interventions.

Each Learning Brief speaks to one of the focus areas listed above, presenting insights concerning various ecosystem components and practical solutions to problems encountered. Each part of the series is a chance to learn about common and unique challenges and new tools and solutions already being applied by practitioners in distinct public and private sectors across Africa.

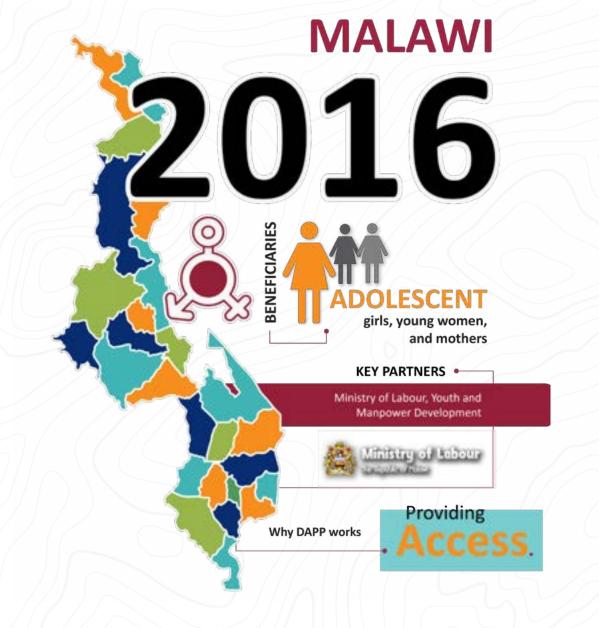
A LEARNING SERIES: GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE-CHANGE



DEVELOPMENT AID FROM PEOPLE TO PEOPLE (DAPP): VOCATIONAL TRAINING ON THE GO FOR YOUNG WOMEN

Introduction

This initiative targets one of the most challenging barriers to effective skills development: access. Many youths in remote rural areas don't have access to TVET institutions, other training centres or the means to travel and stay outside their areas for study purposes. This is especially true of girls, who may be more closely tied to home duties. In addition, they may not even know the opportunities that might exist for them as they lack access to information. By taking the training and required equipment into the community through its mobile facility, DAPP has broken through this barrier.



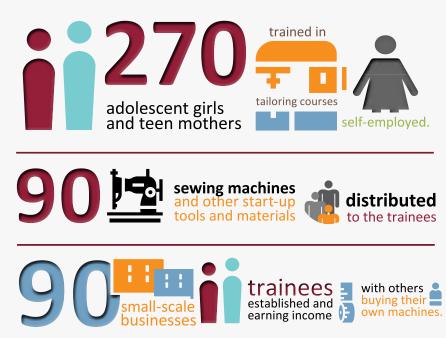
Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) is a local non-government organisation (NGO) and a founding member of the Federation Humana People for People network, which comprises 30 organisations globally. Priority areas are selected and implemented based on a

needs assessment and available capacities. Working on four focus areas: agriculture, education, community development, and health, DAPP draws on its Humana Network to provide local support for amplified impact.

DAPP has taken the vocational concept further through its Mobile Vocational Workshop, whereby a truck modified to become a mobile classroom, workshop, office, accommodation space and storeroom is used to reach its beneficiaries. Instructors are deployed to the villages in remote areas where they conduct training sessions in the truck equipped with various training resources.

Together with local structures, they agree on selection criteria and marketable courses. Youths are then enrolled according to these agreements.

DAPPS Impact



The Challenge

Malawi ranks as one of the poorest countries globally. In addition to the economic challenges that the country faces, gender inequality continues to be a systemic issue. Approximately 42% of girls are married before age 18, with many experiencing the

disparities in pathways towards women's economic empowerment first-hand. Young people with potential live in poverty and remote areas, lacking opportunities to access training information and work. Many drop out of school. This sets up a cycle of exclusion from skills development and income-generating opportunities. By engaging women and girls in consistent skills development, the initiative aims to accelerate development dividends across the initiative's fields of expertise.

DAPP's Solution

The mobile vocational training unit seeks to contribute to rural women's economic empowerment by developing the technical, entrepreneurial, and vocational skills that enable them to venture into profitable and sustainable income-generating activities. The **DAPP** mobile training approach was designed to include hard-to-reach youth in economic activities. Mobile training targets vulnerable rural youth without formal education, adolescent girls, teen mothers, child-headed families, and orphans.

The mobile training workshop offers training in the most underserved districts in the southern region of Malawi.

Every four months, the mobile unit moves to a new village. By design, the workshop is not only a centre for vocational skills training but also a mini youth and community centre connected to a solar-powered system, beamer, five laptops, internet dongles, computers, and a TV.

Women and girls are invited to meet at the centre after training and benefit from the facility, enjoy educational films with the community, discuss matters that affect them and get inspiration.

How DAPP works

The training process runs for four months, delivered through the mobile vocational training unit in the village's centre. Presented in English and local languages, the training includes practical activities, entrepreneurship lessons, business management and setup, teamwork, financial literacy, and industrial attachments with local artisans. Following the training, beneficiaries are expected to form a team of three individuals to set up a joint business, supporting each other until they expand and can operate independently.



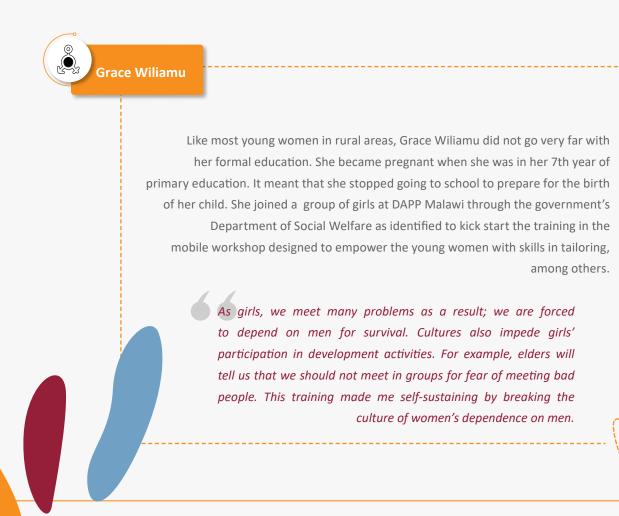
DAPP's Ecosystem: Good Practices

The project's success depends on various **ecosystem** factors, including **funding**, **stakeholder involvement**, collaborative **Creating partnerships**, and **Providing access to resources**. Access is the critical element in **DAPP's** approach.

Providing Access

Mobile vocational training reaches the most vulnerable and marginalised young women, and mothers through providing tailor-made vocational skills training curricula with local industrial attachments in hard-to-reach areas. The unit goes straight into the village and community, removing barriers to access such as transport. In many cases, villagers would not have access to information about such training outside their boundaries. Quality training is made free, so women and girls who often do not have access to income can receive skills that can change their lives. Access to work is also ensured through the attachments provided to training participants. Given an unreliable electricity supply in rural Malawi, DAPP has installed solar panels on the mobile unit to allow training to occur without interruption. Laptops, the internet and even TV in remote areas are inaccessible. While the unit is present, trainees and other community members can enjoy access to these devices and the benefits they bring.

Stories of Success





ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Development Aid from People to People Malawi Website
- Youtube Video: About the Mobile Vocational Truck



A CASE STUDY: GENDER MAKES BUSINESS SENSE (GMBS) - AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP THAT WORKS

Introduction

At the heart of the **Gender makes Business Sense (GmBS)** initiative is the focus on women empowerment, embracing behavioural change as well as a comprehensive range of practical skills and support for female entrepreneurs. In its broad scope and systemic approach, this programme addresses all elements of the skills development ecosystem. This is a mature initiative that has built on previous iterations, and has added innovation and scale through its transition to an e-learning programme.



Gender makes Business Sense (GmBS) is based on humancentred design and anchored in a holistic process that explores business development skills and mindset, culture, and belief systems regarding gender. The GmBS e-learning course is an interactive capacity development journey for entrepreneurs that enhances their understanding of business plus an integrated gender dimension to thrive with a new mindset.

The course is based on the GmBS face-to-face training programme, which has been evaluated and rolled out in six African countries, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Togo. The GmBS face-to-face training was about Gender-Transformative Change, tackling power relations at the root causes systematically, by demanding behavioural change at various levels and stages, not only from agripreneurs but also from policy actors in national ministries and GmBS facilitators in the field.

GmBS' Face-2-Face Programme Impact



The Challenge

Women's economic empowerment is essential for inclusive growth in Africa. Yet, women are disproportionately represented in decision-making, business, and high-income value chain segments. Additionally, ALL entrepreneurs face challenges, including access to capital and markets. Often, female entrepreneurs face additional constraints because they are women. Social norms and access to networks, among other things, can prevent them from growing their business. For this reason, it is crucial to address gender constraints in entrepreneurship.

Gender makes Business Sense's Digital Solution

The GmBS e-learning course equips African entrepreneurs with practical business management skills, financial know-how and an understanding of the socioeconomic impact of gender dynamics in their business. Participants, both women and men, will benefit from the business development and empowerment aspects of the GmBS e-learning course and will:

- Learn how to make more strategic business decisions that are cost-effective and collaborative.
- Appreciate the socio-economic impact of gender dynamics in their business and communities.
- Apply the Business Model Canvas to visualise the critical building blocks of their business.
- Develop a sustainable business growth plan that takes gender-transformative approaches into account.
- 🖞 Learn how gender-transformative change can be beneficial for their business.

Entrepreneurs who take this course start making more inclusive, collaborative, cost-efficient, strategic, and gender-transformative business decisions.

How the GmBS E-Learning Course Works

The **GmBS** e-learning course is a 5-module asynchronous e-learning course that combines user-friendly and engaging content with the digital format allowing a transformational learning experience using various interactive multimedia.



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GmBS's Ecosystem: Good Practices

The success of any project is dependent upon and influenced by various ecosystem components, including access to resources and support, beneficiaries, stakeholders, and collaborative partnerships. Within the scope of GmBS, Providing Access to users is crucial to ensure the initiative's success.

Providing Access

In 2021, **GmBS** embarked on digitalising its face-to-face training into an e-learning course. On the ground, the gender-transformative training programme was implemented by the Agriculture Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Women (ATVET4W) in Africa project in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Togo. When vital capacity-building programmes developed for face-face learning were affected by the onset of COVID-19, **GmBS**

> decided to go digital and expand to include entrepreneurs from sectors outside of agriculture. The asynchronous 5-module e-learning course is accessible via various online platforms, including AUDA-NEPAD's <u>Aspyee</u> and <u>Atingi</u>. Considering the programme's richness, creating a flexible e-learning course for different contexts with different means and budgets was vital. The goal was to reach the learning objectives while keeping the content user-friendly and engaging. To achieve this, the GmBS team did more than transfer the learning content into a digital format; with the help of instructional design experts, they carefully reimagined the content for a self-paced and transformational learning experience for users.

Stories of Success

Gender Makes Business Sense — Success Stories from Togo

A practical capacity development journey for entrepreneurs in Togo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUQCb5mT6Ps



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Women's Empowerment in Entrepreneurship YouTube video
- Gamifying Gender Transformative Change YouTube video
- Using the Business Model Canvas YouTube video
- GmBS e-learning Course signup



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SYSTEMS (YES): VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING FOR VULNERABLE YOUTH IN MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

Introduction

The YES initiative identifies and addresses a critical gap in Burkina Faso's skills development ecosystem. Burkina Faso's TVET system is weak and inefficient, and does not provide enough effective, practical, and technical training programmes that lead to the employment of successful entrepreneurship. YES has developed trade courses for the construction industry, which fosters employability. The most striking feature of this initiative is its sensitivity to its beneficiaries, the youth, particularly women, who would not enter and continue in standard TVET or other training programmes due to their extreme lack of resources. YES addresses basic daily living needs and provides for their study needs.



Youth Empowerment Systems (YES)'s Vocational Training and Recognition of Prior Learning programme is a training tool that addresses the root causes of instability, forced displacement and irregular migration through improved economic opportunities and access to equal opportunities for the youth and young adults, particularly for women. The combination of technical and life skills training allows the programme to contribute to national security and development.

Youth Empowerment Systems (YES)'s Impact



The Challenge

In Burkina Faso, national policies are struggling to meet the demands of the youth regarding access to productive and sustainable dignified employment. Young people, especially the rural and non-literate, suffer from administrative isolation, leading to a lack of access to vocational and career alternatives. Young womenin the local context are often victims of cultural selection. They are denied access to school because families choose to educate the male child, making many underage girls' victims of forced marriages, domestic violence, exploitation, and human trafficking.

In Burkina Faso, a third of school-age children and youth – approximately one million girls and boys – do not have access to education. Only 39.35% of the adult population is literate.

A LEARNING SERIES: GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE-CHANGE

Many of these youth become idle, making them more susceptible to exploitation.

In Burkina Faso, there is low and inequitable access to education, misaligned, irrelevant, or obsolete curricula and poor learning outcomes, inadequate education financing by the government and private sector, weak education system capacity, and a flimsy link with the world of work. Most of the youth and young adults in vulnerable, rural communities cannot read or write in English, as education is delivered in the medium of communication in Burkina Faso, French.

The education system and curriculum expose huge disparities and system dysfunctionalities and inefficiencies in education sub-sectors such as pre-primary, technical, vocational, and informal education, which are severely underdeveloped. Furthermore, education and training programmes suffer from low-quality teaching, inequalities, and exclusion at all levels. Despite a failure to create job opportunities coupled with the high demand for labour in the primary and secondary sectors of the Burkina Faso economy, the school curriculum remains skewed towards the tertiary sector, which is concerned with services and administrative management, ignoring the immeasurable potential for the primary, and

secondary sectors of the economy that focus on the extraction and production of raw materials and manufacturing and processing.

There is a disproportionate distribution of educational investment between primary and higher education in Burkina Faso. Substantial investments are directed towards higher education, yet more than 90% of children started in Grade 1 do not attend university. If priorities are not shifted towards allocating effort and resources toward root causes of socio-economic challenges like primary education, youth will continue to find alternatives to education; They will continue to become idle and left vulnerable and susceptible to rebel radicalisation, human trafficking, and illegal migration.

Youth Empowerment Systems (YES)'s Solution:

YES identified Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as the best alternative to formal schooling. TVET, however, for individuals, can be financially burdensome to access as the acquisition of training tools, equipment, and materials are expensive for the youth that need TVET the most. To mitigate the challenge of poor access to education, YES, through The Centre de Formation Professionnelle en Construction (CFPC), offers affordable, inclusive education through its training activities and professional training centres.

The YES Construction Vocational Training Centre promotes decent, freely chosen, fully productive, and sustainable work, for peace, social cohesion, and community resilience.

YES provides free, high-level training for the job market. Programmes are geared towards restoring the learner's dignity before preparing them for the job market. During training, learners are provided with personal safety equipment, a toolbox, health coverage, food, clothing, and lodging.

Learners spend 80% of the training time in equipped workshops and 20% learning French, financial management, occupational health, and safety, and Computer-Aided Design And Manufacturing. Women receive a 'dignity kit' consisting of wash towels, soap, a bucket, and sanitary wear.

> Each cohort works on a building project for the centre. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) tests are conducted for learners who have skills in building trades but do not have the certification that allows them access to decent and sustainable jobs. The duration of the tests varies according to the field and is available according to the productions envisaged by the centre.

At the end of the training, each learner receives a Diploma from the Burkina Faso government, a skills passport that facilitates their mobility, and an installation kit that allows them to become self-employed.

YES also encourages their attendance at an annual job fair.

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In 2020 **YES** welcomed their first batch of girls and women into their short-term electrical wiring programme, targeting school dropouts from impoverished backgrounds and women facing social and economic problems with no opportunity to make a living, even babysitting their children so the mothers could learn quietly. Many of them did well and are now fully employed with decent jobs.

How Youth Empowerment Systems (YES)'s Works





Youth Empowerment Systems (YES)'s : Good Practices

Resources Management

YES has found a creative way to make TVET education affordable and more sustainable. Based on the 80% practical and 20% in-class approach, each cohort works on a building project for the centre. It is mandatory for trainees in woodworking, welding, and masonry to present their projects at the end of training. At YES, trainees must complete a furnished building with windows, chairs, tables, and shelves after two years.

Identified as the best training centre in the Plateau Central Region, the centre sits on a 4-hectare piece of land with a fully equipped woodwork, welding, and masonry workshop, all built by students, a truck that acts as a mobile training unit, a concrete mixer, compactor, and heavy-duty welders. Their first cohort of learners designed and built classrooms; others built houses for the teachers and staff. They have found this is the wisest way to use materials; instead of wasting cement and sand, they sustainably use them so the learners can practise.

> "We inform partners that they need materials for the students to do welding. We invest materials into the building, and the students learn on-site and on the job. It is a win-win process."

Providing Access

Some villages in Burkina Faso lack adequate infrastructure or even school classrooms. Many learners study under trees or in a room made of grass.

In some cases, classrooms came into disrepair. The YES team goes into villages and observes what is required or needs to be repaired. Their truck is fully equipped with all the tools and equipment necessary to build and repair schools or clinics. When they made a youth centre, instead of bringing in professional masons, they went in with a trainer. But before that, they conduct a recruitment drive through radio campaigns via community radio stations informing the community they are coming to train youth and women in construction, tiling, roofing, electricity, painting and solar. Ten students per trade are selected. Learners are trained in the morning and apply what they learn in the afternoon. Each training cycle can run for up to 3 months when the building is ready to be used. If the building needs to be furnished, welders are trained. Each trainee receives a certificate from the centre, and after being evaluated by the Ministry of Youth and Vocational Training, they receive a qualification with a certification.

Stories of Success

😡 Kologo Alice | Assistant Electrician

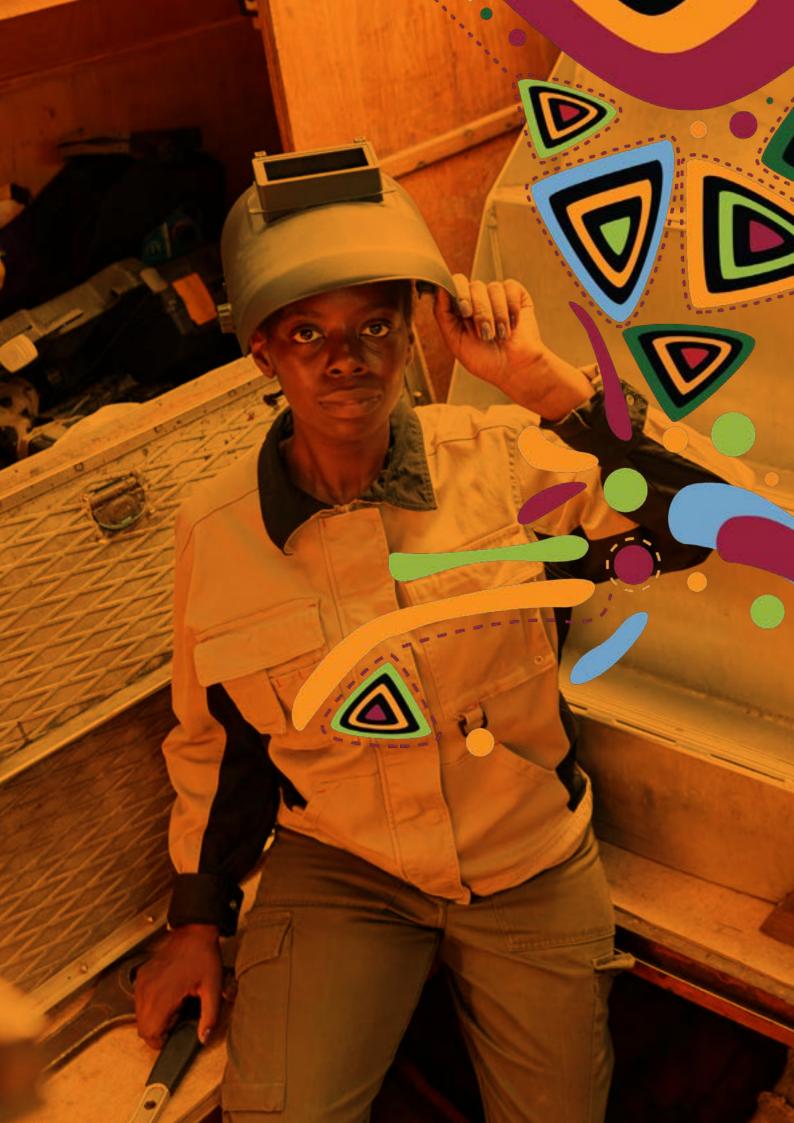
I stopped schooling in 2015 because I did not do well, and my parents could not afford to pay the fees; as a mother, it is not easy to resume school or attend a training centre for an entire year. Sometimes I get depressed at the thought of not having a diploma that can give me a job. I was home every day, and it was not a good feeling. One day I was listening to the radio and heard about the centre and the electrical wiring programme. I quickly applied for that short-term Programme I was interested in, and luckily, I was enrolled. I got trained, and I loved what I learnt. I dreamed of learning how to go up on poles to do the wiring. After the training, I recruited my classmates to work as assistant electricians at the new airport. Thanks to the centre, I now make a living, and I am able to take care of my family and my parents. I want to encourage girls in the construction trades because it can help them in the future. Zonga Wendalassida | Masonry

My father has seven wives and 33 children. Some of us went to school, but in grade 3, I stopped school because my father refused to pay the fees. My father has preferences for boys' education. I realised I would not go to school anymore because my mother is so poor and cannot pay for me to return to school. My next option is to wait for a man to marry me. It felt like the only option. Getting married without having a decent job to take care of myself and my children, I was sure that I would be a victim of domestic violence. When I heard about the centre, I chose to join Masonry. Being here at the centre is a real blessing, and I am thankful the centre has impacted my life, and I am happy to go there every morning. We got uniforms for free; we do not pay to study here, we are fed every day free of charge, we are clothed, and we have safety equipment. I am thankful to the leaders of the centre



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Together We Make A Big Difference YouTube Video
 - Youth Empowerment Systems Website



IN CONVERSATION - DRIVING GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES FOR AFRICA: PATHWAYS TO THE INFORMAL SECTOR

Introduction

The <u>African Union</u> and <u>AUDA NEPAD</u>, through SIFA and <u>GAN Global</u>, hosted a webinar on driving gender-transformative approaches for Africa: Strategies to empower women in the world of work through vocational education training on 28 July 2022 at 11:00 (CAT). The webinar highlighted how the <u>AU Commission, AUDA-NEPAD</u>, through SIFA and <u>GAN Global</u> members, with the support of funders and partners, are continually pursuing opportunities to increase and sustain African women working in STEM.

*Watch the webinar here

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SIFA-led Gender Transformative programmes - Lessons from the Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education and Training for Women (ATVET4W) Programme

Ms Sara Jabril | Technical Advisor Skills Initiative for Africa-ATVET4W

"Let us link gender transformative approaches and women's empowerment because, through gender transformative activities and projects, we aim for women's and girls' empowerment. As a project, when we started to conceptualise different activities in the partner countries, we found this framework especially useful - the Reach-Benefit-Empower framework or principle, to distinguish what we mean when we talk about empowerment. Reaching Women Does not Always Result In Empowerment

The distinction between Reach, Benefit and Empower points out that simply reaching women, for example, by including them in meetings or training, does not necessarily ensure that they will also benefit from increased income.

For example, a woman attends training and receives a certificate; how do we assess whether there is a benefit? As a result of having gained additional skills and certification, she can now negotiate for a higher wage. And then that crucial last connection to empowerment - as even if there is a benefit, it does not always mean that there's also empowerment or positive empowerment outcomes.

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The ideal situation is that the woman increases her income, and there is an expansion of choices, such that she has the agency to decide what she wants to do with that additional income or what she wants to invest in. The question is, does she have access to land and other opportunities? This is a valuable basis for distinguishing what we aim for when discussing empowerment, specifically in skills development.

The Four Domains of Empowerment

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Strategies for Improved VET Transitions for Women

We work with rural women with limited educational experience in six countries, mainly young women already in or desiring to enter more formal TVET offers in agriculture. Very crucial for gender-transformative change, we ensure that men and community leaders with decision-making power and agripreneurs and role models are active participants. To conceptualise empowerment, we found it helpful to think about it in four different domains or questions, starting with the individual one, which is about self-belief and agency. It is essential to increase self-confidence and help women feel like they can go out there and achieve more. Then on the relational level, which is all about power dynamics and decision-making, and is often connected to the household level and the different dynamics. Then systems and structures are critical as well. When we talk about the policy level - how can we empower, safeguard, and support the position of women through different policies and laws? And the fourth domain, the socio-cultural domain, which is all about challenging norms and stereotypes, which can take a long time to influence"



PANEL DISCUSSION: SHOWCASING CASE STUDIES

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The Case for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Laura Schmid- Skills and Employability Representative (Gender focus), International Labour Organisation (ILO)

"Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is sometimes the stepchild in the education system because higher education and primary education do get a lot of the focus and resources. There are also excellent reasons for this. However, being German and having seen how a Technical Education and Training System, if it is well done, can produce young people with excellent chances to enter the labour market, it makes obvious sense to look into and invest in technical education and training in Africa.

The AU has produced but not yet published an Africa-wide review of technical educational Education and Training. It is an analysis of different policies and a collection of best practice examples where countries have managed to reform and restructure their TVET system. The ILO is in the process of a standard setting looking at quality apprenticeship. Many tools have been produced to measure quality apprenticeship- there is a volume and a guide for practitioners. There are also some practical manuals on increasing the quality or inclusion of apprenticeships.

Demand-Led Skills Development with a Gender Lens

Very often, there is a divide between what the labour market needs and what the technical and vocational training providers offer, ranging from curricula to machinery to training advice that is not related to the industry and cannot train the youth according to the industry needs. There is a growing approach to bring the industry and the TVET providers closer, looking at different sectoral skills and skills participation forms. There is also intra-company training - a technique where, for instance, big companies, which very often have their training centres train trainees from smaller medium-sized companies in the local labour market in their training centres because those training

companies very often do not have the means to prepare the youth for the labour market.

TVET is still not gender-equal. This has multiple reasons - some social and stereotypical - that it is blue collar labour and is not suitable for women like being a plumber, electrician, or technician. Suppose females join the TVET system or education system. In that case, you will very often find them either in the caretaking professions, beauty hairdressing or textile sewing machine operation, so, in our time, it makes sense to think about how we can push this forwardwhat can you do as development partners and governments to support young girls and women to enter different fields with better prospects for the labour market.

The Work of the ILO

On the one hand, we have worked with awareness-raising campaigns targeting parents, having open days at the TVET Centres. We have just done a solar and photovoltaic electrician training programme in Somalia. We have also looked at women's constraints regarding safe and secure transportation to the facilities, adequate changing rooms, and adequate treatment. We have worked extensively on supervisory skills training inside factories and collaborating with those so-called master trainers. Many in supervisory roles are still men and are confronted with many young female trainees, so we have done gender-sensitive training. We have also done some classical programmes, such as in Egypt, where we work with scholarships for rural women to access TVET and to go to technical universities to look into more stem-based careers." Reaching Rural Communities and Empowering Women Through Access to Technology

Winnie Karanu, Philanthropy Lead for Sub-Saharan Africa, Microsoft

Ensuring Digital Inclusion for Women and Girls

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When it comes to skills development, TVET can be a tool to bridge the continent's unemployment gap and solve Africa's unemployment crisis.

At the level of the African Union, there is already a continental TVET strategy, and it has a strong focus on youth employment. It considers concrete recommendations to address policy challenges and gaps that constrain the implementation of programmes for skills development on the continent. The main objective of this strategy is to promote skills acquisition to training, responding to the demand of the social and economic value it plays in fostering employability, sustainable livelihoods, and responsible citizenship.

That is why it is about more than just giving skills; it also ensures that the trainees have a safe place in society. Another priority is to position TVET within the education system as a tool to empower African people, especially the youth. It is key to Brand TVET in a way that ensures that parents know that it is a valid road for students to take. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people were displaced in the economy. So, there was a need to think about how some jobs are being created while others are disappearing and the role of Microsoft Team to help people get back to work and partnering to help job seekers gain their skills for in-demand roles in a module economy. We care about this as Microsoft - empowering every person and organisation on the planet to achieve more is core to everything we do.

How do we ensure everyone has the skills, knowledge, and opportunity to succeed in this digital economy? At Microsoft, we believe that when your technology changes the world, you bear the responsibility to help address the world you have helped create and accept greater responsibility for the future.

The Work of Microsoft

When you think about the adoption of technology and digital transformation, there have been many changes in how we work, interact with each other, and think about work.

We have been looking at it from 3 primary areas: There's a global economic crisis, an aspect of returning to a different economy, and an intensified skilling challenge.

Microsoft launched the global skilling initiative as a response to the Skills Gap and set a goal of a million job seekers being trained. Many people needed to be upskilled and reskilled to be able to participate in the economy. To scale this, we created partnerships with the private and public sectors and non-profits. We also look at the kind of jobs we connect people to and ensure they have access to role-based training and not just broad-based training.

We have a couple of programmes focused primarily on women, for example, the women's textiles initiative, a partnership between Microsoft and a tech non-profit. Soon our Islamic Development

Bank is joining us to be able to drive this programme where we want to train five million girls and women from the age of two years old on excellent digital skills so that we can connect them to available jobs. We will do so through fellowships, boot camps, master classes and open days. We are trying to involve the industry as much as possible.

We also have a programme called Microsoft Leap. We look into sourcing for non-traditional, highly diverse candidates; this could be women who left work to take care of their responsibilities at home. We take them through an intensive program for up to six months, where they are trained to become senior Software Engineers. Through our many programmes, we have seen women's lives being changed." How Improving Connectivity is Enhancing Women's Empowerment Efforts in Africa

Mamello Selamolela, Managing Executive for Group Strategy and Innovation, Vodacom

"When we think about digital skills and inclusion, as Vodacom, we start with our purpose - 'we connect for a better future.' A key pillar in connecting for a better future is inclusion for all. At the societal level, specific prerequisites need to be in place for technology to create a better future for citizens on the continent and women in particular.

The first of these is affordable access to technology. If people cannot access the technology and they cannot access basic connectivity, then they are unable to participate in the benefits and opportunities presented by technology.

A starting point is the fundamentals around connectivity. We are collaborating with partners across the continent in all the markets where we operate to ensure that we are doubling down on investment in rural coverage. We know that women in rural areas are disadvantaged if they do not have or enjoy technology's benefits.

Investing in rural coverage

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So, we are investing with partners in rural coverage, increasing the availability of affordable devices, and making access to the internet more affordable. This creates the foundation for ensuring that people across the continent and women can access technology's benefits.

Over the next three years, we aim to connect a million more women across the continent and in the Middle East to affordable technology.

People will then be able to use our financial services solutions targeted at micro, small and medium enterprises, which levels the playing field for female entrepreneurs to access opportunities. Access digital financial solutions, the types of education and awareness that help them improve their businesses, grow their businesses, and increase employment and wealth.

Female Farmers Programme

Another example is our Female Farmers program. We know that agriculture employs a massive portion of the population in some African countries, and women disproportionately conduct subsistence farming. So, our investment in female farmers tends to have an amplified impact on society. When we go in and provide digital skills training to female farmers to be able to use the basics of technology - from word processing to financial skills, we're able to take them from that basic level of awareness and training and plug them into our connected farmer platform that gives them access to markets, better-priced inputs and outputs so that they can have more control over the commercial aspects of their business.

Making Education More Accessible with TVETs

We also partnered with the education sector, and one of our initiatives was partnering with universities and TVET colleges to make education more accessible during the lockdown and that, of course, was entirely dependent on technology. An unexpected benefit is that female students are now more able to access content from the safety of their own homes, improving their educational outcomes without compromising their physical safety. Where previously they would have had to be on campus to access this content, they can now do that more flexibly."



LESSONS LEARNT, TIPS & STRATEGIES

This Learning Brief has been written for practitioners and policymakers interested in good African practices, successes, and lessons learnt regarding **Gender-Transformative Change** in the context of "Working towards agile, responsive skills and (self) employment ecosystems in Africa."

Your perspective might be that of a policy maker, a training provider, a researcher, a funder, an implementer, an evaluator, or a beneficiary in the key thematic and intervention areas identified in the **Continental Education (CESA)** and **Continental TVET Strategies.**

This section draws lessons from the experiences of initiatives and programmes highlighted in this Learning Brief for application in your varying contexts. With an appreciation of the challenges, stories of success, research and observations shared by practitioners across the continent, lessons are generalised for ease of replication. Building on these lessons, the section further provides a set of tips and strategies that you are encouraged to apply to your context where possible.

These are selected and generalised from the initiatives for Gender-Transformative Change described in this brief.

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LESSONS LEARNT

Research

Review and adaptation of programmes is enriching and should be based on monitoring and evaluation of the rollout of different versions of the programme in different countries and contexts. Use feedback from these experiences to adapt the training programme and share innovations in subsequent versions.

The curriculum needs to include **practical ways of addressing systemic blockages** faced by women.

Beneficiary Group

Peer support is effective in business development. The TRIO system of setting up three youths as business partners can work well. Partners encourage each other, encounter problems, find solutions together, and share responsibilities, including marketing and developing a saving culture, as the business is not individualised.

Promote an **entrepreneurial mindset.** Entrepreneurship is a critical component in the mindset change of trainees. They are motivated to become their own bosses and do away with the old ideology that they must attain skills to be employed: instead, they focus on gaining a skill to engage others. It is crucial to develop the idea that youth can be their own change agents and that seeking employment at companies should not be the only reason to get into vocational skills training.

> Student recruitment and retention in the programme for severely impoverished and disadvantaged groups can only be ensured by offering a full range of support. This includes access to the practical training from within their communities, provision of training equipment, and assistance with basic living needs.

The various **skills learnt need to be integrated** into a project with a concrete outcome.

Formal recognition through certification is important for trainees for industry acceptance.

Access Required

Access to training is vital. Regardless of their educational background, all youth have the potential to attain a skill, but they need access to that opportunity. Mobile training is a solution as it reaches everyone.

Post-training support is essential. Many youths trained in the formal or informal sector remain idle without participating in economic activities in line with what they learnt. Start-up tool kits help trainees create and find work.

Access to an e-learning programme needs to be enabled by as many different platforms as possible. Content also needs to be accessible, by making sure that the material is relayed in easy to understand language and helpful instructional design.

Partners

Duplication of effort can be avoided by including partner institutions in ongoing dialogues around lessons learnt, in order to develop useful gender guidelines that grow awareness in both training and employment contexts.



TIPS & STRATEGIES

- Awareness-raising strategies need to be part of Gender-Transformative Change in skills development. This includes making some of the barriers faced by girls and women explicit, as well as addressing gender stereotypes around the kinds of work women can or should do. It could also include raising the profile of TVET as a desirable route towards employment.
- To reach marginalised target groups, training needs to be embedded on site and in the community - whether this is through mobile facilities or ensuring connectivity for any online training. This not only enables access, but can also create buy-in from the community.
- The benefits of the project need to be made visible and communicated - to beneficiaries, to partners, to employers and to any other stakeholders. Visibility might be shown through concrete outcomes, such as trainee products or achievements which can be showcased; or through the sharing of quantitative impact data to interested stakeholders.

- Post-training follow up and support has been shown to increase the chances of trainees remaining in employment or sustaining their income-generating activities. This can take various forms, but a supported network of alumni who can offer advice and guidance, and even potential collaboration, works well.
- Monitoring and evaluation of programmes, including the gathering of feedback from all partners, is essential so that review and adaptation can lead to improvements and scaling up of programmes.
- Gender-responsive skills development needs to engage with systemic barriers to female employment or income generating activities, and offer guidelines on how to address these.





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Youth Empowerment Systems, Burkina Faso

Site visit organisations that opened their doors for knowledge exchange and sharing.

The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) team for organising and facilitating the dialogue and knowledge sharing event.

The Learning Brief also draws from expertise and knowledge sharing through case studies, webinars, and research papers.

- Case Study: Gender makes Business Sense, Agricultural Technical Vocation Education Training for Women (ATVET4W)
- Webinar Panellists: Driving Gender-Transformative Approaches for Africa: Strategies to Empower Women and Girls in the World of Work through TVET
 - Ms Sara Jabril, Technical Advisor Skills Initiative for Africa-Agricultural Technical Vocation Education Training for Women (ATVET4W)
 - Laura Schmid- Skills and Employability Representative (Gender focus), International Labour Organisation (ILO)
 - Winnie Karanu, Philanthropy Lead for Sub-Saharan Africa, Microsoft
 - Mamello Selamolela, Managing Executive for Group Strategy and Innovation, Vodacom





JDA-NEPAD



A LEARNING SERIES

WORKING TOWARDS AGILE AND RESPONSIVE SKILLS AND (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA

A Systems Approach to Addressing Youth Unemployment

LEARNING BRIEF 4 DEMAND-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA



JDA-NEPAD IN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



A Compilation of Learning Briefs Spotlighting Innovation, Impact, Tips & Strategies

LEARNING BRIEF 4 DEMAND-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA



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	Corporate Social Investment
	Global Business Services
	Non-governmental Organisation
	Non-profit Organisation
	National Youth Development Agency
	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
	Return on Investment
	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMMEs	Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

SETTING THE SCENE: DEMAND-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

The labour market is the point at which the supply (of workers who can provide skills and services) and demand (from employers regarding the skills and services they need to grow a business or sector) for jobs converge. The supply side pipeline, elates to education and training pathways that prepare people to become economically active. The demand side relates to the fields, technical and professional skills sets and characteristics that different business and industry sectors require from their workforce, as well as the availability of jobs in a particular context.

One significant reason often cited for the high number of unemployed youths across the continent is the mismatch between supply and demand. In the skills development arena, many interventions (including formal TVET systems) focusing on youth in need have had to pay more attention to the demand side. This has given rise to several issues, such as industry dissatisfaction with the competence of new job entrants or an over-supply of graduates or workers in fields with few positions. Recognition of these problems has led to recommendations (for example, from the World Bank) for creating integrated programmes which will bring together demand-side interventions such as new job creation with supply-side training programmes. Another way of looking at demand-led interventions has been focusing on the development and support of entrepreneurship, leading to small enterprise developments that may become employers. The labour market needs a supply of work-ready and employable youth with appropriate competencies and entrepreneurial know-how to be absorbed into the economy.

> In the real world, this means that the supply side (e.g., skills development providers, their beneficiaries, and their sponsors) and the demand side (e.g., public and private industry bodies and employers) need to share information, consult, and work together in several areas.

Examples include:

- Making sure that training curricula, learning outcomes and technical skills match industry needs, occupational standards, and/or the needs of potential customers.
- Making sure that infrastructure, equipment, and technical resources are up to date.
- Making sure that students who proceed through any programme get marketable recognition or certification.
- Ensuring that the training is linked to work experience, internship, or job opportunity.

ABOUT THIS LEARNING BRIEF

This is Part 4 of the Learning Series **WORKING TOWARDS AGILE, RESPONSIVE SKILLS & (SELF) EMPLOYMENT ECOSYSTEMS IN AFRICA.** The Learning Series is a compilation of four Learning Briefs based on four focus areas identified as critical fields for effective skills development to address youth unemployment

- DISABILITY INCLUSION
- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE INFORMAL SECTOR**
- 🔮 🔰 GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

DEMAND-LED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Demand-led skills development is generally recognised as a crucial goal for those tackling youth unemployment. TVET and other skills development programmes specifically orientated to ensure that their graduates can access gainful and secure employment need to be responsive to the demands of the labour market for workers with specific knowledge, skills and competencies as well as the necessary workplace attributes and behaviours. An employer-aligned, demand-driven approach helps businesses in all sectors find and develop the right employees to innovate and increase productivity.

This Learning Brief on demand-led skills development discusses illustrative lessons learned and tips and strategies for different components grounded in programmes, learning experiences

and innovations. These are made real through inspiring success stories of how beneficiaries have taken forward the opportunities provided through skills development engagement.

The projects described in this Learning Brief speak to the above and more.

Generation Kenya co-designs its programmes with its employer partners and youth beneficiaries.

Harambee in South Africa is notable for its systems-led approach, working with a vast network of public and private partnerships for various purposes and focusing on connecting youth with employment opportunities.

Yes4Youth in SOuth Africa is a business-led collaboration, providing beneficiaries with digital support and taking a multi-layered approach by giving youth access to various and potential small ventures.

Finally, the **Webinar Dialogue** covered in this Learning Brief provides a range of critical insights into demand-led partnerships in different contexts.

AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

This Learning Brief is framed by recognising that skills development programmes, initiatives and training organisations exist within an ecosystem that can enable or hinder the achievement of their goals. Since there are linkages and connections across the ecosystem, there is a need to create alignment and synergies, work in collaboration and create partnerships.

Understanding this helps skills development agencies navigate and influence their ecosystems for impact. What are the enablers that can unblock the system? How can these be leveraged to replicate and scale good practices? Who are the primary stakeholders that need to be engaged? How can practical contextual barriers to youth employment be reduced?

The six ecosystem components illustrated below are suggested as a starting point for growing this understanding and will be explored in relation to each good practice in this Learning Brief.

ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS

Explore each of these components in relation to a specific programme or intervention. Example topics are given for each.

BENEFICIARY

nNa

Profiles, needs, pain points. barriers, attitudes

PARTNERS

For specific resources, technology, work placements, subsidies

ACCESS REQUIRED

To markets, to information, to transport, to support

RESEARCH

Policy & regulatory environment, data on supply & demand on your offering, certification routes

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Government agencies at different levels, funders, industry bodies

RESOURCES REQUIRED

Physical spaces, Human resources, Equipment, Training Materials, Communication platforms

LEARNING BRIEFS AS A METHODOLOGY

Learning Briefs distil the lessons learnt and evidence gathered by practitioners working on the ground. The sharing of evidence-based knowledge, authentic experiences, case studies, success stories, and practical strategies across the continent promotes better planning and implementation of developmental interventions.

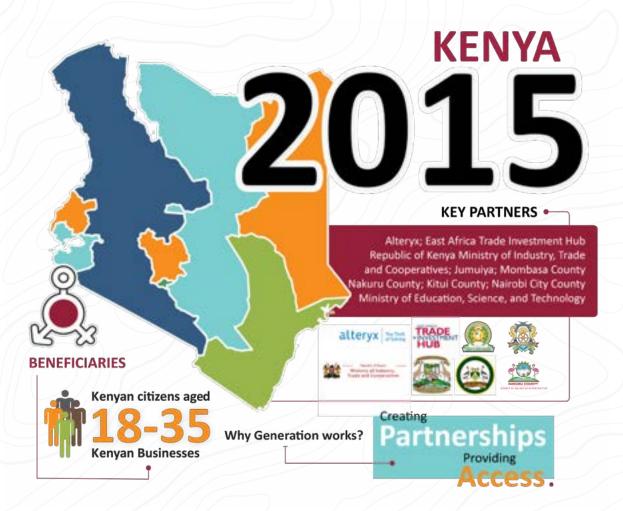
Each Learning Brief speaks to one of the focus areas listed above, presenting insights concerning various ecosystem components and practical solutions to problems encountered. Each part of the series is a chance to learn about common and unique challenges and new tools and solutions already being applied by practitioners in distinct public and private sectors across Africa.



GENERATION KENYA: PREPARING, PLACING, & SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO LIFE-CHANGING CAREERS

Introduction

This initiative fulfils the central requirements of demand-led skills development in that it explicitly seeks out the voice and participation of employers when developing its strategy, designing its curriculum and carrying out different stages of implementation. The active partnership approach results in high-quality outcomes for both employer and employee.



Generation has a unique approach to skills development, sourcing, training, and energising recruits with a combination of skills and attitudes to create immediate value for their business partners. While collaborating with employers to customise programmes based on specific needs, the organisation also carefully tracks graduate performance to revise and improve its programme curricula and methodology. This raises the return on investment (ROI) that employers get from recruiting and training. New hires operate at higher productivity, with longer retention and faster speed to promotion.

Generations' Impact

The impact of the Generation programme can be observed from both a learner and employer perspective.

Learners: 24,378 0% of graduates learners graduated are employed within graduation rate since 2015 90 days of programme completion **75%** at Retention - x4 increase in earnings at 180 days 3x industry average **Employers**:



The Challenge

Employers face various problems concerning entry-level jobs — difficulty finding skilled talent, lack of on-the-job performance, and high turnover in essential roles. Additionally, many employers struggle to find entry-level staff who combine the right technical skills and personal attributes.

Kenyan youth aged 18-34 are 63% less likely to be gainfully employed than those over 35.

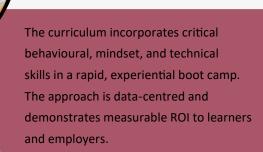
Multiple factors have caused poor employment outcomes, including TVET programmes that still focus on training alone as the "silver bullet." It is recognised that a more comprehensive approach to skills development is needed to overcome obstacles in the employment value chain.

Generation's Solution

Recognising that a more integrated approach is required to overcome issues in the employment value chain.

Generation focuses on awareness of the skills mismatch between the labour market and employer needs as a foundation for the project. In addition, its 7-step methodology brings an integrated approach to skills development by offering preparation, placement, and support for young people into life-changing careers that would otherwise be inaccessible.

> **Generation** stands apart because programmes are co-designed with employers and youth to (a) address specific employer needs/pain points; and (b) understand specific challenges that youth face, including the kinds of additional psychosocial support they might need while securing decent work opportunities post-training.



Generation matches supply and demand through collaboration with various employment partners, designing and securing vacancies. The recruitment and screening process is

Operation

industries

designed to select learners based on their motivation and demonstrated personal commitment. The programme delivers high-quality blended training to youth, with the addition of experiential and career readiness modules to improve training and the transition to employment. The various partnerships further allow **Generation** to place students in employment whilst providing lifelong mentorship and support. The data-centred approach allows **Generation** to demonstrate its return on investment



Stewards

Service

Freelancing

How Generation Works

Generation has achieved this impact using their 7-step methodology:



Generation's Ecosystem: Good Practices

A project's success depends on various ecosystem factors, including funding, stakeholder involvement, collaborative partnerships, and resource access. Creating Partnerships and Providing Access are the two critical elements in Generation's approach.

Creating Partnerships

Generation has partnered with 280+ employers since its establishment in 2015. It has successfully developed collaborative relationships with county governments and 300+ public-private partnerships that enable Generation to scale within the existing skilling ecosystem to align with the context in which it operates, supporting sustainability.



Generation Kenya and Liberty Eagle

Liberty Eagle, Subway's Kenyan franchise holder, targeted rapid growth—but it struggled to find recruits with job-ready skills and management potential. Generation helped solve that problem: today, around 40% of Subway's local staff are Generation graduates. According to Subway, hundreds of young Kenyans apply to join Subway each week. But most do not know what it means to have a full-time job and do not understand the demanding standards. Only two or three of every 100 job-seekers make it through Subway's recruitment process—wasting precious HR time. That changed when the company partnered with **Generation**, whose graduates have a greater success rate in Subway's interviews.

Generation graduates are also more likely than other recruits to stay with Subway. In the fast-food industry, high turnover is bad: new employees do not know the systems, are uncomfortable talking with customers, and need training. Employees handle a lot of cash daily at Subway's sandwich shops, making theft a strong temptation. But Generation graduates have a high degree of honesty and integrity. **Generation's** close-knit network encourages ethical behaviour. Just 18 months after Subway first partnered with **Generation**, several graduates have already been promoted to managerial positions—helping the company to fill most of its supervisory roles from within. Recognising the value that **Generation** has created for Subway, the company was one of the first partners in Kenya to agree to contribute financially to every graduate it employed.

Providing Access

Through a comprehensive approach to employment intervention, Generation identifies the skills mismatch between the labour market and employer needs and addresses this by bridging the education gap by preparing, placing, and supporting people into life-changing careers that would otherwise be inaccessible. Through collaborative partnerships, Generation provides its beneficiaries with training, job pavement, and support services. Access to these services and resources has proven successful for both beneficiaries and employers.

Stories of Success

Judy's Story

Generation Kenya - Judy's Story

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Generation Kenya



HARAMBEE: ACCELERATING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND TECHNOLOGY

Introduction

At the core of **Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator's** work is the recognition of a major irony relating to the South African economy: that it has one of the highest youth unemployment rates on the continent, but that there are numerous entry-level jobs which remain unfilled. Employers are often hesitant to hire 'first-time' applicants with low or even medium educational achievements, complaining that they are not work-ready and lack some of the foundational competencies, soft skills and attributes required. At the same time, young job-seekers from disadvantaged backgrounds often do not know where or how to look for work in effective ways: they have few networks, may lack access to information, and become discouraged.

One of Harambee's main goals is to match the entry-level needs of their business partners – across a range of economic sectors – to a developed and supported network of high-potential job seekers. In addition, Harambee represents another vital feature of good practice skills development: agility and responsiveness to changing situations and contexts. Demand-led skills development has also come to mean understanding the future of work, which is not limited to formal, contractual employment. Harambee has grown in scope and offerings to prepare its beneficiaries for disruptions in the world of work, and for other types of opportunities for income generation.

SOUTH AFRICA



KEY PARTNERS

arambee works with several partners in the public and private space as well as NGOs and NPOs.

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For a full list of partners, please visit their website.

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Conducting Research

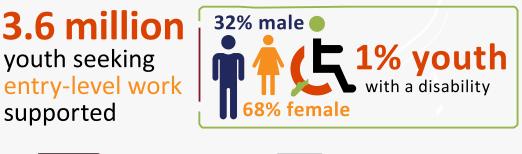
BENEFICIARIES

What makes Sightsaver's IT Bridge Academy work?

Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator is a not-for-profit social enterprise that accelerates youth employment by partnering to break barriers and unlock jobs. Harambee addresses youth unemployment through partnerships - connecting job-seeking young people with companies across South Africa.

Harambee's Impact

Who is in SA Youth:





R17.2 billion \$ income earned since inception

The Challenge

Youth in South Africa continue to be disadvantaged in the labour market, with an unemployment rate higher than the national average.

According to the **Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS)** for the first quarter of 2022, the unemployment rate was **63,9%** for those aged 15-24 and **42,1%** for those aged 25-34 years, while the current official national rate stands at **34,5%**.

Although the graduate unemployment rate remains low in South Africa compared to other educational levels, unemployment among the youth continues to be a burden, irrespective of educational attainment. The unemployment rate among young graduates (aged 15-24) declined from 40,3% in 2020 to 32,6% in 2021. However, unemployment has increased by 6,9% to 22,4% for those aged 25-34 years in the first quarter of 2022.

Of the 1 million youth seeking to enter the labour market annually, two-thirds will not end up in education, employment, or training (NEETs) within a year. In South Africa, there is also a slow growth economy with young people locked out of the labour market due to the barriers they face. Even though there is a high investment in education and training programs, youth transition into earning is limited.

Harambee's Solution: A Pivotal Role in South Africa's National Youth Employment Strategy

Harambee collaborates and coordinates its efforts across public, private, and social partnerships such as the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention - a comprehensive response to the challenge of youth unemployment in South Africa.

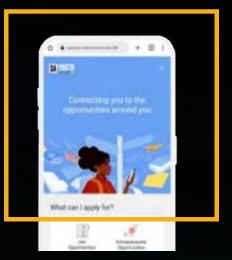
With its partners, **Harambee** co-creates solutions to unlock new jobs in growth sectors, such as jobs in the digital space and Global Business Services (GBS).

> Harambee also provides young people free access to all their learning and earning opportunities through innovative technology such as the <u>SA</u> Youth platform.

> > **Harambee** operates in the following four key focus areas to solve youth unemployment through partnerships:

- SA Youth: The connective platform of the National Pathway Management Network for youth to access jobs and services – for free! A network of networks – government, business and civil society partners working together to find learning and earning opportunities for youth through technology designed by Harambee. They use innovative technology to accelerate youth employment by unlocking & aggregating jobs and making them visible and accessible to youth.
- Coordinating the National Pathway Management Network: As pathway manager of the National Pathway Management Network, Harambee supports public, private and civil society partners to pull together and work collaboratively.
- Pathway intelligence: Harambee's access to information allows it to disseminate and collate data and insights to equip itself and its partners to reduce the barriers that exclude young people from the labour market.
- Solution design: Harambee designs, tests, and scales impactful and sustainable solutions to youth employment.





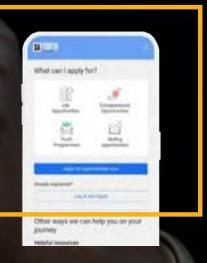
How Harambee Works

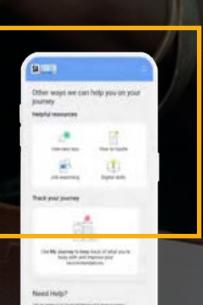
Go to <u>SA Youth</u>

Have your Identification, address, and postcode ready > Select your needs and start networking

<u>SA Youth App</u> also includes the following for all its free subscribers:

- Interview app
- How to hustle
- Job Searching
- Digital Skills





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The Harambee Ecosystem: Good Practices

Any initiative's success depends on numerous factors within an integrated ecosystem. It requires the consideration and management of beneficiary needs to access complex stakeholder engagements, collaborative partnerships, and resource requirements. Of particular interest for the **Harambee** Foundation is **Providing Access, Creating partnerships** and **Conducting Research**

Creating Partnerships

To address the multi-layered issue of youth unemployment, **Harambee** takes a systems design approach, partnering with networks of private sector companies and matching them with youth for training, mentorship, and career development.

Harambee is built on partnerships and was founded by a group of South African businesses that partnered with the government and many others to hold a solution to youth employment that could work on a big scale, as everything starts with where the opportunities are for young people - partners who have a real need. After utilising research and insights to understand exactly what is needed, they actively select and match the candidates with the best chance of success in that work opportunity. The young person is placed successfully when they find a match that works.

Notable partnerships include work with:

- SA Youth: A national network that consolidates capacity development and job opportunities.
- Tshepo 1 Million Youth Employment: A Gauteng Provincial Government initiative that seeks to accelerate youth development dividends by creating and supporting skills development, entrepreneurship, and job placement.
- Digital Work Accelerator: A collaborative effort by government, industry leaders and civil society to scale up work in virtual spaces.
- Digilink: A service which connects potential employers with entry-level applications seeking to learn more about the digital space.



Providing Access

Simply accessing the SA Youth mobile application and signing up to the network of employers and recruiters - by presenting a South African Identification Number, or valid permit status, a physical address, and a postal code, youth residing in South Africa can access a network of learning and work opportunities in their respective area. It is a 100% free opportunity for young, unemployed South Africans to help them connect to work through numerous services and work readiness training opportunities. **Harambee** manages the SA Youth network. The most impressive innovation is that <u>sayouth.mobi</u> is zero-rated on MTN, Vodacom, Cell C, Telkom and Rain networks, meaning no Wi-Fi or data is necessary to access that network platform.

In addition to the SA Youth application database, **Harambee's** role as pathway manager for the National Pathway Management Network, and the work they do in pathway intelligence, provides limitless access to profiles and attributes an excess of 3.6 million young people

> people living all across South Africa seeking opportunities to organisations in public, private and civil society spheres.

Conducting Research

One of Harambee's key strategies is to conduct continuous broad-based qualitative and quantitative research, looking at both the demand and the supply side of the employment ecosystem. Research findings

allow them to regularly update information on their employers and recruiters as well as the demographics and behavioural patterns of potential employees. As an ecosystem facilitator, rigorous research ensures that they are providing accurate, timely and responsive support.

Examples of research Harambee has conducted include a study where they commissioned <u>Genesis Global Business Services</u>, Knowledge Executive to conduct a survey and mapping process. They facilitated interviews from April to July 2020 via outbound calls and online surveys with C-level decision-makers, including CEOs, COOs, CIOs, CTOs, ICT/Technology Directors/Managers, HR Directors, and Heads of IT and Operations Directors. These respondents represented organisations across fifteen key vertical markets (e.g., automotive, banking and financial services, construction, education, global business services (GBS), insurance, healthcare and medical, manufacturing, media and publishing, public sector/government, retail and e-commerce, technology, telecommunications, travel and leisure and utilities.)

This enabled them to:

- Authenticate and rank the most in-demand roles in the digital and technology space in South Africa.
- Validate pockets of excellence, skills and talent in the country and where stakeholders need to reskill, upskill and future skills in order to scale and grow to meet the demand.
- Quantify the type and nature of digital and ICT work and services being outsourced by South African businesses to other foreign countries.
- Map digital and ICT job roles against specific competencies, skills and specialisations.

Stories of Success

Segametsi Songwane | A Hustlers story

Impact stories like that of Segametsi Songwane embody what the Harambe initiative endeavours to achieve. Segametsi, a chemical engineer by training, was allowed to pitch her idea for a range of antibacterial sanitisers to the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) through the Tshepo 1 Million programmes, effectively launching her entrepreneurship journey.

Segametsi Songwane's story



First impressions matter, and clothes are essential to that first impression. Since 2014, Harambee has been collecting donations of interview-appropriate clothes to help candidates make a great first impression in a job interview. Over 5,000 young South Africans have benefitted from the clothes donated.

Smart Works Video

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



- Harambee Knowledge and Research
- A toolkit and case study for growing sectors inclusively
- Systems Change (2021-2026)



YES4YOUTH: SAYING YES TO SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT JOURNEYS

Introduction

Yes4Youth is an example of a demand-led skills development initiative that responds to identified skills gaps in partner businesses, as well as helping companies to fulfil broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) requirements. An innovative feature is the Youth Hub, a centre for new business ideas linking youth with potential industry partners.

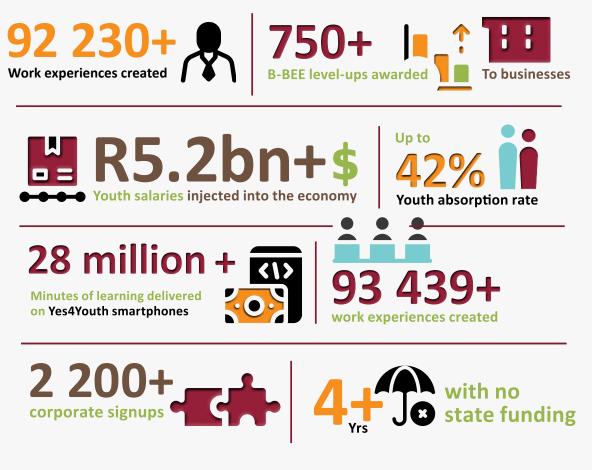


Yes4Youth is a business-led collaboration that seeks ground-breaking ways to reignite the economy and give youth a dignified first chance through innovation and technological best practices.

As a youth employment and business incubation programme, Yes4Youth achieves this by providing an employer-host, a smartphone, extensive youth support, mentorship, and skills development. The programme also supports businesses meeting skills deficits within their supply chains and BBBEE upscaling.

The **Yes4Youth** 12-month quality work experience equips unemployed youth with a toolkit to be a beacon of hope for their families, households, and communities. The CV & reference letter they get at the end of their 12 months gives them a 3 x greater chance of an interview call-back in employment pursuits.

Yes4Youth's Impact



In 2022 64% of South African youth, specifically those aged 20 to 35 (40% of South Africa's population), were unemployed.

This figure does not consider the many young people who have given up looking for employment. Given the significance of the first job in the career trajectory of one's life, the first job is critical in determining the employability and success of individuals. Many of South Africa's young people do not realise the reality of a paid designation. This has debilitating effects on the country's economy and creates a limited tax base, leading to a narrow customer base and thus stunting economic growth and increasing crime and social issues. The COVID-19 pandemic made a dire situation even harder to address as global economies were halted into a recession.

Yes4Youth's Solution

Conceived and launched in 2018, Yes4Youth is an NGO that exists to respond to the youth unemployment crisis in South Africa. By taking advantage of a pre-existing skilled and semi-skilled youth labour base, Yes4Youth links unemployed youth with organisations, institutions, and businesses for employment experience and opportunities.

Employee hosting takes place over 12 months through a thoroughly curated skills exchange and building contract. The employed youth gain on-the-job experience, a smartphone for the programme, mentorship, and a reference. The partnering employing organisations get the opportunity to constantly monitor and evaluate internal systems processes and operations as they are responsible for imparting relevant, industry-required knowledge, good practices, and hands-on experience to developing employees.

The young trainees gain valuable skills and expertise for better employment opportunities, improving value chains in host companies by providing extra support and BBBEE upscale.

Yes4Youth Hubs

Yes4Youth Hubs connect youth and the community to global good practices in training and technology, primarily located and designed to address barriers to youth employment, entrepreneurship, and economic inclusion. The hubs provide access to the market for businesses – getting products, services, and technologies into the hands of the fastestgrowing market in South Africa.

A range of activities occurs at **Yes4Youth** Hubs, enabling innovation and a crosspollination of ideas, seeding points for new business. Participants who register at the Hub can access networks, training, markets, work opportunities, ideas for careers or new businesses, and the necessary partner support to increase their career prospects, start their businesses or actualise that idea they have been nestling. Youth exuberance coupled with access to networks, markets and industry inputs is fuelling and facilitating ingredients for SMMEs to develop and thrive. SMMEs are the biggest generators of jobs, which is why Yes4Youth Hubs work to attract a disruptive cocktail of ideas and resources to encourage, nurture and support small businesses.

Together with like-minded partners and corporate funders, Yes4Youth Hubs deliver a host of programmes that include a basket of digital courses, textile manufacturing centres, ceramics labs, creative agencies, small business support centres, drone programming, culinary academies, beauty therapy, biodegradable sanitary pad production, 3D printing labs, and urban farming.

Play Video 🖕

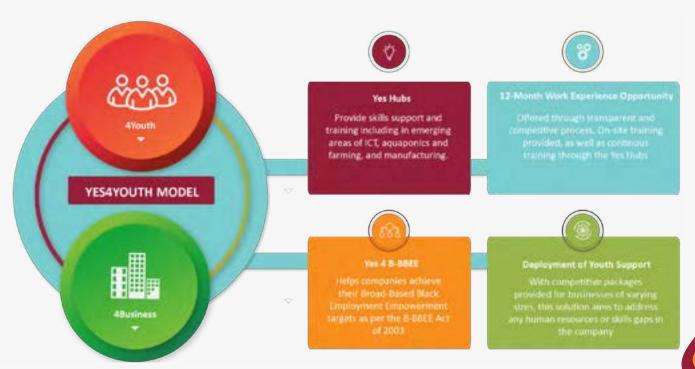




How Yes4Youth Works

Hydroponic farming sowing seeds at scale. The packaging business provides services to the Green Engine produce farming.

- The Yes4Youth Drone academy: Soaring to new heights Candidates are trained to repair, operate and fly drones to provide services to critical sectors of the economy.
- **The Yes4Youth Culinary Academy:** Food for the future Chef training and entrepreneurial incubation with live restaurants running while youth learn.
- The textile academy stitching solutions: Supplying skills training, upskills and connects sewists, manufacturers, and networks to develop and find retail markets for these products.
- Digital 4IR skills training: Coding careers in communities. Digital training lab offering a range of specialised digital learning programmes. Training partners include Vodacom, Google, Microsoft, and IT Varsity.



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Stories of Success

Zikhona Abongile Mabala's Story

Zikhona Abongile Mabala was a young woman struggling to find employment for over two years. Through the Yes4Youth initiative, she was provided with skills training and matched with car manufacturer Volkswagen for a 12-month work placement. As part of the Yes4Youth Communications team, Zikhona attests to her capacity growth and the impact the Yes4Youth initiative has had on her career trajectory.

> "I am now part of something bigger than me, something that is changing the community."



VW & YES changing lives for a better future

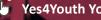
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Yes4Youth YouTube Channel



IN CONVERSATION-PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEMAND-DRIVEN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

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The African Union and AUDA NEPAD, through Skills Initiative for Africa hosted a <u>webinar</u> on 31 May 2022 at 07h30 (CAT) reflecting on the lessons learnt from implementing TVET initiatives, provided a forum to exchange ideas on improving future practice/policy and facilitated continental knowledge exchange drawing on the experiences of different countries and contexts. The discussion was based on "A Handbook for TVET Managers for Building Demand-Based Partnerships".

A common thread running through these conversations is the need for explicit links to be made between training provision and employability. Training should be fit for purpose, in terms of the types of skills that will be useful to both job seekers and business sectors, as well as the quality of graduates in relation to the needs of employers.

Connecting Major Stakeholders to Maximise the Employment of Users

Ashenafi Shiberu, Director for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Communication - Selam TVET College, Ethiopia

Supply and Demand Mismatch

"The problem we face is the low rate of employability of our graduates. Many students graduate from vocational training institutions each year, but they do not get employed immediately, while employers complain they are not getting a skilled labour force with the required skills.

> In the pipeline from learning to earning there is a gap between the job seeker and the employer or the graduates and the industries. This is because there is a lack of labour market linkage and intermediation - most institutions do not actively connect the graduates with employers in sectors and companies, or the graduates are given no support from the institutions, so these graduates have limited information about employer industries and companies.

On the other hand, employers do not have ample knowledge of where to get skilled personnel as per their demand. Even graduates who prefer to be self-employed or start a small business have limited information on accessing the industry. Selam TVET College is implementing a "Job Business Service" to address the problem of labour market linkage and intermediation.

> The primary function is connecting or linking all these significant stakeholders who do their jobs independently and do not share information.

- 🔮 The TVET college,
- The training graduates,
- The market (industries and companies),
- 💡 The microfinance institutions,
- The government facilitators.

About the Job-Business Service

The service organises a stakeholders database and mapping - Where are they? What do they do? What kind of skills do they need? Once gathered, the information is analysed and disseminated among each stakeholder. The top officers also create a network and organise information exchange platforms like exhibitions and job fairs for those seeking wage employment. We help them set up their CV and prepare them with interview techniques. For those who prefer to go into self-employment or start their small businesses, we help them establish working groups. We have a successful savings and credit association that helps

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in the legalisation process of their new associations and facilitates a workspace. In Ethiopia, getting a working space is tricky, so we connect graduates with government facilities, facilitators, or offices.

We have aggressively implemented this approach, created links, connected the significant actors, and attained terrific results. Some graduates have been employed at various industries and companies in wage employment; others have become self-employed and begun their small businesses.

We have learnt that training institutions should focus not only on equipping learners with technical skills but also on labour market linkage and intermediation to maximise the employment rate of graduates and to transfer from learning to earning.



Partnerships for Demand-Driven Skills Development: A Case Study from CAP Youth Empowerment Institute

Mr Dennis Muchiri, Training and Operations Manager - CAP Youth Empowerment Institute, Kenya

"CAP employment institute is an NGO based in Kenya with our head office in Nairobi. We aim to be an end-to-end community-based solution provider for the not-in-education, employment or training youth.

> We impart employability skills to increase their chances of accessing livelihood opportunities. We do this with a basic employability skills training approach, combining technical and vocational aspects of training entrepreneurship and life skills.

You need to be an all-rounded graduate or an employee to survive in the world of work. So, when discussing partnerships, we divide them into three aspects: (1) We have the pre-training elements of the course that requires partnerships; (2) We have the during-training aspects; (3) We have the post-training aspects.

Partnership Journey: Pre-Training

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These are the aspects that inform us of what the consumers of our products, the trained youth, would want to get from our products. We partner with the private sector to conduct a training needs assessment. We start off with understanding the market needs, how relevant the skills will be after training, and how suitable the graduates will be to potential employers. We ask them about the skills mismatch and ensure the skills they need are somewhere in our curriculum. Establishment of a skills development advisory committee

Identification of the occupational standards from the private sector (the Standards then form the framework for curriculum development)

Government Agencies:

CEDA then accredits the curriculum & facilitates a validation workshop, &

TVETA oversees the TVET institutions.

The significant stakeholders will attend the validation workshop, one of them being the sector skills advisory committee, to assess the developed curriculum to ensure it will answer the gaps identified during the training needs assessment.

Partnership Journey: Training & Support

During training, the private sector plays a vital role in a demand-led approach. Because demand-led methods focus on hands-on skills. Setting up a training centre that gives 2% per cent practical aspects required for any technical or vocational education and training is expensive.

We partner with the private sector and invite subject matter experts to come to our centres and offer lectures. They allow our trainees to have a feel of how the world of work is through field visits and exposure visits. They go to a hotel so that they can see a typical kitchen and chef. We also form what we call the 'Business Mentors Network.' The mentors help them manage their expectations regarding post-graduation. Seasoned professionals come in to discuss their career journey and business mentors come in to help trainees understand the skills of the 21st century. We conduct a series of mock interviews for assessments in liaison with the private sector who give us feedback on each of the individual trainees that we want to release to the world of work so that we can iron out any grey areas.

Partnership Journey: Post Training, Towards a Promising Future

Post-training, the government provides certification. The private sector ensures a higher transition rate of training to livelihood opportunities. We partner with financial institutions so that they can offer capital to boost their businesses.

Recommendations: You need to create a solution where everyone benefits. Also, avoid over-reliance on a few stakeholders. Most importantly, avoid forging partnerships only when you need something. They should know that you are on this journey together." **Supporting Inclusive Growth**

Anthony Gewer, National Business Initiative

"How do we create demand-led TVET interventions to enhance South Africa's employability? We face somewhat of a unique challenge. We have incredibly high unemployment. Our biggest challenge is that our informal sector, a large part of our economy, is not creating jobs.

The South African Context

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We have deficient employment levels in our informal economy - we are not creating jobs, so we rely on our formal sector. Although we have a well-developed formal sector, it is insignificant compared to our population. It is unable to do well-considering COVID-19. Still, even before COVID-19, given the economic situation in the country, it's unable to create sufficient jobs for the number of young people that are coming out of our schooling and education system every year, so we're looking for broader solutions that can be more inclusive and can enable more comprehensive access to opportunities for marginalised young people, but also for *entrepreneurs that are operating outside of the* formal economy, and that's a significant focus

of what we're doing here.

Value chain cuts across your construction sector, your private property, your public infrastructure, your domestic and others, and we try and conceptualise across those different buckets of demand where the opportunities are and how we can access those, so we have a -year strategy and the national business initiative.

How we are Rising to Meet the Challenge

We are an NPO, a business-based, membershipbased organisation. We work with many of our larger corporations in the country, both national and multinational, and play an intermediate role between corporates, government, and other sectors of our society to create sustainable solutions around social, economic and environmental transformation. We have two broad objectives: How do we increase the demand for skills, particularly jobs in SMEs? Many of our SMEs are not creating jobs, particularly outside the formal sector but even those operating in the formal sector, so how do we incentivise and grow the demand for jobs?



Investigate the DEMANDS of the employer market and develop graduate scholars with skills that meet them to increase employment opportunities.

- Creating a support network for entrepreneurs to gain confidence and grow. Entrepreneurs who are experienced but may not be formally qualified, qualified artisan entrepreneurs, graduated artisans and learners network interact and collaborate via the Installation Repair and Maintenance (IRM) Hub located at many TVET colleges to improve their entrepreneurial skills, innovate and get on a growth plan.
- Seasoned entrepreneurs are incentivised to mentor, train and facilitate the journey of young, recently graduated artisans and artisans seeking (self) employment and help them develop a comprehensive growth plan.

Strategic Alignment: A Review of our Process

We have three areas of strategic alignment. One is infrastructure maintenance because there is much infrastructure across the country that is not being well maintained, be it public, private, or domestic and/or even industrial, and that offers a vast range of opportunities for young people and for SMEs to be upskilled and to be supported to participate in the implementation of infrastructure maintenance and the improvement of infrastructure.

How do we capitalise on the green economy? If you are doing construction and maintenance, you must ensure that you do it in the most sustainable way possible. Many low-cost houses we have built in this country have fallen apart. With the recent floods in our coastal regions, we have seen how infrastructure has collapsed, not just because of the buildings, but the land in which it is built and whether the land is suited for buildings. So, all these sorts of things, particularly climate change, will increasingly become an issue.

Re-Industrialization at the Local Level

We position ourselves within local industrial sites to ensure that communities and youth benefit from investment in industrialisation. We believe that we can position TVET colleges at the heart of this entrepreneurial ecosystem, supporting SMEs to realise their growth objectives and access opportunities in the green economy but also responding to the demand for skills in those SMEs. We believe that with each SME that we work with we can create two new jobs.

We are also using the vehicle of township hubs. We talk about them as IRM hubs. They allow an interface between the SMEs, the entrepreneurs and the youth and other unemployed and employed youth. Many employed are in precarious roles because they have never had any formal training.

Our hubs allow us to reach more significant numbers of entrepreneurs and a larger number of youths within our township communities.

Our enterprises get access to

- 🔮 Networks for collaboration
- Access to relevant resources, tools, equipment and information
- Access to new markets and support to build their capabilities to produce new products and services
- The capabilities and competencies to manage their businesses
- Shared support services like admin and finance and I.T

The hubs become mechanisms for growing and supporting SMEs, bringing them closer to the formal sector, being an intermediary between the township business and the formal sector. As we bring the informal business closer to the formal sector, we use the hubs to make them more visible to link them to opportunities and then bring the private sector closer through our networks of the larger businesses we work with. We focus on the packaging of skills related to the SMEs we're working with and a considerable focus on the green economy and new technologies that are emerging. We also focus on work readiness behaviours for youth and entrepreneurship education because we *hope to identify budding entrepreneurs through* the youth we train and place in SMEs. Once they complete their training, we bring them back to the hubs, and take them into an incubation program. We are focusing on fast-tracking them into the labour market while ensuring they are getting accredited and recognised for excellent

quality, skills and structured on-the-job training, which leads to certification and recognition. Then we can transition them in many ways. To do all this, we must work with a range of partners in this ecosystem to find a scalable solution. We work with the following:

National Government Interventions and Partnerships: Supply and Demand

- Presidential Youth Employment Intervention facilitates the integration of the different components.
- Small Enterprise Development Agency provides incentives for SMEs
- Department of Trade and Industry unlocks opportunities in industrial sectors
- Public Works opens opportunities in public infrastructure
- Ecosystem partners: intermediary industry associations, professional bodies, business chambers, government agencies
- *Opportunity partners:* companies, government departments, NGOs
- Delivery Partners: TVET colleges, community training centres, private training providers
- NGOs and CSOs

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Observations and Insights on Demand-Based Partnerships Gichobi Stanley Mwangi - Global Development Incubator

"Global Development Incubator is an international Non-Profit Organisation focused on the toughest global challenges and looking at diverse ways that we can tackle these challenges, especially around poverty

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About Global Opportunities Youth Network

We believe we can address poverty by creating meaningful livelihood opportunities for youth through our Global Opportunities Youth Network (GONET) program, which is enthusiastic about understanding some of the challenges and potential pathways we can create among our learners. A key critical area is TVET reform. Part of TVET reform is conversations about connecting the supply side to the demand side for optimal output.

We have been working together to understand how we can create a public-private partnership framework and how TVETs can engage the public sector in vocational training. We are applying some critical insights from talking to different stakeholders across Africa. From the interviews, we reviewed materials and several challenges that needed to be addressed. First, how do you localise these interventions? Of course, you do have the more prominent approach from the national level. However, if you are to achieve success, we need to localise needs within a specific territory and not at a national level or an African level, even if it is most probably to the smallest unit here in Kenya; we will call that a sub-county or a county government to other sets of provinces or a district.

Next, there is a challenge of autonomy, especially in decision-making around how to build this mechanism for curriculum and training if we are to achieve meaningful change. This challenge must be addressed, and VET vocational training level autonomy is encouraged. Here managers can make critical decisions also. These challenges around coordination between blocks and sectors will need to approach differently and coordinated better and more strategically. Of course, regionalisation is important. We have these regions that come together based on alignments; creating an understanding and then adopting an application unique to each country would be challenging.

Sustainability beyond the reform is imperative - this calls for political institutional dialogue, policy, and engagement with other stakeholders. These are some of the early insights while we try to understand the challenges and what would guide us as we approach building these tools and processes.



Our Process: Towards Strategic Interventions

Effecting Change

- TVETs strategic and operations planning: Market analysis (identifying strategic themes and good practices).
 - **Curriculum design:** Collaboratively working with the employer market to establish a demand-led curriculum with relevant, current, and practical work-based learning.
- Institutional TVET Capacity Development: Innovative business models to maximise administrative, operational, financial, legal proficiency & service delivery to both markets, the scholar and employer.
 - **Stakeholder management skills development:** Capacitating TVET led personnel in relationship building and maintaining PR relations with the private sector and alums through training and workshops.

The Shift: Customisable TVET Strategic Positioning Tool

Working towards a more strategic positioning that considers TVET's local context and creates strategies that work for local contexts to create what works for them.





LESSONS LEARNT, TIPS & STRATEGIES

This Learning Brief has been written for practitioners and policymakers interested in good African practices, successes, and lessons learnt regarding **Demand-Led Skills Development** in the context of "Working towards agile, responsive skills and (self) employment ecosystems in Africa."

Your perspective might be that of a policy maker, a training provider, a researcher, a funder, an implementer, an evaluator, or a beneficiary in the key thematic and intervention areas identified in the **Continental Education (CESA)** and **Continental TVET Strategies.**

This section draws lessons from the experiences of initiatives and programmes highlighted in this Learning Brief for application in your varying contexts. With an appreciation of the challenges, stories of success, research and observations shared by practitioners across the continent, lessons are generalised for ease of replication. Building on these lessons, the section further provides a set of tips and strategies that you are encouraged to apply to your context where possible.

> These are selected and generalised from the initiatives for Gender-Transformative Change described in this brief.

LESSONS LEARNT

Research

An informed, evidence-based approach is needed for collaborative skills development initiatives. Reliable data on the demand-side needs of different sectors means that the appropriate partners can be identified and effective networks can be established. Data will also guide strategic decisions on innovations going forward.

Continued mapping of competencies against job categories keeps programmes relevant.

Beneficiary Group

A strong, scalable education-to-employment programme should garner support by selecting suitable partners representing different stakeholders such as Government, development partners, and delivery partners such as TVETs. This integration through partnership is key to creating a conducive enabling environment to ensure success. A strong, scalable education-toemployment program should also be:

Find the second second

Learner focused on creating a positive impact for youth by integrating technical and behavioural skills and mindsets in program delivery, mentorship, coaching and psychosocial support.

> Focused on including partner support by selecting suitable partners. This is key to creating a conducive enabling environment to ensure success. Specifically, Government, development partners, and delivery partners such as TVETs.

Resources Required

Formal recognition of their work experience in the host company is vital for trainees to continue with their employment journey.

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Effective support for beneficiaries can take many forms, from the promotion of soft skills to the provision of basic necessities such as transport money and interview clothing.

Simple and accessible Apps can be leveraged for information sharing with beneficiaries. Make sure that your information categories are extensive and varied, and that the way they are presented meet audience needs.

Access Required

Varied Hub activities can provide further opportunities for cross-collaboration between different services which can be nurtured.

Partners

Partnerships are the bedrock of demand-led skills development.

The process of employee hosting period needs to be carefully structured and monitored so that both the host and the employee can get the full benefit.

TIPS & STRATEGIES

- Effective demand-led skills development can only be achieved through collaborative partnerships, in which stakeholders have specific roles at different levels to ensure that the skills development value chain offers up a match between supply and demand.
- On the ground, the various players the training providers, the industry sectors as potential employers and the graduates also need to be linked through explicit and managed mediation processes so that key information on labour sources and work opportunities is easily shared.
- Links between the informal and formal sector can be nurtured and consolidated.
 Informal sector work and entrepreneurial enterprise can serve as gateways to further employment opportunities, and funnel upskilled youth into the formal sector.

Initiatives can capitalise on identified areas of need (such as improving infrastructure, or growing the green economy) in a community or sector, to equip youth with skills which will respond to immediate opportunities.

Effective programmes are multi-layered. Employers need to be involved in the development of technical curricula to ensure that these are relevant and up to date; and both providers and employers need to share insights on the kinds of work readiness and life skills that will help job entrants to grow and develop.

- Sustainable skills development that has an impact needs to be linked to ongoing support services pre, during and post training. Mentorship and peer support have both proven effective.
- Accreditation and certification need to be taken into account, to serve as quality indicators for both the trainees and the employers.



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Study Tour delegates who shared their work, experiences, and lessons while

Generation, Kenya

Site visit organisations that opened their doors for knowledge exchange and sharing.

Harambee, South Africa



The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) team for organising and facilitating the dialogue and knowledge sharing event.

The Learning Brief also draws from expertise and knowledge sharing through case studies, webinars, and research papers.

- Webinar Panellists: Partnerships for Demand-Driven Skills Development
 - Ashenafi Shiberu, Director for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Communication Selam TVET College, Ethiopia
 - Mr Dennis Muchiri, Training and Operations Manager CAP Youth Empowerment Institute, Kenya.
 - Anthony Gewer, Installation, Repair and Maintenance with National Business Initiative
 - Gichobi Stanley Mwangi, Global Development Incubator

