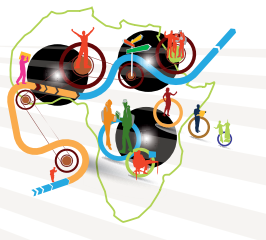




Association for the
Development of
Education in
Africa



MINISTÈRE D'ÉTAT, MINISTÈRE DE L'EMPLOI,
DES AFFAIRES SOCIALES ET
DE LA FORMATION PROFESSIONNELLE



ICQN/TVSD SEMINAR ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AFRICA

3 and 4 December 2012, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

SUMMARY REPORT

“ As part of the establishment of the Working Group on socio-economic integration, a seminar was held on 3 and 4 December 2012 in Abidjan to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What recurring difficulties are being encountered with the socio-economic integration of young people in Africa?
2. Based on the analyses conducted in the various countries, what portion of these difficulties is due to:
 - A lack of information about available jobs?
 - Absent or poor vocational guidance?
 - A disconnect between the skills acquired in training and the skills required by the labour market?
 - The lack of job creation policies?
 - A lack of investment in job-creating economic sectors?
3. What players and organizations are involved in the programmes established?
4. What methods are used to promote integration?
5. What are the main factors that determine the effectiveness of the programmes?
6. What are the weak points and strong points of the programmes and initiatives set up?
7. In what ways could the programmes and initiatives be improved, including their results?

Based on these questions, each country was asked to produce a summary report of their own experiences, with the document to also include the following:

- The most relevant data about youth employment in the country
- The economic sectors that are creating and / or losing jobs
- The sectors that lack skilled young people

During the work, ten countries made presentations, including Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Togo, Benin, Mali, Niger, Mauritius, Ghana, Chad, and Burkina Faso. The ADEA, the GIZ, the APSS and Coders4Africa also presented valuable experience.

On this basis, and in the light of the subsequent discussion, the current policies, programmes and initiatives were developed, the highlights of which are described hereafter.

A – The situation of youth employment

In most African countries, the category of "young people" or "youth" includes persons aged 15 to 35, representing at least 60% of the population. Young people are the hardest hit by unemployment, under-qualifications, under-employment and difficulties with socio-economic integration. The informal economy provides more employment opportunities than the modern public and private sectors. As a result, the majority of young people who get jobs are absorbed by the informal economy. The mismatch between the supply and demand for labour is ongoing. The statistics vary from one country to another, but on the whole the levels of unemployment and underemployment of young people are quite high (8-60%) and require special attention.

These observations point to the difficulties with the socio-economic integration of young people in Africa.

B – The major difficulties and constraints identified

Generally speaking, the following difficulties and constraints were identified in the countries' presentations:

- The lack of an operational action plan for the implementation of national employment policies
- The disconnect between the skills acquired in training and the skills required by the labour market
- The lack of coordination of integration programmes
- Inadequate qualifications of young people and their lack of work experience
- The inability of government to anticipate the needs of the economy for skilled human resources
- Weak private sector involvement in the development of training benchmarks and programmes in the formal and non-formal sectors
- The absence or weakness of vocational guidance
- The lack of reliable and comprehensive up-to-date data on the labour market
- The limited access of young people to information on job opportunities due to the poor visibility of the labour market
- A weak entrepreneurial culture and training
- Deterioration in some countries in the level of education and lack of access to the labour market among young people due to armed conflicts
- The administrative complexity and cost of accessing the labour market (age limit, the costs of supporting documents, etc.)

C – The responses by the countries

The actions being taken by the various governments focus on the following points:

The reform or creation of institutional frameworks

- The establishment of an institutional framework structured around the Ministries in charge of Technical and Vocational Skills Development and Employment, together with their central and decentralized structures, technical services and implementing agencies
- The establishment of informational and guidance platforms for young people

- The development of partnerships with the private sector

The development of strategies for integrating young people

- The establishment of arrangements for and offers of training by ministries in the various sectors
- Building and equipping vocational training centres
- The establishment of various projects and programmes to enhance the employability of young people and promote waged employment or long-term self-employment financially and technically by the countries and/or by the partners
- The recruitment of young people into the civil service on specific occasions
- The development of high-intensity labour programmes ("THIMO")
- Training in entrepreneurship and the acquisition of technical and vocational skills
- Strengthening apprenticeship programmes
- Reforming legislation with a view to creating new businesses
- The recognition and validation of learning acquired on the job

D – The strong points of the initiatives

- Youth employment has grown to become a national priority. This has resulted in the implementation of legal, institutional and strategic measures
- The institutional underpinning of integration programmes
- The tendency to adopt a global approach to handling the vocational integration of young people
- Consideration for all categories of young people (school graduates and school leavers, with or without diplomas)
- The strong questioning of government by young people
- The mobilization of numerous partners on the issue of employment, particularly the employment of young people
- The involvement of local communities in addressing the problem of youth employment
- Taking into account job opportunities in the agriculture and livestock sector
- The networking of different actors
- The development of vocational guidance for the recruitment of young people in some countries
- The use of ICT for the job search

E – The weak points

- A low level of economic and industrial development
- Need to take greater account of requirements in human resources when developing economic policies and strategies
- The implementation of training policies without considering the needs of strategic sectors with growth potential
- The absence in some countries of a public fund for the integration of young people
- A lack of coordination and cohesion among the actors in several countries
- A low level of involvement of the private sector in training programmes
- The growing difficulty young people experience in finding career-oriented internships in business
- A mismatch between training and the needs of the labour market
- A lack of reliable statistical data on youth employment and the labour market
- A lack of regular monitoring and evaluation of actions to promote youth employment
- A weak culture of entrepreneurship

F – Recommendations

Faced with the problem of youth employment, there is real growing awareness of the relationship between youth employment and the fight against poverty and for social cohesion in the countries of Africa. Most states are committed to finding solutions to youth unemployment, for both graduates and non-graduates. Nevertheless, there are still weaknesses in the institutional, technical and material responses to the challenges and expectations.

Given these observations, the seminar made the following recommendations:

Recommendations regarding the monitoring and evaluation of programme activities

- The need for better coordination of the various programmes in the countries
- The need for reliable data about the labour market, human resources requirements and rates of vocational integration
- The need to monitor and evaluate the existing programmes (tracking studies on the youth integrated)

Recommendations regarding programme financing and sustainability

- The States should be more involved in financing programmes for the vocational integration of young people (national budgets, local government budgets)
- Need for greater involvement of the local authorities
- Need to situate vocational integration programmes for youth within a national policy framework

Recommendations regarding the production of statistical data on the employment and socio-economic integration of young people

- Have regular access to relevant information on the labour market
- Establish data observatories to strengthen the monitoring and forecasting of the labour market
- Provide existing observatories with substantial resources

Recommendations regarding training and the promotion of technical and vocational skills

- Ensure the vocational training system takes into account the current and future needs of the economy
- Provide pathways in the education and training systems that lead to the acquisition of the practical skills needed in the workplace
- Revise the curricula to also take into account the needs of the informal sector
- Develop a business culture during the course of training
- Explore and exploit all the possibilities offered by ICT to facilitate the vocational integration of young people
- Develop a National plan for human resource development
- Make technical education, vocational training and apprenticeships attractive
- Strengthen the skills of apprenticeship supervisors and all the professionals who train young people in the informal sector in order to raise the skills level of these young people, and to stimulate the informal sector more generally

Recommendations regarding public-private partnerships

- Reduce bureaucracy by allowing private sector participation in the management of training programmes
- Strengthen the frameworks for coordinating all those working in the field of youth employment
- Support the creation of micro enterprises by facilitating their access to bank credit

Recommendations regarding job search strategies

- Better inform and guide youth by making available a set of services to help them define and implement their career plans

Recommendations regarding the Inter-Country Quality Node (ICQN)

- That the leader country (Côte d'Ivoire) continues to support the activities of the Node
- That the ADEA continues to provide the Node with the means needed to make it stronger
- That each member of the Node commits itself to greater participation in the Node's activities as well as in the implementation of its recommendations

Conclusion

The Working Group, after having taken stock of the recurrent difficulties with the integration of young people, analyzed the difficulties and the constraints that prevent these young people from entering the world of work and identified the ways countries are responding so as to promote the development of effective and relevant programmes to develop skills and promote integration, and it decided to continue the process of dialogue and sharing experience initiated in Abidjan. The WG members propose in particular to use an internet discussion group to report at regular intervals on the progress being made by each country and organization so as to share experience concerning programme improvements and the results achieved.

The Working Group recommends that the Ministers who are members of the ICQN / TVSD do everything within their power to promote inter-country cooperation with regard to the socio-economic integration of young people. This kind of cooperation will help to accelerate the concerted implementation of policies, measures and programmes and give young Africans an opportunity to become full participants in their personal, professional and economic futures, while ensuring the sustainable development of their continent by including them in the world of work as rapidly as possible on an optimal basis.



Abidjan, 4 December 2012

The Seminar

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

- CÔTE D'IVOIRE
- MALI
- TOGO
- BENIN
- BURKINA FASO
- SENEGAL
- NIGER
- MAURITIUS
- CHAD
- GHANA

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

- ADEA
- Association for the promotion of livestock in BURKINA FASO
- Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogiques (CIEP)
- GIZ
- The Sahel and Savannah region (APESS)

ORGANISATIONS AND GOVERNMENT BODIES FROM COTE D'IVOIRE

- Ministry of State, Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Vocational Training
- French Embassy in Côte d'Ivoire
- Institut Pédagogique National de l'Enseignement Technique et Professionnel (IPNETP)
- Direction du Développement de l'Apprentissage et de l'Insertion (DDAI)
- Agence d'Etudes pour la Promotion de l'Emploi (AGEPE)
- Service de Coordination et d'Exécution des Projets (SERCEP)
- Direction des Etudes, de la Planification et des Statistiques (DEPS)
- University of Cocody
- Plate-Forme de Service (PFS)
- Fédération Ivoirienne des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises (FIPME)
- Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie of Côte d'Ivoire (CCI-CI)
- Chambre Nationale des Métiers of Côte d'Ivoire (CNM-CI)
- Fond de Développement de la Formation Professionnelle (FDFP)
- Agence Nationale de la Formation Professionnelle (AGEFOP)
- NGO la VIE