

GHANA STRATEGY REPORT 2018

BRIEF ON STRATEGIES TO CURB YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN GHANA

Ghana Job Bank Initiative, Patron- Former President of Ghana, H.E. John Agyekum Kufuor, 2018

***Transform Ghana* Peace Campaign & SIMPOLICY**



**EMPLOYMENT**

**PREFACE BY DR. FRANCIS ASHONG-KATA**

**T**here are 1.2 billion youth in the world aged between 15 and 24, accounting for 17% of the world's population. 87% of them live in developing countries. The World Bank in its current report on jobs in Ghana has disclosed that about 48 percent of the youth in the country, who are between 15 - 24 years do not have jobs. The report further questioned the country’s preparedness in dealing with the youth bulge in the coming decades. Unemployed youth has been called "a lost generation": not only because of productivity loss but also because of the long-term direct and indirect impact unemployment has on young people and their families. Unemployment has been said to affect earnings for about 20 years. Because they can’t build up skills or experience during their first years in the workforce, unemployed youth see a decrease in lifetime earnings when compared to those who had steady work or those who were unemployed as an adult. The issue of unemployment in Ghana, especially among the youth is of major concern to government and stakeholders in the public and private sectors. According to the 2015 Ghana Labour Survey Report by the Ghana Statistical Service, Ghana's unemployment rate as of 2015 stood at 11.9 percent. The unemployment rate is highest among the 15-24 years age group at about 26%.

The Ghana strategic report has been crafted to make significant contribution towards the discourse on youth employment and thereby provide guidance to the government of Ghana in tackling the youth unemployment menace. The report has come at a time when government’s efforts at youth entrepreneurial development has been intensified, making it foremost in the government’s drive towards job creation. Government’s job creation efforts are premised on training Ghanaians for business development and hence economic growth with the consequent reduction in unemployment, in the direction of reduction in unemployment the Youth are the central focus since they are disproportionately affected by the unemployment problem. The strategic report has been birthed out of a remarkable insight gained from interviewing a cross section of Ghanaian youth players across multiple communities, demographic credentials and political persuasions. The interviews uncovered varied but equally plausible viewpoints on the ways in which youth unemployment could be addressed.

This report therefore takes pains to shed some lights on the ways to avoid youth unemployment in Ghana. The implications of Youth unemployment is profound affecting the socio-economic situation as well as the peace of the country. The report places special emphasis on the role of peace in economic development and hence reduction in unemployment. It has been argued in the report that peace initiatives should be youth-centric, and youth driven- albeit in concert with respective bodies and other key actors. The report convincingly proposes a bold agenda towards youth entrepreneurship and talent grooming. At the heart of this proposition is the creation of youth incubator centres and talent pools. It has been argued in the report that youth mentorship schemes embedded in modern technology is essential driver of youth employment and hence a call for government to expedite action on the Ghana Labour Management information system GLMIS, however various initiatives at applying state of the art technology in youth employment, job search and recruitment have also been convincingly explicated in the report. Other essential ways of driving down the rate of unemployment has been alluded to in the report- these include the five main pillars of (1) creating a conducive business environment; (2) relevant education; (3) entrepreneurial training; (4) start-up support; and (5) labour market intermediation through match-making programmes. However, the question that remains is that what roles do the key institutions of Government, local government, NGOs, International Partners, Communities, Civil Society Youth and Academia play in the deployment of the five main pillars of reducing youth unemployment? The report lays out practical strategies which answers this question.

A teething economic puzzle that bewilds the Ghanaian public has been the incidence of high economic growth rates coupled with lower employment growth rates, the report catalogues the reasons for such an occurrence and proposes innovative ways for countering same. In countering the issue, a theoretical lens is focused on agriculture-led transformation as of prime importance. The report therefore highlights the need to not only promote Foreign Direct Investment but more importantly the need for government to intervene to effect a particular pathway and destination sectors for FDI. The disproportionate effects of unemployment in rural areas has been underscored and a careful guidance offered on the way to address this, including the promotion of specific FDIs. Governments everywhere are concerned about the effect and impact of accelerated employment programmes on the citizenry, in the case of Ghana, government has rolled-up major flagship programmes aimed at reducing rural unemployment on the one hand as well as crate a much-needed national economic growth as a whole through the One-district-One factory initiative (1D1F). The report therefore makes a modest attempt which seeks to underscore other strategic considerations needed to even achieve more with the 1D1F initiative. Another government programme i.e. Ghana Infrastructure Fund for Electronic communications (GIFEC) provides a useful way to tackling the Youth unemployment challenge in Ghana. Given that past policy options have been largely misplaced, the report drives home the urgency to ensure the effectiveness of ongoing government drives aimed at tackling unemployment.

A novel approach at tackling unemployment, The Ghana Job Bank has recently been muted. The Job bank aims to make significant contribution to Youth training, business incubation and start-up support. Therefore, the report echoes a call for the extended participation of relevant stakeholders in this arena.

In summary, the report lays out strategies in respect of the following:

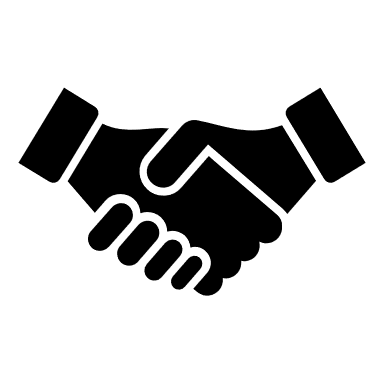
* Labour market reform
* Youth Entrepreneurial Training
* Promotion of FDI
* Legal reform
* Coordination and joined-up approach
* Mobilization of the Youth
* Policy formulation

Having taken you the Ghana Strategy report, it is now my utmost pleasure to invite you for a walk through the pages of the report. I am certain that you would glean from its display of rich insight and workable solutions to the Youth unemployment challenge in Ghana.

Cheers to an excellent reading experience!!

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. Francis Ashong-Katai**



With the aim to help build a flourishing *Ghana- Beyond- Aid*, we see youth employment as one of the most important factors determining the sustainable long-term flourishing prosperity of both the country of Ghana and its people.

Not only is the right to occupation manifested in Ghana’s 1992 constitution - youth employment especially provides social and economic security as well as positive prospects for the future and thereby lays the foundation for lasting peace in the region. Therefore, this first Ghana Strategy Report (GSR) focuses on the key issue of youth unemployment and implicitly youth underemployment. Although Ghana is rich in natural resources, for instance currently being the second largest gold exporter in Africa, the future of the country will heavily depend on Ghana’s largest potential resource which needs to be expanded and realized: Ghana’s human capital.

Given the report’s close relation with the sitting government’s vision for the country, we hope for good cooperation and believe that by successfully creating youth employment opportunities, a thriving *Ghana- Beyond- Aid* is envisioned as a sound and attainable goal.

**EMPLOYMENT**

Ghana Strategy -> Ghana Action -> Ghana Without Aid

We are delighted by the prospect of affecting valuable change for the people of Ghana and Africa at large and are hoping for successful cooperation with key institutions. After the report has been successfully launched in Ghana, its results and vision will be shared locally and internationally with youth groups, academia, NGOs and governmental audiences. However, we also firmly believe that Ghana needs less talk and more walk. In this respect, we see the Ghana Strategy Report 2018 as the first milestone towards a greater alliance that will effectively develop and implement successful solutions to sustainably curb youth unemployment and thereby increase the economic and social strength of Ghana. For this reason, we are honoured to cooperate with the China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) in Ghana presently as well as in the future formation and implementation of the Ghana Action Plan. Together, we strive to develop the right strategy for Ghana domestically and abroad to achieve a thriving *Ghana-Without -Aid* utilizing human capital as its primary resource!

***“Believe in yourself, believe in Ghana, and believe in Africa. Where there is peace we believe that we can make a paradise of this country Ghana and the entire continent.”***

Aims and Objectives

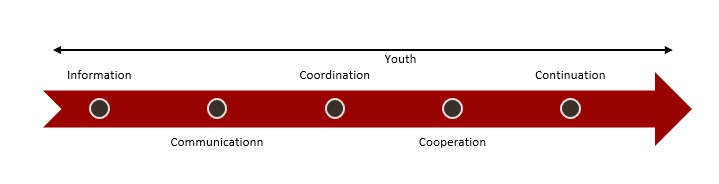
We base the Ghana Strategy Report 2018 on the firm belief that through dedication, cooperation, communication and creativity, a successful transition to a striving *Ghana -Beyond -Aid* is an honourable and attainable goal. Our first Ghana Strategy Report (GSR) provides a brief on policies to curb youth unemploymentbecause we believe the youth’s access to economic opportunities to be a key driver of Ghana’s sustainable social, economic and political well-being.

Methodology

In the Ghana Strategy Report 2018, we

* Identify Ghanaian human capital as a key potential and sustainable resource before natural resource endowments;
* Insist of the invaluable benefit of involving the Ghanaian youth in every step of the process;
* Identify key solutions to the unemployment problem;
* Provide recommendations for successful policy;
* Operate on the principle of establishing a strong local and international network as force that can secure continuous progress even beyond future administrations; and
* Initiate the Ghana Strategy data pack platform to gather data from various sources.

Findings



KEY SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

**Unemployment in Ghana**

Within the past 1 ½ decades, Ghana’s increase in economic performance as measured by GDP growth has been exceptional – especially from 2000 to 2014 recording an average annual growth rate of 6.4%. As a result, in 2011, Ghana was deemed the fastest growing economy in the world. This occurred when the commercial production and the export of oil escalated the country’s annual GDP growth to 14%. However, a key question concerns how this economic growth can be best translated into building the aspired sustainable economic foundation of the country, and hence lasting employment creation. Of importance, assessment of unemployment has to be assessed in the informal sector.

As per Table 1 the Unemployment Rate in Ghana increased from 5.54% in 2015 to 5.77% in 2016. Historically, the Unemployment Rate in Ghana averaged 6.51% from 1991 until 2016. Notably, the rate reached an all-time high of 10.36% (2000) - in comparison to holding a record low of 3.60% in 2006.

**Table 1[[1]](#footnote-1)** Ghana Unemployment Rate, International Labour Organization (ILO**)** www.tradingeconomics.com(Population: Millions)

**Right to employment: Ghana**

**1992 Ghana Constitution, Article 34 Clause 31**

* Manifests the right to productive employment granted to all citizens of Ghana

**2003 Ghana Labour Act (ACT-651)**

* Directs and expounds the employment principles in the 1992 Constitution.

**2015 Youth Employment Agency Act (ACT-887)**

* Empowers young people to make meaningful contributions to both the socio-economic and sustainable development of Ghana.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Establishes the Youth Employment Agency for the development, coordination, supervision and the facilitation of youth employment and provision for relating matters. (FRONT 11 AND SUDDENLY SKIPPING TO 12).

**Youth unemployment as major setback to sustainable growth**

“More than half of females (64.8 per cent or 2,801,262), who are currently employed are self-employed with a relatively small number working as paid employees. Nearly one in six of 733,522 of the unemployed were located in urban areas and 41.4% of the 517,391 population were in rural areas. Persons with tertiary education have the lowest unemployment rate in the country. Agricultural businesses engaged 2.1 million of those in current employment. Majority of the currently employed were in vulnerable employment with about five million of the currently employed persons being self-employed.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

**2015 Ghana Labour Force Survey Report (LFSR)**

The Labour Force Survey Report (LSFR), commissioned by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS)aims to provide:

* **Data Insights -**  It provides basic Ghana Labour Force Statistics such as the
  + - * 1. Number of persons in the workforce (i.e. employed, under-employed and unemployed);
        2. Country monitor and evaluation of the impact of labour policies and programmes;
        3. Real-time information for assessing the labour force situation in the country.
* **Transparency –** It provides the public with best retrievable labour statistics to make informed decisions to alleviate the employment situation.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The LSFR findings in summary:

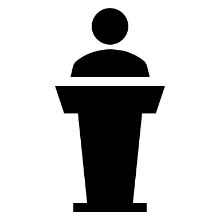
* **Ages 15 years+:** Over 1.2 million are estimated to be unemployed
* **Unemployment Rate**: 11.9%
* **Females Unemployed**: 714,916 (57.2% of total unemployment)
* **Males Unemployed**: 535,997 (42.8% of total unemployment)
* **Education**: Reported unemployment rate of young citizens with higher education is higher than for those less formally educated.

**Seven Key Institutions**

Key stakeholders able and responsible for reducing unemployment in Ghana are not solely limited to governmental agents but rather constitute a multiplicity of diverse international, national and community-level organizations. It is crucial to understand that there are more determinants that shape both the level and the growth rate of unemployment in Ghana. Therefore, it is essential that several institutions collaborate and contribute to facilitate the best environment for eliminating youth unemployment. The exchange of information, experiences, viewpoints and the coordination of activities between these actors are necessary for maximizing the practical effect of reforms. This section aims to provide a picture of the seven institutions that are considered key actors for a successful youth employment reform. This leads to an assessment of specific solutions of how Ghana can overcome the issues that threaten the employment level on the demand side, which includes a growth centred in low employment sectors - and on the supply side, which includes the issue of a demographic bulge entering the workforce. The suggested solutions positively affect both the urban areas facing unemployment and the underemployed rural areas of Ghana.

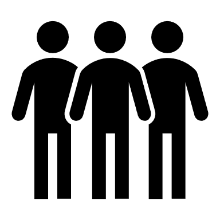
As illustrated in **Figure** **1,** this involves seven key institutions; (1) the government of Ghana, (2) the local governments, (3) the domestic non-governmental organisations, (4) the international organisations, (5) the communities, (6) the young generation, and (7) academia.

**Figure 1:** Key Actors for a successful youth employment reform in Ghana

**Government of Ghana**

Controlling the formulation and implementation of policies, the government of Ghana has vital responsibility for tackling the issue of youth unemployment. For an optimal transparency on the issue, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations together with the Ghana Statistical Service should assist the Government of Ghana in providing the technical systems that predict and issue national employment data. It is also important that the government interacts with regional and international agencies to strengthen the scope of employment capacities. In our consultative forums, we saw the necessity for the government of Ghana to support local communities and governments in developing operational job creation capabilities. The considerable amount of informal labour activity in Ghana creates a sub-optimal and unstable labour market and business environment. This is, for instance, due to lack of information and registration (African Development Bank et al. 2012).

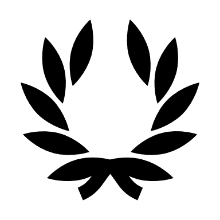
Moreover, the government has the major responsibility to build up the infrastructure in terms of transportation, communication, and electric systems because attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow is an important tool for developing countries to generate stable incomes and reduce unemployment (Eldeeb 2015; Mayom 2015; Shaari Hussain & Halim 2012). In support of this hypothesis, Mayom (2015) proves a significant positive effect of the FDI inflow on employment in Sub-Saharan countries. However, the infrastructural conditions have been a constraint for foreign investments for setting up manufacturing plants. President Akufo-Addo launched a vital plan for job creation with the National Entrepreneurship and Innovations Plan (NEIP), where he set up a $100m fund for entrepreneurs in July 2017 (Allotey 2017). While this is a crucial step to minimize youth unemployment, the NEIP programme arguably does not eliminate the issue, due to the current and future equilibria on the labour market.

**Local Governments**

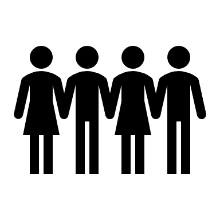
Like the Government of Ghana, local governments are central to job creation, seeing that decentralised administration of the country is vital for specialising jobs in the different communities. Transparent information through internal communication needs to be improved to identify the key natural resources and match the skill in each community. As the Western Region is known as a gas and oil region, it is important to match that with the right business conditions, including the right labour skills. This is done by engaging the local population by specialized job training programmes, which increase productivity and reduce foreign recruitment intake.

**International Organizations**

International organizations constantly provide support to various developing countries, including Ghana. These international supporters are in favour of the Ghanaian workers and have repeatedly reported suggestions on how to increase the employment base. Especially the International Labour Organization plays a major role in painting the overall picture of employment in Ghana. Thus, it is crucial that the international organizations collaborate and share knowledge with the other actors to continuously conceive a comprehensive picture of Ghana’s employment status.

**Non-Governmental Organisations**

Several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play an important advocacy role to help ensure that employment opportunities stay on the agenda for government policymakers. In Ghana, we found that many NGOs focus insufficiently on the support employment creation. This is due to the fact that these care mostly about donations and grants, always looking at how to donate gifts to communities. As a result, many of the Think Tanks in Ghana presently do not have the specialised mission of promoting employment.

**Youth**

Baah-Boeteng (2015) econometrically finds that many factors come into play when determining youth unemployment. In addition and contrary to previous research on the matter, it is increasingly recognized that youth unemployment might not be due to younger generation’s tendency to shop jobs (“job hopping”). Rather, older labour market actors are more experienced and thus in higher demand (Sackey & Osei 2006). Additionally, younger people are possibly easier to dismiss from their position (Anyanwu 2013). In fact, younger generations are becoming more alert about their careers, and thus, they are becoming more educated than ever (Herrera & Merceron 2013). The demographic bulge of the young generation creates a fast flood of workers to the labour market. Even though scholars might argue that the young generation is subject to unemployment as an effect of other market labour forces, it is extremely important to define the generation as a pro-active contributor to a successful labour reform. By providing youth the tools for success, is a crucial ingredient to generate innovative ideas and thus create jobs. Their knowledge about both the difficulties and opportunities of the labour market cannot be underestimated. Thus, every solution should incorporate inputs from the generation and the effects on the generation as a whole.

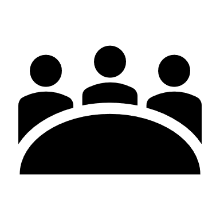
In Ghana, we should be able to confidently answer questions such as: “Who is and by how much affected by the unemployment and underemployment problem?” “What precisely constitutes the labour force in the country?” The targeted analysis of those citizens identified as “unemployed” will allow for a better understanding as to how job allocation will be best conducted and to be able to know and act upon the most immediate needs of the group as institutions must adhere the views of these victims.

The Ghanaian youth is versatile and capable of changing their future with the right environment in collaboration with those in power. Even in the absence of favourable circumstances there are visible efforts to show that laziness is not in the genes of this particular crop of generation. In the past, opportunities were limited because the typical Ghanaian youth was exposed only to their immediate environment, whereas today’s technology has reduced these limitations. By the touch of a phone button, communication can be established between or among persons from different backgrounds and jurisdictions. Knowledge is easily passed on within a matter of seconds. Social media and its pooling of much of the Ghanaian youth on social media is an indication that given the right support many things can be achieved within the short-term. Everything starts with the creation of opportunities. The following points can therefore be considered.

**Effective change in employment:** Admittedly, the government or public sector can only employ a limited number of public servants. When the number of graduates churned out of Ghanaian universities is compared with the available job openings, it can be observed that there is a great mismatch in terms of the absorption rate. A solution for effective change, therefore, entails the restructuring of the job placement and job creation system. Thus, youth must be taught and trained to create jobs instead of always seeking for jobs. The private sector is on the backs of this generation and maximum economic prosperity cannot be achieved when everyone is seeking to be on a payroll. Technical and strategic training must focus on the training of our youth in order to reshape the nature of employment seekers flows.

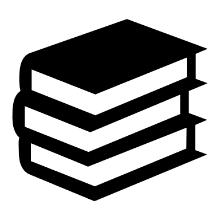
**Input from affected youth:** From an external perspective, there can only be a limited understanding of what the youth wants and how they want it in terms of employment and occupation. However, engagement is the way forward. The very persons who have been affected by joblessness must be interacted with in order to understand the causative factors of their current plight, to assess the extent of such impacts and also come up with sustainable employment strategies. The creation of jobs must not only be focused on meagre jobs that only keep the youth occupied for a few months. There should be methods that are aimed at ensuring sustainable employment and the best way to achieve this, is to engage the very youth that needs such help. One cannot cry more than the bereaved and if there is any help to be offered to the bereaved to lessen the pain, understanding their situation is sufficient.

**Need to help provide data, ideas and the will for successful reform:** Data in many sectors of the Ghanaian economy is lacking including: health, education and employment. The government and all stakeholders must be provided with accurate data that reflect the- state- of- affairs. Through these means, the right steps can be taken to address pertinent issues about employment and youth occupation.

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**Communities**

The issue of unemployment is threatening the urban areas. In the rural areas, however, workers are facing underemployment (Sackey & Osei 2006). The reason why employment does not respond to the GDP growth (Aryeetey & Baah-Boateng 2015) is due to many factors as described in chapter 4 of the underlying report. The downward pressure on the labour demand, due to economic growth, is centred on low employment sectors. Other factors such as the upward pressure on labour supply is also the culprit. For the upward pressure on the labour supply, examples include a doubled labour force from primo 1995 until primo 2018 (The World Bank 2018), and a demographic bulge of young workers entering the labour force. The communities are important institutions that shape the employment rates, and a solution must capture how to engage communities in the job-creating process.

**Academia**

The top academic institutions crucially provide specialized scientific and technological input to assist governments and communities in developing early warning systems on the youth employment issues in Ghana. These institutions include Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Mines and Technology, University of Ghana, and Telecom University along with other private institutions such as the Sarfo Kantanta Technology Hub. Moreover, these universities play a major role in transmitting specialized knowledge and supporting start-up ecosystems. One advantage of academia is the ability to house entrepreneurial student associations which can drag investors to the universities. According to Peprah, Afoakwah and Koomson (2015), “universities play a key role in not only teaching entrepreneurial skills which can be used to circumvent the weak formal job market institutions but also by teaching and assisting the students to put money to the side so that they have sufficient start-up capital upon graduation.”

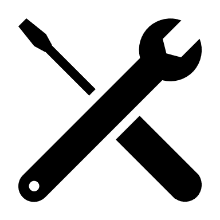
**The Way to Go**

The exchange of information, experience, viewpoints and coordination of activities between the seven actors are necessary for maximizing the effects of the reforms on the labour market, as they all have the power and responsibility to increase youth employment.

* **The Government of Ghana & Non-Governmental Organizations:** For the government, it is essential to focus on favouring the borrowers in the private sector. As an increase in debt leads to more treasury bills - which has to be discounted to match the demand side and which then leads to higher interest rates - it is important for the government to have a somewhat balanced budget. Thus, it is crucial to set up a coherent employment strategy with a long-term focus. The long-term employment strategy should include strategies to target employment services, the establishment of employment committees, and also employment policies in which the government can utilize endowment funds to invest in the youth and their labour market integration. By targeting the employment services, these services would then have the knowledge of the geographically dispersed need for labour and specialised job training programmes. The employment services would connect the newly established network of information to the public. Moreover, the government can make it more favourable for NGOs to create apprenticeship programmes.
* **International Organisations:** It is crucial that the international organizations collaborate and share knowledge with the other actors to enable a full picture of the employment status and prospective labour market trends. International organizations constantly provide support to Ghana and the rest of Africa to increase the employment base, and the International Labour Organization should foster the exchange of figures and information between the key sectors that drive job creation in Ghana.
* **Communities:** It is important to equip the communities with the right tools to create new jobs. This includes supporting the public to increase the possibility of starting new initiatives by offering microfinance options for investment in start-ups and other self-employing jobs. The communities should be able to attain exposure to entrepreneurial training, as entrepreneurial and vocational training are a measure to curb idleness of labour in smaller communities. All of these initiatives should be hosted on a platform where the public has easy access to entrepreneurial consulting.
* **Academia:** To reduce unemployment in Ghana through academic institutions, these institutions should begin to set up incubator hubs. These hubs should work as a business incubator located in the university, which will foster a cluster-effect of entrepreneurs. Thus, ideas can easily be shared and consulted, and the incubators can help with incubator services such as (1) networking, (2) market researches, (3) basic business issues, (4) strategic and financial management, (5) access to resources such as venture capital, (6) knowledge sharing, and (7) mentorships. The incubator hubs will work as both a start-up/seed accelerator (Cohen 2013) and start-up studio with parallel entrepreneurship. The incubators could be a platform for entrepreneurial leaders. At such platforms, expert leaders can speak at events and also to visit to give more views on start-ups. The entrepreneurial culture at universities is essential for the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana. The universities should also host mentoring and alumni network platforms that allow fresh graduates to fully benefit from their attained degrees. The educational programmes should also be focused on skills for the private sector and not solely for the public sector. These skills include not only entrepreneurship, but also marketing, financial management, and business administration and management. Currently, the education serves mainly the public sector, and it is essential to educate students to master skills that can be used both in the rural- and the urban areas.

***“It’s time to create our Bill Gates and Steve Jobs. (…) Ghana needs skills which are relevant to the job market and industry demands in order to break the cycle of unemployment and poverty which have become a challenge for us as a nation.”[[5]](#footnote-5)******-*Senior Minister Yaw Osafo Marfo**

**Entrepreneurial and Vocational Training**

**** Baah-Boateng (2013) voices the criticality to empower both vocational and entrepreneurial training, establish start-up support, building bridges for youngsters to join the entrepreneurial journey; as this will create “job creators” versus “job seekers.” The group targeted are young people who do not possess the means to conclude a tertiary education and find the informal sector and self-employment not appealing enough. Studies reveal that the reason for not considering self-employment is the lack of the right skills. Therefore, the relevant opportunity for training and start-up support, would truly entice secondary school students to consider self-employment. To illustrate, there exist various programs supporting youth entrepreneurship programs including the Kenya Youth Business Trust (KYBT), which provides start-up capital, training and mentoring. The KYBT is a great stepping stone for a passionate youth who is keen to go into business (UNECA 2011; Baah-Boateng 2013).

**Granting Youth Access & Information to Support Crucial Youth Entrepreneurship**

There are numerous barriers that the youth faces when considers becoming business owners, such as:

* Lack of awareness: Without the right mentors, youth are unsure of their business potential;
* Lack of education and training programmes: Insufficient to continue to stir the entrepreneurial drive and improvement of the skill set;
* Lack of prior work and entrepreneurial experience;
* Lack of financial resources: Hard to start a business without these resources;
* Limited business networks; and
* Market barriers: Discrimination by others not accepting youth-owned businesses.[[6]](#footnote-6)

**Youth Voices Raising attention on Employment:**

An urgent call for action has come to the youth of Ghana! Now is the time to come forward and have a voice regarding Ghana’s employment. Mr. Steven Blessing Ackah, Founding President of Transform Peace Project (a youth think tank), shared his heartfelt views to the incoming Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, HON Ignatius Baffour Awuah, stressing:

* the importance to guide and serve in a mentoring capacity to Ghana’s youths as they are unsure about their future in the workforce;
* the need for better guidance as the main job creation vehicle is highly poor; and
* the need to establish systems that look at critical dimensions of employment crises and bridge the information gap.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Recommendations

* Create employment and training opportunities for fresh graduates;
* Create business opportunities and recognize local firms’ efforts for job creation;
* Create market opportunities for local goods and services;
* Maximize benefits for the local communities;
* Develop skilled and qualified personnel locally;
* Adopt new and appropriate technologies in the labour market; and
* Encourage early saving habits and investment locally.

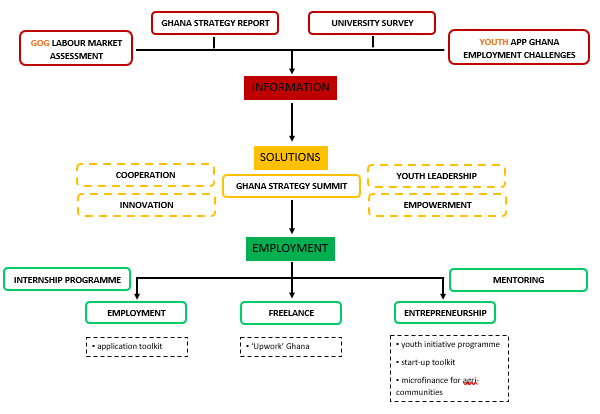
Action Plan

The action plan recognized three distinct sectors for improvement:

1. Employment (via employer)
2. Freelance activities
3. Entrepreneurship

With the aims to

* Gather the right **information** for a youth employment policy
* Deliverable 1.1: Comprehensive Ghana labour market assessment together with the Government of Ghana;
* Deliverable 1.3: Annual university graduate employment survey;
* Deliverable 1.4: App for Ghana Youth in which they share their situation, challenges and aspirations -> identify youth employment challenges and role of universities
* **Empower youth** and seek innovative success strategies
* Deliverable 2.1: Ghana Youth Summit 2018 on Youth Employment (possible co-operation with G200 Youth Association) with a special focus on:
* Cooperation
* Innovation
* Youth leadership
* Entrepreneurial empowerment
* Deliverable 2.2: Support the expansion of international apprenticeship programmes.
* Provide necessary **employment guidance**
* Deliverable 3.1: National internship programme
* Deliverable 3.2: Interactive online application toolkit
* Deliverable 3.3: ‘Upwork’ Ghana to support freelance activities
* Deliverable 3.4: Entrepreneurship guidance including
* Youth initiative programme
* Start-Up toolkit
* Microfinance programme for rural communities
* Deliver feedback
* Deliverable 4.1: Conclude and reflect upon 12-month sprint with Ghana Strategy Report 2019



Authors and Acknowledgements

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
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The authors would like to express their gratitude toall the members of the National Election Early Warning and Response Group (NEEWARG), China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), the Election Situation Room 2016, National Peace Council, Kofi Annan Peace Keeping and Training Center, USAID, Legon Center for Diplomacy, West Africa Network for Peace Building and all political parties and dignitaries in Ghana, especially: H.E. John Agyekum Kufour, Hon. Lawyer Samson Kwaku Boafo, Hon. Elvis Ankrah, Mr. Patrick Acheampong, Dr. Francis Ashong Katai, Prof. Mathew Tsamenyi, Mr. Richard Ofori Atta, Dr. Kwame Kyei Baffour and the Enthamoty Youth team. Further, extending thanks to the Consultative Head Executives Forum team.

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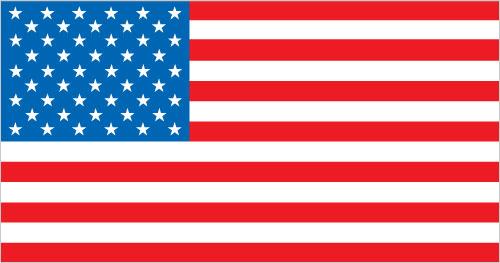
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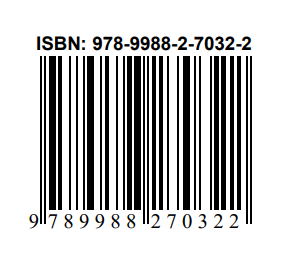
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