



A report on Ghana national level activity submitted to the INCLUDE platform meeting

## National Policy Dialogue on job creation for the youth in Ghana

**INCLUDE PLATFORM MEETING**

### Introduction

**Youth unemployment and joblessness remain major socio-economic and political problems in Ghana, despite the impressive growth performance witnessed between 2000 and 2014. Indeed, the country's inability to translate its impressive economic growth into productive and sustainable jobs has been a major concern.**

The issue of youth unemployment thus dominated the political discourse during the December 2016 presidential and parliamentary election campaigns. In the light of this, ACET in collaboration with the INCLUDE Platform organized two national dialogues on youth employment and unemployment challenges in Ghana in 2016 to engage the various political parties contesting the elections to reach a consensus on the subject matter. "Job creation" became the key manifesto theme of the main opposition party, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which went on to win the election. The NPP titled its manifesto, "Change: An agenda for jobs". The employment generation strategy in the NPP manifesto was anchored on industrialization linked to modernized agriculture around three key campaign issues – "One District, One Factory", "One Village, One Dam" and "Planting for Food and Jobs". This suggested that the party would be committed to promoting employment generation once in government.

### Objectives

Since the new government is still committed to the above-mentioned employment generation strategy of industrialization linked to modernized agriculture, the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET) in collaboration with the INCLUDE Platform organized a policy dialogue on job creation in Ghana on 28 February 2018. This dialogue was the third in a series focused on government's policy initiatives towards job creation, including how these policies will be rolled out to impact positively on youth unemployment. The policy dialogue also served as a platform to launch the Youth and Skills Chapter of the Pan African Coalition for Transformation (PACT).

#### The objectives were to :

- Build on the previous two dialogues by interrogating how policy makers are going to unpack the above interventions of government;
- Interrogate implementation, know-how and possible delivery challenges in implementing these policies;
- Look at skills development and the ability to translate government policies into real jobs for the youth in Ghana.

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## Activities

The national policy dialogue on job creation for the youth in Ghana was held on 28 February, 2018 in Accra.

### National Policy Dialogue on job creation, 28 February 2018

Although the dialogue was open to selected invited stakeholders within the youth employment space, media advertisement on radio prior to the programme attracted a considerable number of participants to discuss the issues within the framework of government policy on job creation. Specifically, the dialogue brought together stakeholders, which included policy makers and representatives of the private sector, civil society, academia, development partners, youth networks and the media. Among senior management members of ACET that participated in the dialogue, President and Founder Dr. K.Y. Amoako was present to give the needed support.

The dialogue began with a welcome statement from the Director of Advisory Services of ACET, Dr. Edward K. Brown, who noted that the ACET-INCLUDE dialogue was the third in a series of policy initiatives on job creation and youth employment.

This was followed by opening remarks from the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Ghana, H.E. Ron Strikker. Ambassador Striker highlighted the relevance of job creation and youth employment to both Ghana and the Netherlands. 'To help address the challenge of youth unemployment, the Kingdom of The Netherlands has put in place programmes to promote the development of entrepreneurial skills among the youth,' Ambassador Striker said.

In a presentation on Ghana's economic policies towards sustainable job creation for the youth, which set the tone for discussion, Professor William Baah-Boateng of the University of Ghana, highlighted some interesting stylized facts about youth unemployment, advanced reasons for the trends, and outlined various government employment creation strategies and initiatives. The following were issues laid out for discussion:

- Should Ghana be concerned about jobs or employment?
- What are the constraints of job creation or employment generation?
- Relevance of Ghana's education system for job creation
- How do we make TVET and job creation work?

A panel session moderated by Professor William Baah-Boateng and chaired by Dr. Yaw Ansu, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Finance and Chief Economist-Emeritus, ACET, engaged representatives of the Trades Union Congress, the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, the Ghana Employers Association, civil society and youth networks on employment generation for the youth. In the end, the panel members shared the following policy recommendations towards job creation:

- Government should move from programmes to policies that support the private sector and incentivizes them to venture into sectors that have high employment generation potentials.
- To be relevant in the future of work, there is need to train people in adaptable skills.
- University curricula need to be revised to respond to the demands of the job market.
- To be able to create more jobs, a functional Labour Market Information System is needed to provide information on the labour market.
- The National Employment Policy document needs to be revisited.
- More policy direction is needed for the agricultural sector.
- The state must support youth entrepreneurship.
- The informal sector should be formalized to help deal with challenges of unemployment.

## Outcome

The third ACET-INCLUDE Platform dialogue on job creation for the youth was attended by about 70 participants representing major stakeholders within the youth employment and job creation space in Ghana. The event was covered by print and electronic media, including television, radio and online sources. Some of the major media houses that covered the event were the *Daily Graphic*, the *Ghanaian Times*, the *Business and Financial Times*, the *Finder*, TV3, Metro TV, TV Africa, GHOne TV, Joy FM Citi FM, Starr FM, Financial Tribune, Ghanaweb and Accra Mails.

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## Output

- A Concept Note
- Background Paper on Youth unemployment and Joblessness challenge in Ghana: Revisiting the Issues
- Final Report of the third national dialogue
- Stakeholders' engagement forum

28th February 2018, National Policy Dialogue on Job Creation for the Youth in Ghana. The dialogue was reported in the media as follows:

## Online media

### 1. Financial Tribune

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/world-economy/82874/despite-growth-ghana-jobless-rate-rising>

### 2. Ghanaweb

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/business/Economic-growth-not-translating-into-jobs-Economist-630927>

### 3. Business and Financial Times

<https://thebftonline.com/business/economic-growth-not-translating-into-jobs-economist/>

### 4. Myjoyonline

<https://www.myjoyonline.com/business/2018/March-3rd/economic-growth-not-translating-into-jobs-economist.php>

### 5. Modern Ghana

<https://www.modernghana.com/news/839031/still-no-jobs-in-ghana-despite-economic-growth.html>

### 6. Ghanamma

<https://www.ghanamma.com/2018/03/02/economic-growth-not-translating-into-jobs-economist/>

### 7. African Eye Report

<http://africaneyereport.com/economist-ghanas-economic-growth-doesnt-reflect-in-job-creation/>

### 8. Eveyo.com

<https://sites.eveyo.com/news/339624-economic-growth-not-translating-into-jobs-%E2%80%93-economist.html>

### 9. Ghananewsone

<http://ghananewsone.com/2018/03/government-is-determined-to-create-productive-employment-for-the-youth-dr-baah-boateng/>

### 10. Accra Mails

<http://www.accramails.com/2018/03/05/government-is-determined-to-create-productive-employment-for-the-youth-dr-baah-boateng/>

## TV

1. TV Africa
2. Metro TV
3. TV3
4. Angel TV
5. GHOne

## Radio

1. Peace FM
2. Citi FM
3. Joy FM
4. Starr FM
5. Pink FM
6. Onua FM

## Print

1. B&FT: *Economic growth not translating into jobs - Economist*, March 2, pg. 3
2. The Ghanaian Times: *Incentivise private sector to absolve the unemployed - Govt urged*, March 2, pg. 28
3. The Finder: *Labour market data, key to addressing joblessness – Expert*, March 2, pg. 4
4. Daily Graphic: *Labour Ministry develops web portal*, March 1, pg. 48
5. Accra Mail: *Government is determined to create productive employment for the youth – Dr. Baah-Boateng*, March 5

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28 February 2018