

## Youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa

As outlined in the [INCLUDE one-pager on youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa](#) published in March 2015, there are several concerns about the employment of youth in Sub-Saharan Africa. Issues such as job stability, proper training, informal work, under-employment and unemployment are posing challenges for the large number of Sub-Saharan African youth. The earlier one-pager described how these issues are increasingly being put on the agenda of researchers and discussed at conferences in Africa. This one-pager follows up on the earlier overview, by outlining the recent conferences, seminars and online resources on this theme.

### Conferences and seminars

The **12th Annual Migration Meeting** hosted by the Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA) discussed migration from Africa to Europe. In seven sessions at the meeting, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 20-24 April 2015, insights were presented on the relationship between migration and education, human capital and remittances. A special session underlined the [economic potential](#) of migration for African countries. The papers presented can be found [here](#).

The mutual learning workshop **'What works for youth employment? Innovative experiences in the transition to formality'** was organized as part of the implementation of the Resolution of the 101st International Labour Conference "The Youth Employment Crisis: Call for action". The workshop was hosted in Peru, Lima, but its broad thematic design and the wide range of themes discussed are of relevance to researchers and policymakers in Sub-Saharan Africa as well. One of the conclusions was that "when youth first enter the labour market, they should have labour rights and attain learning that improves future employment or entrepreneurial opportunities". This conclusion, and more, can be found in the [meeting document](#), which is the result of the workshop on 22-24 April 2015.

Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, was host to the African equivalent of the workshop held in Peru. The meeting, **'What works in youth employment'**, hosted by the ILO, was a multi-stakeholder meeting with representatives of governments and workers' and employers' organizations from nine African nations. Similar to the Peruvian workshop, this meeting, which was held on 29 and 30 June 2015, was part of the ILO Knowledge Sharing Events to provide key insights and contextual explanations for themes related to youth employment. One of these important contextual findings was that African nations need to strengthen the evaluation evidence underpinning public employment programmes in order to design and implement future policies. The event report covering this conclusion can be found on the [ILO page](#), together with other products from this meeting.

Addis-Ababa also hosted the conference **'Investing in Youth and Ensuring Decent Jobs to Harness the Demographic Dividend'** on 15 July 2015 - the first-ever World Youth Skills Day. This conference was a side-event of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. So far only a [concept note](#) outlining the objective and scope of this meeting has been published.

The **'Southern and eastern African Youth Employment Knowledge Sharing Forum'** took place from 19-22 July 2015 in Harare, Zimbabwe. This follow-up meeting to 'What works in youth employment' in Addis-Ababa, also coordinated by ILO, discussed and disseminated innovative approaches and good practices for skills development and measuring the impact of youth employment initiatives. It produced substantial recommendations for establishing a focus on job creation, youth employment and strategic partnerships impacting lives. The presentations held during this forum can be found [here](#).

From 3-6 August 2015, Durban, South Africa, hosted the **'Youth in Agriculture Summit for Southern Africa'**. The summit addressed an important issue in southern Africa, which is the declining involvement of youth in agricultural practices. One of the products of this summit was a [declaration](#), which, among other things demands commitment to mainstream youth in agricultural policies at all levels of southern African political bodies.

From 7-11 September, a World Congress on the theme **'The Changing World of Work: Implications for Labour and Employment Relations and Social Protection'** was held in Cape Town, South Africa. The focus of the Congress, which was organized by the International Labour and Employment Relations Association (ILERA), was [labour relations and social protection](#). [Papers](#) presented included ['Human Resource Development for Economic Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa'](#) and ['Africa's Diasporas and the Challenge of Employment Opportunities: Exiled Zimbabwe nationals in the UK'](#).

Recently, the Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) organized the **'National Stakeholders Consultative Workshop on Youth Employment'** in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. This national consultation raised youth unemployment as a key theme for the policy agenda in Tanzania. Youth struggle to find capital, premising jobs and entrepreneurial skills for self-employment activities. A review of this consultation, including an interview with the Director for Employment in the Tanzanian Ministry of Labour and Employment, can be found [here](#).

## Publications

Below is a selection of recent online publications on the theme of youth employment:

- **Brixiova, Z. (2015).** ['Skills, training and youth entrepreneurship in Africa'](#). *INCLUDE*, 10 June 2015.  
Brixiova argues that entrepreneurship, if supported by the right policies, can effectively solve youth employment in Africa.
- **Balt, M. (2015).** ['Youth unemployment in Mali: a magnet for criminals and terrorists'](#). *The Broker*, 23 April 2015.  
Balt urges the Malian government and the international community to address youth unemployment because of the vulnerability of unemployed youth to being recruited by criminals and terrorists.
- **Keita, A. (2015).** ['Creating good job opportunities at local level: a way to stop young people being attracted to terrorism'](#). *The Broker*, 26 August 2015.  
Providing more context to the opinion article by Balt, Keita argues that it is necessary for the local economic environment in Mali to offer more opportunities to unemployed Malian youth.
- **Mihyo, P.B. (ed.) (2014).** ['Employment Policies and Unemployment in Eastern and Southern Africa'](#). *OSSREA*.  
The authors present several case studies on employment in eastern and southern Africa, including youth unemployment.
- **African Development Bank (2015).** ['Innovative Programme to Improve Employment and Income Outcomes for Young People'](#). *AllAfrica.com*, 05 May 2015.  
A lack of skills, knowledge and access to land are hindering African youth from profitably running agribusinesses. The African Development Bank is developing a new programme to address this, 'Empowering Novel Agri-Business-Led Employment for Youth in African Agriculture (ENABLE Youth)'.
- **Resnick, D. & Thurlow, J. (eds.) (2015).** ['African Youth and the Persistence of Marginalization: Employment, Politics, and Prospects for Change'](#). *Routledge*.

The authors compare the marginalization of African youth with other regions and generations, including youth employment patterns.

- **Bhorat, H., Cassim, A., Kanbur, R., Stanwix, B. & Yu, D. (forthcoming). 'Minimum Wages and Youth: the Case of South Africa'. Paper commissioned for the African Economic Research Consortium Plenary Session on 'Youth Employment in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges', December 2014.<sup>1</sup>**

The authors investigate the impact of minimum wages on employment, wages and non-wage benefits for South African youth.

- **Olawale I. (forthcoming). 'What is in a Job? The Social Context of Youth (Un)Employment in Africa'. Paper commissioned for the African Economic Research Consortium Plenary Session on 'Youth Employment in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges', December 2014.<sup>2</sup>**

Olawale analyses the social dimensions of youth informal sector employment strategies in Africa.

- **Louise Fox and Alun Thomas (forthcoming). 'Skills or jobs? A Diagnostic of Youth Employment Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa'. Paper commissioned for the African Economic Research Consortium Plenary Session on 'Youth Employment in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges', December 2014.<sup>3</sup>**

Fox and Thomas analyse the macroeconomics of youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Web resources

- ILO [infographic](#) on youth employment: 'A Generation at Risk: global employment trends for youth 2013'.
- [Youth Employment Inventory](#) - a World Bank database that provides information on regional projects, including skills trainings, entrepreneurship promotion and employment services.
- [Youth Employment Knowledge Sharing Platform](#) - an official ILO platform for the exchange and information and knowledge on youth employment as part of the Youth Employment Programme. Note: non-ILO staff will need to request access.

## Videos

The following videos deal with youth employment in Africa:

- [documentary](#) of YACAN & YAN Finland and Plan Sierra Leone on youth unemployment in Sierra Leone
- [ILO video](#) on youth employment and its relationship to sustainable development in Kenya
- [small documentaries](#) on YEF Africa's Youth to Youth Fund for youth entrepreneurship.
- [interview](#) with Stephen Pursey, Director of the ILO Multilateral Cooperation Department on the challenges of youth unemployment at the Financing for Development Conference in Addis-Ababa.
- [interview](#) with Aeneas Chapinga Chuma, Assistant-Director-General and Regional Director for Africa ILO regarding the skills that can enable youth to get productive employment.

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**Weblink: <http://includeplatform.net/one-pager-on-youth-employment-in-sub-saharan-africa/>**

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