



DEBATE III – Mechanisms to promote access to employment for youths

This two-pager sets out the highlights of Debate III, part of a series of five Dialogs on Inclusive Policies and Youth Employment in the Extractive Sector in Mozambique held in 2016 and presented on 25 May 2017.

Debate III focused on promoting access to employment for youth. In general, it was agreed that a structural change for the inclusion of youth through access to decent jobs requires more than a single strategy – it requires strategies involving diverse governmental/non governmental sectors and a set of complementary and integrated policies (for instance, involving, apart from the Youth government sector, the *Gender and Social Action, Mineral Resources and Energy, Economic and Finance, Labour*, among others).

One of the ways proposed to encourage youth to access employment opportunities was to **promote individual initiatives**. The importance of personal skills (such as creativity, attitude, engagement, autonomy, free enterprise, and even affection and love) was emphasized, for both formal employment as well as entrepreneurship/self-employment. IFPELAC (Cabo Delgado) presented the *Competência, Habilidade e Atitude (CHA)* approach, which aims to stimulate the competence, ability and attitude of professionals.

Among the challenges discussed was the differences in work culture (between local cultures and enterprise cultures). It was agreed that there is a need to show respect for the diversity of work cultures (as discussed in Debate II). The discussion also emphasized the so-called **'passivity' of youth** as a factor impeding their access to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. It was suggested that more *initiative and awareness of rights and responsibilities* is needed on the part of youth. It was also emphasized that successful experiences of self-employment may require a *change in attitude* on the part of youth. Other participants talked of the need for companies looking to *adapt to the work context* (e.g., with respect to deadlines, work patterns, and criteria for the performance of the services). Considering the poverty in which most youth in Mozambique live, it was asked whether young people really have the so-called 'individual free enterprise' capability to decide on their

activities. Given the necessity of employment for survival, often the only choice is to follow the work pattern determined by the employer (sometimes based on another work culture, whether foreign, from the capital or from another province), leaving young people with little autonomy or power to choose.

During this discussion, the risk of associating (or 'blaming') the lack of success in promoting decent jobs solely on lack of initiative or the 'attitude' of youth was highlighted. Other factors and barriers also need to be taken into account, such as: existing inequalities in access to employment and education (Debate II); the fact that the practice of 'entrepreneurship' in Mozambique started only a little more than a decade ago and is still new (for both young and old); and the (ongoing) process of adapting to a labour context in which, in addition to government jobs, other key sectors have emerged, such as associations, NGOs, the private sector (including micro, small and medium sized enterprises, and megaprojects in the extractive industry), and entrepreneurial activities. Additional challenges in the current context are related to the increase in informal/precarious jobs, as well as illegal work (such as some mining activities, which involve mainly youth from local communities).

Education and vocational training, through public or private technical and vocational training centres, is also needed to promote access to employment. Among the opportunities, emphasis has been placed on qualifications (e.g., through training that is freely accessible or targeted to certain groups, such as the national population, local population, women, youth, among others, who have had less access to jobs – see Debate II). Investing in training policies has been referred to as a strategy for sustainability, as such knowledge (training) remains in Mozambique when companies operating in the extractive industry leave (Debate V). It was suggested that companies prioritize the training of the local population and ensure the inclusion of the local community from the outset. Some ways to promote employment and employability are:

- ◆ **Invest significantly in vocational training:** Many youth choose their training based on the influence of friends, parents and the community – not individual inclination/vocation or desire.
- ◆ **Provide more training in places where extractive industry companies operate:** To encourage the participation of people who cannot leave their villages (examples were given of miners having difficulty accessing the training centres), provide training in local communities.
- ◆ **Ensure quality training:** Guarantee the minimum necessary conditions for the specific thematic skills or professional trainings to take place (Basic requirements referred during the debates included:

laboratories with specific technical equipment to the training, qualified teachers in specific thematic of the training, teachers with adequate remuneration and motivation to work, etc.).

- ◆ **Provide post-training follow-up:** Facilitate access to information on potential jobs in the area in which the training is conducted.

(Pre-)professional **apprenticeships** and the need to formulate policies to promote first employment after graduation from education institutions were emphasized as facilitating young people's access to job opportunities.

Regarding apprenticeships, a *mixed model* is often implemented (apprenticeships where one receives a subsidy and others where one does not). However, the need for subsidies was questioned: some participants said that the subsidies provide continuity (completion of the apprenticeship and greater access to employment after training), while others said that the poverty context may make youth enter apprenticeships for the purpose of remuneration, instead of based on interest or need. Some extractive industry companies use apprenticeships as a training mechanism in a specific area (e.g., Company Montepuez Ruby Mining, based in Cabo Delgado Province). It was also pointed out that, in addition to formal training, technical skills and experience gained from family or community teaching (e.g. as carpenters, locksmiths, painters, etc.) can also be of value.

The government **policies and public funds, including for community associations**, were another priority issue in the debates. Examples of ongoing public policies to promote employment include: *public funds*¹ (to stimulate entrepreneurship and self-employment projects); *employment centres* (which facilitate access to jobs); and *technical-professional training* and support in terms of work-related materials/tools (to boost associations). An opportunity generated by these policies would be the inclusion of people (associated or not) who live in a situation of vulnerability and who, without these support mechanisms, would not have the minimum conditions necessary to start self-employment activities or to compete for job vacancies.

Challenges were identified in relation to the various support modalities. For example, cases were cited of young people using *loans* for purposes not related to the project designed (and ultimately failing to repay the loans). The importance of returning funds to ensure the sustainability of policies and access to funds by other beneficiaries needs to be reinforced.

Although seen as insufficient, the view was expressed that most existing policies are relevant and that the main challenge is implementation. For instance, *public funds* should be allocated and returned through fair and transparent criteria and employment centres should be increased in number, in terms of access by those in rural

areas and in relation to adequate resources (trained staff and infrastructure) to facilitate customer care. It was suggested that an evaluation be conducted to determine the most effective policies/mechanisms to assist in determining budgetary priorities.

Options for developing strategies include:

- ◆ **Once-off support** (e.g., benefits, small loans, support for work materials, etc.) and/or **strategies for structural change** (government investments to promote the private sector and generate large-scale employment for the whole population)
- ◆ **Universal policies** (for the whole population) and/or **affirmative action/positive discrimination** (for the inclusion of groups with less access to employment opportunities)

In addition to government policies and funds, participants mentioned *projects* implemented by NGOs or supported by international cooperation partnerships. Regarding the private sector, *tax exemption policies* were suggested to encourage companies in the extractive industry to be more inclusive and to promote the employment of youth (or other vulnerable groups), whether within strategies for corporate social responsibility (see Debate V) or not. However, during the debate others stressed that companies (especially international ones) should provide social support, regardless of tax incentives. Others warned of the risk of companies replacing the role of the State in implementing social policies.

Finally, the importance of **collecting data on employment** was highlighted (information e.g., on the *labour market*, *available jobs*, and *young candidates looking for jobs*² etc.). The creation of the Labor Market Monitoring Group (*Observatório do Mercado de Trabalho*, MITESS) was positively noted, including the production of a bulletin and improvement of the information system. The electronic system for the payroll list (*Sistema Electrónico da Folha de Relação Nominal*) was also noted as a breakthrough. Challenges cited included³:

- ◆ Dissemination and use of models for data collection and consolidation of the data collection process; the collection of data from various economic areas (including mining); strengthening the relationship with enterprises and updating the data on jobs created; the monitoring of admissions records; and the operationalization of the IT management platform
- ◆ Capturing data on specific jobs, such as artisanal mining informal activities in the extractive sector and in quarries, salt mines, sand pits, etc.

Plataforma Inclusão is an intersectoral initiative launched in 2016 as a contribution to the sharing of knowledge and identification of concrete actions to promote inclusive policies and decent employment for youths in Mozambique.

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¹ Some of the modalities were: investment infrastructure, credit, social areas, cross-cutting areas, development of the district/FDD and exclusively for youth (*Pró Jovem* and Support Fund for Youth Initiatives/FAIJ).

² See presentations by the Labor Market Monitoring Group/MITESS, Quelimane, October 2016, Pemba, November 2016. [Presentation accessible in Portuguese in the website *plataformainclusao.org*](#)

³ See presentatiaons by IFPELAC Headquarters/Maputo and IFPELAC, Cabo Delgado, Pemba, November 2016. [Presentation accessible in Portuguese in the website *plataformainclusao.org*](#)