

## Provisional programme

# Boosting youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: creating opportunities and building skills

Wednesday 11 – Saturday 14 July 2018 | WP1609

In a climate of concern around global economic growth and productivity, global youth unemployment is again on the rise, with young people in emerging economies particularly badly affected.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the African Development Bank estimates that without concerted action, nearly 50% of youth will be unemployed or economically inactive by 2025. An estimated 18 million new jobs will be needed each year until 2035 to absorb the growing labour force in the region.

However, the problem is not only unemployment, but underemployment and a lack of secure and decent work. The informal economy, where many young people find a livelihood, may not absorb all jobless youth and offers largely insecure work. This is particularly challenging in agriculture, where work is highly unstable and low paid, putting off potential young recruits to the sector. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest migration rate in the world and the evidence suggests that a lack of decent work opportunities is driving this. The region continues to suffer the highest youth working poverty rates globally at almost 70 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

Achieving decent work for all is key not only to promoting the wellbeing of African youth and driving economic prosperity in the region, but also in achieving the sustainable development goals as highlighted by Goal 8, which aims to “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. This also means ensuring that women and girls, minorities, disabled people and those affected by HIV/AIDS are not excluded from meaningful participation in the economy.

Young people have the potential to shape the future of their countries, helping to curb instability and conflict and grow markets for international investment. There are, however, real questions about the prospects for job creation in contexts of violence and instability.

Up to now, in terms of policy response, there has been a strong focus on building education and employability skills in Sub-Saharan Africa, which play a huge role in improving young

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people's lives and are particularly important for girls. However, education is only one part of a complex picture. It is of course important to ensure that young people have the types of skills needed in the 21st century workforce, including digital literacy, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. But there are also questions as to whether a focus on the 'skills gap' through education and skill building is appropriate if, in reality, there is mainly a 'jobs gap' and jobless growth, a distinction which has huge implications for understanding the causes of exclusion and marginalisation and strategies to tackle them.

This Wilton Park event will explore the complex picture of youth unemployment and under-employment in Sub-Saharan Africa, exploring how to go beyond entrepreneurship and skills development, to come up with more comprehensive solutions. This requires challenging assumptions and the asking of broader questions. To what extent, for example, is a deeper transformation of African economies needed in order to create decent work for all?

At the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM) in London in April 2018, Heads stressed the importance of creating meaningful employment opportunities for the Commonwealth's growing youth populations. They agreed on the need to invest in a systems approach to support young people, including through skills building, entrepreneurship, apprenticeships and the need for better data to target interventions effectively. Is a new ambitious global partnership on Youth Employment, as referenced at CHOGM, the way forward?

This event is part of the 'Wilton Park Youth Dialogues: powering the future' series, which focuses on young people, with a view to generating a positive and action-oriented debate, looking at youth ambitions and opportunities in relation to employment, education, security and peace.

**In partnership with the Department for International Development (DFID) and the British Council and in association with Restless Development, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS).**

This Wilton Park dialogue is preceded by a half-day invitation-only event for donors which will be facilitated by IDS and is part of DFID's Knowledge for Development Programme.

## Wednesday 11 July

1700

Participants arrive

1900

Informal dinner

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_513739.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_513739.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Thursday 12 July

0800-0845

Breakfast

0900-0945

## Welcome and introduction

### **Alison Hilliard**

Programme Director, Wilton Park

### **Rachel Turner**

Director for Economic Development, Department for International Development (DFID), London

### **Harriett Baldwin (video message)**

Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

### **Colm McGivern**

Director, South and Southern Africa, British Council South Africa, Johannesburg

### **Bernice Hlagala**

Director for Youth Development, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Government of South Africa, Pretoria

0945-1100

## 1. Making the case for concerted action

The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in London in April 2018 and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth conference in Geneva in May 2018 both stressed the importance of concerted action on youth employment and the need to stimulate new investment in developing countries to boost job creation and build a global consensus on what works.

Building on from these events, this session will explore what a new global initiative could achieve against the current landscape of youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa. It will look at how to address barriers to youth participation in decent work, as well as emerging investment opportunities, in the context of the massive macroeconomic and demographic challenges faced.

### **Patricia Scotland**

Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Secretariat, London

### **Sherifah Tumusiime**

Commonwealth Youth Award Winner for Africa and Europe 2018; Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Zimba Women, Kampala

1100-1145

Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1145-1300

## 2. What does a decent living look like for young Africans today?

This session will bring to life the employment barriers that young people face, turning to youth business leaders to explore what environmental factors and solutions helped their innovations go to scale in the context of huge challenges. Young thought leaders will also give an insight into what a decent living looks like for young Africans and how these aspirations could translate into tangible actions for governments, the private sector and donors to deliver.

### **Knight Ganje**

Founder, Director, Africa, H&G Advertising, Gaborone

### **Gerald Chirinda**

Chief Executive Officer, Tapiwa Capital, Harare

**Gloria Michelle Otieno-Muka**

Chief Executive Officer, Recours Four Kenya Consultants Ltd (R4K), Nairobi

**Peter Awin**

Chief Executive Officer, CowTribe Technology Ltd, Tamale

1300-1430

Lunch

1430-1600

**3. Making investment work for youth: improving the effectiveness of youth employment interventions**

Why has large scale investment from financial institutions to date not produced transformative results to tackle youth unemployment across Africa? Can such investment ever work, given that the majority of young Africans will never work in the formal, waged sector? Why is support to youth entrepreneurs not cost effective to achieve transformation at scale? And, how can countries best equip young people with the skills they will need in the future to respond to growth sectors?

This session will take a critical look at investment barriers in developing countries and what interventions have already been implemented in the region, identifying good practice as well as what has not worked. The discussion will draw upon the range of options that investors, donors and practitioners have at their disposal to boost youth employment.

Has the problem been correctly diagnosed? Is it a wider jobs problem which is overwhelmingly youthful or are there barriers specific to young people, which exclude them from decent work?

**Louise Fox**

Chief Economist, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington DC

**Aggrey Kibenge**

Under Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports, Kampala

**Laura Brewer**

Senior Skills and Employment Specialist, International Labour Organization (ILO), Pretoria

1600-1630

Tea/coffee

1630-1745

**4. Breakout session: addressing barriers to decent jobs for all**

This breakout session will look at the barriers to decent jobs for all, focusing on four themes:

**Doing development differently: supporting youth-led initiatives for decent jobs for all**

**Facilitator: Rachel Proefke**

Senior International Research Manager, Restless Development Uganda, Kampala

**Leave no one behind: eliminating gender obstacles and barriers for the disabled and other vulnerable groups to secure decent jobs**

**Facilitator: Abella Bateyunga**

Founder, Tanzania Bora Initiative, Dar es Salaam

**Effective education for entrepreneurship and creating enabling environments for youth entrepreneurs and youth-led business start-ups**

**Facilitator: Ocheck Msuva**

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Bridge For Change, Dar es Salaam

## **Innovative financing and high-risk investments: how to effectively get finance to young people?**

**Facilitator: Neil Fleming**

Business Development Director, Challenges Worldwide, Edinburgh

1745-1845

### **5. Feedback from breakout groups**

1845-1900

### **6. Briefing from the IDS Learning Journey**

**Jim Sumberg**

Research Fellow, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Brighton

1900

Reception hosted by

**Ben Llewellyn-Jones**

Deputy High Commissioner to South Africa, British High Commission, Pretoria

1930

Dinner

## **Friday 13 July**

0800-0845

Breakfast and checkout

0900-1030

### **7. Partnerships for decent work: the challenges of co-ordinating to tackle the youth employment challenge together**

This session will re-examine the roles of the private sector, government, donors, civil society and foreign direct investment in creating more and better jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people. How to enable more investment in productive sectors? How to better coordinate this work? How to make skills and tertiary education truly demand-led? How does the tertiary education system need to respond to the youth employment challenge? How to facilitate meaningful, impactful and lasting cross-sectoral partnerships and cooperation?

This session will bring together the different strands of the conversation so far, looking to chart a way forward with concrete suggestions for next steps and action. How can the various actors coordinate and work together to help young people improve their lives and propel their countries to prosperity? Does the solution to delivering large numbers of better jobs at scale lie in attracting greater investment, or in empowering entrepreneurs and improving the business environment?

**Prudence Ngwenya**

Head, Human Resource and Youth Development, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa

**Oley Dibba-Wadda**

Director, Human Capital, Youth and Skills Development, African Development Bank Group, Abidjan

**Tashmia Ismail-Saville**

Chief Executive Officer, Youth Employment Service (YES), Johannesburg

**Lutz Ziob**

Dean, 4Afrika Academy, Microsoft Corporation, Bryanston

1030-1100

Tea/coffee

1100-1200

### **8. Breakout session: partnering to drive change**

This second breakout session will look at the key sectors and actors that need to work together to bring about change, focusing on four key areas:

**How do schools and vocational training institutions need to change the better to prepare young people for existing job markets in urban and rural areas?**

**Facilitator: Vuyokazi Mafilika**

Director, Student Development and Support, Department of Higher Education and Training, Pretoria

**How can international and development finance institutions be mobilised to create more, and better, jobs for youth?**

**Facilitator: Alex MacGillivray**

Director, Development Impact - Evaluations, CDC Group, London

**How can the private sector and private investment be mobilised to create more, and better, jobs for youth?**

**Facilitator: Mfundo Mohammed**

Managing Director, Onswaziline, Mbabane

**How can digital initiatives harness the power of technology to create decent jobs for young people in Africa?**

**Tashmia Ismail-Saville**

Chief Executive Officer, Youth Employment Service (YES), Johannesburg

1200-1300

## **9. Feedback from breakout groups**

1300-1430

Lunch

1430-1600

## **10. Going forward: addressing the gap in the youth employment architecture**

A new permanent global structure on youth employment could help to unite partner governments, donors, investors, international finance institutions and delivery partners to deliver jobs at scale. What are the practical barriers to this happening? What role would such an institution have to help countries mobilise investment behind country plans to increase youth employment? How would a policy consensus for partner governments improve skills interventions? What would a genuine partnership look like that unites supply and demand side actors? And, how could a new institution support the creation of jobs for youth? How would young people have a voice at the table?

**Rachel Turner**

Director for Economic Development, Department for International Development (DFID), London

**David Woolcombe**

Editor, The Case for Urgent Action on Youth Employment; Founder and Chair of Trustees, Peace Child International, Cambridge

**Yunus Carrim**

Chairperson, Standing Committee on Finance, National Assembly; Member, Board of Directors, Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and IMF, Cape Town

1600-1630

Tea/coffee

1630-1645

## **11. Evaluation survey**

Completion of online survey

1645-1715

## **12. Going forward: youth panel responses**

This session will hear from a panel of young Africans working in the space of employment responding to the discussions and proposals made throughout the event.

**Nancy Amunga**

Director, Dana Communications Limited, Nairobi

**Grace Mwaura**

Programme Coordinator, African Academy of Science (AAS), Nairobi

**Lawrence Muli**

Assistant Programme Officer (Africa), Commonwealth Secretariat, London

**1715-1830**

### **13. Conclusions, commitments and next steps**

Final discussion and endorsement of action points.

**1900**

Reception

**1930**

Dinner

## **Saturday 14 July**

**0900**

Participants depart

**This is a preview programme and as such may be subject to change.**

**This is an invitation only conference.**

Enquiries about participation to: Lisa Elvy, Project Manager

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