

GOVERNANCE REGIONAL INTEGRATION ECONOMICS AGRICULTURE TRADE

GREAT

insights



Youth employment in fragile countries

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About GREAT Insights
Governance, Regional integration, Economics, Agriculture and Trade (GREAT) Insights is ECDPM's magazine covering a wide range of topics related to economic development in Africa and the developing world. *GREAT Insights* gathers expert analysis and commentary from a wide variety of stakeholders with different perspectives.

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Coverphoto:

Helina, (centre) 25, works for a real estate construction firm in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. She is overseeing the construction of three apartment buildings. Women working in construction used to be a rare sight in Addis but because of a construction boom, more women are wearing hard hats. World Bank research shows that sectors that are traditionally male-dominated provide an opportunity for women to earn higher returns. Photo: © Stephan Gladieu / World Bank, Flickr.

Erratum:

In the Brian Cooksey article on Railway rivalry in the EAC that was published in Volume 5 issue 4 (July 2017) we omitted to mention the source of the map on page 36. This map was produced by Africa Confidential. Permission for re-use should be obtained from Africa Confidential.



Editorial

The multi-faceted dimensions of job creation for youth in fragile states

Peaceful, stable, equitable, sustainable and prosperous development is a common ambition for all. But it seems even more pressing, and yet often more illusory in conflict-affected and fragile states. The complex environment in fragile countries means that there is no simple, let alone unique, solution towards sustainable peace and prosperity. Instead, it is more about intertwined processes and inter-connected factors.

With a rapidly growing population – more than half of this growth by 2050 expected to be in Africa - job creation is a top priority. Yet, there is no quick fix or simple recipe for providing increasing employment opportunities, in particular to an expanding youth work force, and even more so in fragile and conflict-prone contexts.

One dimension consists of seeking to improve the institutional and regulatory environment, build infrastructure and stimulate local and international productive investment. The World Bank Group, with its private arm the IFC, have been doing this for years and are tailoring the approach, based on their accumulated experience, to fit more vulnerable countries. So have some other development finance institutions (DFIs).

In Europe, the newly announced External Investment Plan (EIP) aims to harness development finance in fragile and conflict-affected countries, and in particular European DFIs and the European Investment Bank (EIB), to do exactly that. Combining the promotion of investment (including through new risk guarantee mechanisms), the provision of technical assistance, and support towards more conducive business and governance environment, the aim of the EIP is to foster development through decent work creation in more fragile countries in Africa and in the European neighbourhood. The G20 Compact for Africa, to be launched in the summer of 2017, and the recently announced German Marshall Plan with Africa, have similar ambitions to harness investment for infrastructure development and job creation in Africa.

By doing so, these initiatives intend to contribute to the necessary structural transformation of African countries, towards sustainable and inclusive industrialisation processes. The more immediate political drive, at least from a European perspective, is to address the so-called root causes of migration, based on the premises that conflicts and the absence of decent jobs, especially for youth, are major push factors to the recent immigration flows experienced in Europe from neighbourhood and sub-Saharan African countries. While such initiatives are unlikely to have a short-term effect on migration flows, the objective of contributing towards sustainable economic transformation and improved governance frameworks are, of course, welcomed.

However, operating in fragile contexts requires the integration of many other dimensions as well, including specific ones targeted at conflict-affected countries, and youth. One general characteristic is the dominance of the informal sector and the weak institutional setting. To secure their livelihood, young people tend to perform not one single professional activity, but a range of activities, combining formal and informal ones, rather than a fixed, full-time, well identified job position. In these conditions, the notion of employment itself becomes more vague and flexible. Ignoring this reality is self-defeating. Job promotion and skill training must therefore accommodate this variety and inherent vulnerability, focusing on developing a range of skills rather than specific tasks or professional training, and responding to the flexible and demanding schedules of young people.

Besides, some conflict-affected countries face challenges for re-integrating former combatants, mainly (male) youths, that can easily be recruited to violent activities and become a potential source of further instability. Providing employment opportunities for ex-combatants without discriminating or segregating them from other categories of the population is a key challenge.

Many other dimensions also have to be considered, including rural-urban dynamics with rapid urbanisation, while many sustainable employment opportunities can be further enhanced in agriculture, along value chains and sustainable food systems. In conflict-affected settings, moreover, there is peacebuilding potential in adopting a conflict sensitive approach to value chain development and integrating specific attention for youths therein. The gender dimension is also central in promoting jobs for peace and prosperity.

This issue of *GREAT Insights* brings together a range of perspectives on the pressing question of how better to promote youth employment in fragile and conflict-affected countries. As always, we hope you will enjoy them and we welcome your comments and suggestions.

By San Bilal



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Complex paths: supporting mixed livelihoods in fragile states

by Chris Maclay and John Skelton

As in most fragile states, traditional concepts of 'employment' as a singular state do not apply in Liberia. Instead, many young people navigate complex livelihoods, earning income from multiple sources. The implications of these 'portfolios of work' are outlined below.



ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, December 2014 - Trainees at UNIDO-supported workshops in the Selam Vocational College learn to maintain and repair heavy duty equipment and machinery. Photo: Unido, Flickr.com

What does 'employment' mean in fragile states?

In 2003, a World Bank report estimated unemployment in Liberia to be as high as 85%, a figure which continues to be cited in major reports and economic outlook assessments (BTI, 2014, Liberia Country Report). Less than a decade later, an International Labour Organization (ILO) Labour Force Survey in Liberia concluded that the unemployment rate was only 3.7% (2011, Report on the Liberia Labour Force Survey 2010). How is this possible? Had Liberia achieved

the most remarkable employment shift in documented history over the course of eight years? Unfortunately not – this discrepancy comes from two widely differing definitions of employment.

One of these – correlating with the 85% figure – is based on a definition of employment based on contracts, formality, and fulltime work, things which largely don't exist in economies of fragile states like Liberia. The other – associated with the 3.7% figure – is based on a definition which includes any work at all, paid or unpaid, and inclusive of short-term work. Clearly, these black-and-white definitions do not

help us understand the complexity of the situation on the ground. So what does employment for youth really look like in Liberia?

Findings from an initial sample of participants in the baseline survey of 'Prospects', a youth employment programme implemented in Liberia by the international NGO Mercy Corps with support from the Swedish Embassy (see www.prospectsliberia.com for more information) provide some insights. While just 0.7% reported having a full-time job with a written contract, fully 80% had some form of income from work-related activities. Unemployment of respondents could therefore be understood either at as much as 99.3%, or as little as 20%, depending on definitions. Those 80% are certainly not 'employed' in the sense that the term is commonly understood (with stable income and regular hours), but they are not fully unemployed, either. In fact as many as 46% of youth that reported one form of income had had two (or more) income sources. 'Employment' is therefore not a simple definition in Liberia, and we need better ways of understanding it.

'Portfolios of work' and 'mixed livelihoods'

The aforementioned findings from Liberia mirror an emerging discussion characterised by growing acknowledgement that modern youth 'employment' in fragile states and many emerging economies is more complex and dynamic than rigid definitions allow for. Young people are engaged in a variety of income-generating activities at any one time, straddling the formal, informal and agricultural sectors, including family and micro-enterprises.

In a recent Working Paper, Chris Blattman and Laura Ralston define this livelihood strategy of combining multiple simultaneous income-generating activities as a 'portfolio of work' (2015, *Generating employment in poor and fragile states*). This portfolio approach, which the same authors assess as 'the best response to a bad situation', has arisen in fragile states for multiple reasons including: lack of full-time formal jobs; an equally clear lack of marketable skills for such jobs; imperfect hiring practices; and a high prevalence of seasonal earning opportunities. In addition, for youth who perceive temporary education as the biggest opportunity for economic mobility, part-time work to support studies may be essential, though it may be a means to an end rather than these youths' ultimate objective.

It should be emphasised, though, that this mixed livelihood is not purely a coping strategy, but rather increasingly a proactive employment strategy. Recent research in Ghana and Uganda using livelihood diary methods has suggested that the portfolio approach suits the aspirations of young people today, who are attracted by the flexibility of mixed livelihoods and their ability to evolve within equally changeable contexts. Speaking at the Young Africa Works Summit, in Cape Town in 2015, Anne Marie van Swinderen from the research company L-IFT explained, 'Almost everyone is juggling income sources. . . mixed livelihoods is almost an identity.' While the more developed economies are noticing an increasing movement towards the 'gig economy', those navigating mixed livelihoods in unstable economies in Africa are masters at it. The narrative of a single pathway out of poverty, via the attainment of a formal job, is therefore becoming increasingly obsolete for young Africans.

Implications for design and evaluation of youth employment programmes

The recognition of mixed livelihoods requires programme implementers to consider how both programme design and evaluation systems can respond to this emerging trend.

For programme design

Actors working on youth employment, particularly in fragile states, need to recognise that their employment interventions are unlikely to truly stimulate a linear employment trajectory as often outlined in theories of change; indeed many 'unemployed' participants or beneficiaries are actually already navigating some form of livelihood, albeit an unsatisfactory one. Varied young people need diverse supports to take their mixed livelihoods in different directions, and some may require more support than others: one youth may require increased technical skills which can be provided through vocational training or an on-the-job training scheme; others may require different interventions, such as business skills training or access to financial products. Moreover, those with much weaker portfolios might need a greater suite of supports to improve their status or overcome certain hurdles. This is not to mention the common variances both in aspirations and needs according to gender, age, and disability, among other variables. Accommodating these diversities in status and aspirations are critical to successful intervention; efforts to commit participants to a singular channel of training in an expectation that all youth are 'unemployed' could even risk damaging their existing income portfolio as well as detract from their non-economic obligations (such as educational commitments).

A recent (2016) systematic review of youth employment programmes by the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) for the World Bank (of which half the sample were for programmes in weaker economies) found that only 30% were successful, and that even within those successful programmes the impact was often modest. There is therefore a clear need to rethink youth employment programming in fragile states, based on a more thorough understanding of mixed livelihoods. The systematic review found, for example, that programmes which integrate multiple interventions are more likely to have a positive impact.

Mercy Corps' Prospects programme in Liberia is an example of an initiative

which is structured to respond to the diverse needs and aspirations of young people with mixed livelihoods. The programme operates through demand-driven principles, with youth accessing a range of employment services (up to 40 are available) through walk-in Youth Opportunity Centres. Programme staff advise youth on services available in their area so youth are then able to undertake one or a range of activities, offered continuously and at differing schedules so participants are able to fit their livelihood portfolio growth around their existing responsibilities. More research is required to best understand how youth employment programmes can most effectively respond to the complexity of working with youth with mixed livelihoods. Part of this comes from needing a better understanding of the impact of such programmes on complex portfolios of work.

For programme evaluation

With this deeper understanding of mixed livelihoods, we recognise that outcomes resulting from employment programmes might occur in a range of areas, from the total and regularity of income earned, the number of days worked, the type and growth potential of livelihoods, satisfaction, or any combination of other areas. Moreover, changes in one area may result in contradictory changes in others; one individual's improvement in his/her work stability by connecting to a formal job may result in lower pay. Further still, priorities and changes are likely to look very different for different people.

This complexity can create challenges for reporting programme impact to donors – a simple figure of 'jobs created' is replaced with a complex narrative of different changes which, as Blattman and Ralston (2014) observe, are 'less glamorous and more difficult to quantify'. Moreover, this complexity can also create challenges for youth employment programme staff – what is the 'north star' of impact that the programme is aiming at? Recognizing complexity is fruitless unless we are able to make sense of what to do with it.

Mercy Corps' five-country youth employment partnership with The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation, Youth Empowered for Success! (YES!), has sought to respond to this challenge by determining a more operational understanding of what impact of youth employment programming looks like on mixed livelihoods. YES! looks at three 'domains of change' in measuring impact:

envision a more flexible and evolving set of services. Donors will need to provide space and flexibility to allow implementers to make this possible. Strong monitoring and evaluation systems can help provide valuable insights into what is working (and what isn't) and can provide some clarity in navigating this uncertain terrain. ■

Work security

The diversity, regularity, and security of work. An improved portfolio of work may involve more regular work, on a more secure contract, or with new income streams reducing risk.

Income and Savings

The total income from the portfolio of work and its ability to generate savings.

Meaningfulness

The individual's work satisfaction and confidence in their livelihood opportunities.

Each of these domains looks different between and within country contexts and encompasses a range of livelihood characteristics as presented above. In some contexts, 'skills' are also included as a low-level outcome, as this is potentially a critical long-term asset. This conceptualisation enables presentation of complex change in a simple fashion to a range of audiences, while also enabling programme teams to maintain a clear outcome-orientation.

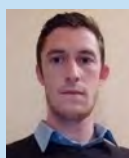
Conclusion

Young people in fragile states have increasingly complex livelihoods. 'Silver bullet' or one-size-fits-all solutions, which imagine singular trajectories of economic empowerment, are unlikely to fully respond to the wider context in which youth live. Implementers and policymakers are likely to have to

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Youth employment for resilience in fragile and conflict-affected states

by Dr Audrey Aumua

The Pacific region is attempting to use strategic partnerships to address the growing challenge of youth unemployment in an environment with limited opportunities for sustainable development.

The Pacific region consists of 22 countries and territories spread across the world's largest ocean. The total population of this diverse region is around 10 million people, more than half of which is under the age of 25. It is growing fast, placing huge – and increasing – demographic pressures on basic resources and core services such as education, health and justice. The average youth unemployment rates in the Pacific are 23% compared to a global average of 12.6%.

A lack of statistical data and analysis on youth creates difficulty in identifying gaps and providing evidence to guide investments. Youth issues are often treated as stand-alone issues, unconnected to other issues, and often without addressing root causes. Compounded by a lack of engagement between partners, governments and young people, the task of responding to the situation of young Pacific Islanders is complex and challenging. There are few sources of large resources for regional youth programmes. The issue of 'youth' is still considered a 'soft' issue, beleaguered by its lack of statistical basis, its value-intensive mandate and a dilemma over the boundaries of what is defined a 'youth issue', both statistically and thematically.

The Pacific Youth Development Framework

The Pacific Youth Development Framework (PYDF) 2014–2023 represents an important milestone for the Pacific region. It responds to the calls from young people, development

partners and governments for greater support for the implementation of countries' youth policies, and to address barriers to progress. The framework aims to be a catalyst for investment in youth, rather than a regional youth programme. The PYDF is structured around four development outcomes – prioritised by young people in the Pacific – and uses four strategic approaches which mark a significant change to the way youth issues have previously been addressed in the region.

The four strategic approaches are focused on critical drivers for investment: strengthening development accountability through the engagement of young people as equal partners; statistical and analytical evidence, and strategic information to inform decision-making for policy and programming; promoting inclusion to target attention towards the most marginalised populations of youth; and working to mainstream youth to enhance outcomes across development sectors where resources already exist.

The PYDF's first development outcome is to address one of the greatest challenges confronting youth in the Pacific – to secure decent work opportunities. To meet this outcome, the PYDF determines that young people must have increased access to relevant education and training in formal and vocational sectors, more young people must be involved in entrepreneurship, and youth-friendly employment services must be established to connect young people to employment opportunities.

Strategies of the Pacific Community

The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific technical organisation in the Pacific region, supporting development in the region. It has worked innovatively to implement strategies through the support of its member states, development partners and strategic partnerships. Some of these strategies include:

- **Increasing targeted access to relevant education and training:** SPC's Youth@work Programme provides education and training for early school leavers, young women, young people living with disabilities, and rural youth, providing them with pathways to formal employment or entrepreneurship. Additionally, SPC provides training in renewable energy, organic farming, fisheries observer training and other areas of SPC's scientific and technical portfolio.
- **Partnering with youth:** SPC recognises the potential and effective role that young people have in advancing development agendas that are inclusive and responsive to youth-specific issues. This involves creating space for youth leaders to determine their priorities and advocate for those with governments and development stakeholders, and providing guidance and mentorship to enhance their role as 'development participants'. In supporting youth leadership, SPC has hosted the regional secretariat for the



Youth in training. Source: Pacific Community (SPC).

Pacific Youth Council (PYC) – the regional focal point for national youth councils in ten Pacific Island countries. SPC provides administrative support, mentorship and guidance and has supported negotiations, strategic planning and partnerships between the PYC and relevant development partners. The SPC/PYC partnership creates space for the PYC to exercise youth-led advocacy initiatives on their top priority – to increase targeted investment in youth employment.

- **Strengthening evidence and strategic information:** Recognising the need to improve the knowledge and awareness of specific challenges confronting Pacific youth in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) in the region, SPC and the PYC worked in partnership with the Asian Development Bank to lay the groundwork for a series of youth-led country case studies. To best understand their challenges and opportunities, youth from nine countries were trained in participatory action research methodology at a regional workshop in May 2016 entitled, *'The Future of Youth in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States: A Pacific Youth Research Workshop and Consultation on Skills Development and Employment'*. A continuing and strengthening partnership with the Asian Development Bank

will support a series of youth-led researchers on the youth unemployment situation in countries in 2017 and will strengthen the evidence base to drive advocacy work in this area.

- **Promoting youth entrepreneurship and youth-friendly employment services:** The Pacific Youth Council has made progress in establishing youth-friendly employment services to support young entrepreneurs. Following a regional workshop aimed to build capacities of young entrepreneurs, the PYC then supported the First National Youth Employment Forum in Vanuatu, and through a partnership with the International Labour Organisation and the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce, established the Vanuatu Young Entrepreneurs Council. There are also plans underway for similar councils to be launched in the Solomon Islands and Tonga for later in the year. These important services for young entrepreneurs will support job creation and will allow more young people to contribute to personal livelihoods and that of their families and communities.

These strategies are imperative in addressing the challenges faced by youths in the employment sector and foster more opportunities for platforms of dialogue between youths and relevant

productivity ministries and stakeholders. Moving forward, the Pacific Youth Development Framework will be a key document in guiding national governments and partners for increased investment in youth across development sectors and the inclusion of youth in future development discussions. ■

Pacific Youth Development Framework (PYDF) 2014–2023. <http://www.spc.int/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Pacific-Youth-Development-Framework.pdf>.

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When money finishes, people remain: the challenges of youth unemployment in Nigeria

by Joe Abah

The need to tackle rising youth unemployment is clear to all. Nigeria needs to develop a coordinated, overarching youth employment policy, approved at the highest level of government, to guide all the interventions.

A few days ago, Mr Bisi Ogunwale, a businessman, reported on Twitter how a young boy had begged him for money at a popular bus stop in Lagos, the bustling commercial capital of Nigeria. When he refused to give the boy any money, the boy is said to have told him: "Remember! When money finishes, it is people that remain." Mr Ogunwale reported that the statement had had a chilling effect on him and that he was scared and sad at the same time. A short Twitter debate ensued as to the possible meaning of the statement. Some felt that it was an approximation of the quote often attributed to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "When the people shall have nothing more to eat, they will eat the rich." Others felt that it meant that you should be nice to the poor because if there is a breakdown of law and order, it is the poor people you have been nice to who will save you, the rich. Yet others felt that it was an admonition not to place too high a value on money, but to invest instead in people, particularly the youth. Virtually every commentator agreed that the statement was sufficiently chilling to concern every Nigerian adult.

High youth unemployment

According to its National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria has a youth labour force of 38.2 million people. For context, that is a youth workforce (between the ages of 15 and 24 years) that is more than three times the entire population of Belgium. Of this number, 48.7% or 15.2 million (much more than the entire population of Belgium) is out of work and actively seeking employment. The NBS figures include those that are unemployed and seeking work, as well as those that are under-employed. The NBS is careful not to include those that are not working and not looking for work, such as fulltime homemakers.

Several reasons have been advanced for the high rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria. These include high population growth rate (understandably), deficient school curricula and poor teacher orientation, lack of focus on manufacturing as a result of overdependence on the oil sector, and flawed and inconsistent government policies on youth unemployment. These will now be discussed in turn.

It is rather difficult to do anything to reduce Nigeria's high population growth, particularly as it is tied to religious and cultural sentiments. Family planning campaigns are mostly run



Street in Lagos Centre. Photo: Zouzou Wizman, flickr.com

by foreign donors, and the cultural reliance on multiple births as a response to previously high infant mortality rates is still in the consciousness of many. There is also some evidence that a large population is not necessarily a bad thing if a country can leverage it as an advantage. Countries with large populations such as China, India, Brazil and Indonesia have made very good developmental progress in the last 50 years.

The school curricula at different levels are neither sufficiently geared towards the needs of employers nor do they equip young people for self-employment. Many young people complete even tertiary education without an ability to apply that knowledge to real life situations. This has led some to conclude that a majority of the youth are 'unemployable'.

It is expected that the drop in oil prices will lead to a sharper focus on manufacturing and industrialisation, which should, in turn, create additional jobs. If it is true that "oil is over", then there are likely to be more employment opportunities for young people in agriculture, solid minerals, telecommunications and services, as government and the private sector make efforts to diversify the economy.

Uncoordinated policies towards youth employment

The Federal Government of Nigeria has recently launched a programme called Npower, which is targeted at equipping youth with the skills to make them employable. It aims to help build entrepreneurship skills, facilitate mentoring and skills transfer, and provide internships and contract employment to more than 500,000 young persons.

Virtually every government in Nigeria's history has created one programme or another in an attempt to tackle youth unemployment. The schemes tend to raise hopes and do indeed benefit some young persons while they last. However, policy inconsistencies mean that successive administrations abandon the initiatives of their predecessors and create new initiatives, often justifying their actions with allegations of corruption against their predecessors and accusations of nepotism in the selection of beneficiaries. This means that it would be difficult to point to a consistent, sustained youth empowerment initiative that can be tracked over time and assessed for impact.

It is also difficult to point to a coordinated youth employment agenda that is shared, understood and subscribed to by all relevant government actors. Different parts of government have different initiatives and ambitions for youth empowerment. The Office of the Vice-president, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development, the Ministry of Labour and Productivity and the National Directorate of Employment, among others, all have

initiatives and schemes focused on youth unemployment. What is lacking is a coordinated, overarching youth employment policy, approved at the highest level of government, that guides all the interventions. Such a policy will foster coordinated strategies which should, in turn, produce sensible activities and initiatives in a measurable way across the whole result chain: input-output-outcome-impact.

The Bureau of Public Service Reforms, which I currently lead, will shortly be developing a policy paper titled "Understanding Youth Unemployment". The paper will evaluate the effectiveness of current and previous efforts, including the major issue of coordination and an overarching policy and strategy, and propose ways forward.

The need to tackle rising youth unemployment is clear to all. Nigeria is currently in a recession and oil prices have been at their lowest for very many years. As the young boy at the Lagos bus stop said, *"When the money finishes, it is people that remain."* ■

About the author



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Employing ex-combatants in fragile and conflict-affected countries

by Tarila Marclint Ebiede

While specific employment programmes have been developed to facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants, policy makers in post-conflict societies need to give equal priority to employment programmes for both ex-combatants and ordinary civilians, bringing them together.

Youth unemployment in fragile and conflict-affected countries remains a crucial concern for the development community. However, the youth demographic is not homogenous. Ex-combatants are one group within the heterogeneous demographic of youths in societies emerging from violent conflicts. Like other youths, ex-combatants face the challenge of gaining employment after participating in armed conflicts. Policymakers have developed disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes to address this problem. Reintegration is the strand of DDR programmes that seeks to address the problem of unemployment of ex-combatants. To achieve this, several strategies have been built into different reintegration programmes that have been implemented over time. This article sheds light on a variety of approaches that have been implemented in different post-conflict contexts.

Step approach to DDR programmes

DDR programmes have been the primary policy mechanism used to manage the transition of ex-combatants from violent conflicts to post-conflict societies. The logic of DDR programmes is that combatants should be transformed into civilians to stop them from exhibiting destabilising violent tendencies when conflict ends. DDR can also be applied as a strategy to motivate fighters to desert their armed groups in an on-going conflict.

Disarmament focuses on “the collection, documentation, and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of ex-combatants and the civilian population” (Munive, 2016). This is followed by demobilisation, which focuses on “formal and controlled discharge of the active combatants from armed groups” (ibid). Finally, reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants return to civilian life and gain sustainable employment and income during the post-conflict recovery period” (ibid).

There is a consensus that DDR is an important component of post-conflict peacebuilding and economic recovery. However, reintegration, the last phase of DDR, remains a challenge. One key importance of reintegration is that it prepares ex-combatants for employment into various sectors of the economy.

Approaches to employing ex-combatants

DDR programmes have used different approaches to increase the chances of ex-combatants gaining employment, including:

Training

Training has been a core component of reintegration programmes. Training has focused in most cases on equipping ex-combatants with vocational skills in agriculture, construction, transportation, small business management and driving. New initiatives have also included formal education as part of training under DDR programmes. Formal education often focuses on facilitating the continuity of the education of ex-combatants which may have been interrupted as a result of conflict or who may have lacked opportunities to go to school even though they had the capacity.

Infrastructural development in communities

The World Bank has funded some DDR programmes that have focused on providing infrastructural development in communities. These infrastructural projects are meant to achieve the dual purpose of providing jobs for ex-combatants, as well as contributing to infrastructure in communities. This approach falls within the so-called community based reintegration (CBR) programmes. The logic of CBR is that the provision of infrastructure would ensure that non-combatants in communities are not left out of the benefits of DDR. This strategy tends to be conflict sensitive as it promotes community cohesion and creates social capital in the process. For decades, policy analysts criticised DDR programmes for not paying sufficient attention to communities. However, CBR programmes are fast becoming the norm in most countries where DDR is applied.

Funding SMEs

To support the reintegration of ex-combatants, some DDR programmes have focused on providing small loans to support small-scale entrepreneurship by ex-combatants. This strategy is based on the notion that the provision of seed capital can provide the basis for ex-combatants to put their entrepreneurship skills to use. The provision of small loans has been a common practice in DDR. The outcome has been mixed. While some ex-combatants have succeeded



From child soldier to bricklayer. Photo: Department for International Development/Pete Lewis

as entrepreneurs, many others have not been able to transit from being combatants to entrepreneurs. One basic challenge here is that many programmes do not capture the challenges of becoming an entrepreneur. Although DDR programmes may provide seed capital, they often do not address the other challenges entrepreneurs face in post-conflict societies.

Cash transfers

DDR programmes also provide cash payments as part of the means to facilitate the economic reintegration of ex-combatants. Although cash payments are not sources of sustainable employment, it is meant to “ameliorate the additional drain on resources experienced by receiving communities and households” (Knight and Özerdem 2004: 511). Cash transfers to ex-combatants ensure that they do have a basic income that keeps them away from crime and enable them to direct their energies towards searching for legitimate sources of employment. Cash transfer is not an employment mechanism itself. But it is meant to support the process for ex-combatants to gain employment.

Case Studies: Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire

Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire are countries that have recently implemented a DDR programme and have applied different strategies in facilitating employment for ex-combatants.

Nigeria

The Nigerian government designed, funded and implemented a DDR programme for armed groups in the Niger Delta region through a post amnesty programme (PAP) (Ebiede, 2016). The DDR programme in Nigeria adopted a multi-faceted approach that includes educational and vocational training, small loans for SMEs and cash transfers to ex-combatants. The training of ex-combatants in Nigeria received priority funding. Ex-combatants received both formal education and vocational training. The training was based on a needs assessment that focused on the demands of the ex-combatants themselves. This occurred at the demobilisation camp where ex-combatants were asked about their preferred economic reintegration trajectory. The expectation was that this training

would enable ex-combatants to gain employment.

Beyond training, the DDR programme in Nigeria also provided small loans for SMEs owned by some ex-combatants. The funding was not a loan, but start-up capital provided by the government without any expectation of repayment by the recipient. The Nigerian government has provided regular cash transfers of about \$300 per month to ex-combatants since the beginning of the DDR process in 2009. This cash transfer is meant to provide a source of livelihood while ex-combatants search for jobs.

Côte d'Ivoire

The DDR programme in Côte d'Ivoire, supported by the United Nations (UN), has also adopted multiple approaches to facilitating employment for ex-combatants.

The DDR programme gave ex-combatants the opportunity to learn skills in vegetable farming, livestock breeding, construction, transportation and small business management. It also focused on providing apprenticeships in over 30 different trades, as well as providing on-site construction training and driving skills. The DDR in Côte d'Ivoire tend to have an emphasis on skills transfer to ex-combatants. In fact, it is clearly stated that the economic reintegration in Côte D'Ivoire is meant to give ex-combatants skills needed to participate in economic activities.

Côte d'Ivoire estimates that each ex-combatant will benefit from a reintegration package that will cost \$924. The reintegration will include community rehabilitation that focuses on rebuilding public and economic infrastructure that was affected by war. This is based on the logic that the investment in public infrastructure will spur the growth of private businesses, which in turn will give ex-combatants the opportunity to put their skills to use. In essence, the economic reintegration programme in Côte d'Ivoire was based on a focus on the overall economic development of the country that has just emerged from a civil war.

Outcomes

Ex-combatants in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria continue to face employment challenges. The cash transfers to ex-combatants

in both Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire have proved to be an unsustainable means of income. Although it provides funds for ex-combatants, it does not necessarily guarantee that ex-combatants will be able to find jobs. The cash transfer actually tends to be a disincentive for ex-combatants in finding jobs. This is especially the case in Nigeria where the cash transfer of \$300 per month is more than the minimum wage and the monthly income of workers with the same skills that DDR seeks to give ex-combatants.

The programme in Côte d'Ivoire has reported considerable success in facilitating employment for ex-combatants, but these claims remain contestable. Generally, unemployment of youths, particularly ex-combatants, continues to be a problem in both Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.

The benefits received by ex-combatants from DDR programmes in both countries tend to create a perception that fighting pays. This perception tends to divide youths in post-conflict societies into two basic categories: ex-combatants and others. This is an important challenge that needs to be addressed in the design of programmes that seek to provide employment for ex-combatants. Employment programmes should reduce, not broaden, the divide among youths in post-conflict countries.

Looking forward

DDR will continue to remain relevant to societies that have experienced violent conflicts. This relevance means that policies designed to facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants will remain the policy of first instance in facilitating employment for ex-combatants. Therefore, there is a need to design DDR programmes in ways that ensure they give ex-combatants the opportunity to gain sustainable employment.

One way to do this more effectively is to carefully analyse value chains along different economic sectors prior to the design of employment programmes for ex-combatants. After such analysis, policy makers will be better informed to know where ex-combatants can add value and gain sustainable means of income in the economy.

In essence, all the approaches used in reintegration must clearly feed into an economic activity that goes beyond DDR which ex-combatants can contribute to in societies where they are expected to reintegrate.

Employment programmes for ex-combatants need to be designed in ways that do not widen the divide between ex-combatants and other youths in post-conflict societies. There is a need to ensure that DDR programmes are not seen as a reward for 'rebellion'. For this to happen, governments and institutions in post-conflict societies need to give equal priority to employment programmes for both ex-combatants and ordinary civilians. It may also be beneficial to design and promote economic programmes, especially those that focus on creating jobs that bring ex-combatants and ordinary civilians together. ■

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Agricultural value chains and their potential for youth employment in fragile and conflict-affected contexts

by Sophie Desmidt

As agriculture is one of the most promising sectors in most fragile and conflict-affected environments, this article explores some of the key challenges and obstacles agricultural value chain development poses for youth employment.

Increased attention for the challenges and potential of youth employment

Attention to the challenges and opportunities of youth employment is not new. In 2012, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the OECD released a dedicated study about youth employment in Africa, noting: "Creating productive employment for Africa's rapidly growing young population is an immense challenge, but also the key to future prosperity." The potential of agriculture for youth employment has, however, received more recent attention. The African Union's 2014 Malabo Declaration on Agriculture, for instance, underlines the importance of agriculture and youth employment in agribusiness for poverty reduction objectives.

Outside Africa as well, the issue receives increasing attention. The European Union's External Investment Plan (EIP), launched in September 2016, includes a focus on employment creation for youth as a means to tackle the root causes of migration and fragility. With youth at the top of the agenda for the upcoming Africa-EU summit scheduled in November 2017, the potential for youth employment and agricultural value chain development in fragile contexts deserves a closer look.

Re-building fragile relations

Value chain development and agricultural investment are generally challenging development interventions, and even more so in fragile or conflict-affected areas. Hiller, Hilhorst and Weijs (2014) note that, in fragile contexts, value chains are generally inefficient and short, which in turn results in an unequal distribution of income across the chain. Meanwhile, however, the World Bank (2013) and other experts have pointed to the peacebuilding and developmental potential of investing in agricultural value chain development in fragile and conflict-affected states. Value chain development notably strengthens the relationships between different stakeholders across the chain, relationships which are generally weak in conflict-ridden and fragile environments. Focusing on the multiple entry points along the value chain, each characterised by interaction and interdependence, arguably allows for conflict sensitive development approaches.

Youth unemployment and fragility

At the same time, youth unemployment continues to be seen as a major concern in view of potential security threats in fragile contexts, and constitutes one of the economic indicators of the OECD's fragility framework used to assess the fragility of states and contexts across five dimensions. The linkages between youth un- or underemployment and violence and instability are diverse and complex, and are therefore often misunderstood. In some cases, such limited understanding of the matter has led to an overconfidence in employment creation as a panacea for peaceful reintegration (International Alert, 2014). Despite diverging views on how and why youths pose a threat in fragile and post-conflict contexts, it is clear that the future youth bulge in Africa poses major challenges in terms of employment creation in the decades to come.

Agricultural potential in fragile and conflict-affected environments

According to the World Bank (2013) informal economies and agriculture constitute the two most promising sectors in terms of job creation in most fragile and conflict-affected states on the continent. Rural-urban migration patterns among young Africans, however, seem to reflect a reluctance to engage in agricultural work. In a similar vein, youths from rural areas who have been forced to migrate to urban areas due to instability, conflict or the collapse of rural economies, often prefer not to return given the limited employment prospects. International Alert (2014) notes in this regard that young people's rejection of village life and agricultural labour often extends beyond mere employment preferences but also has to do with the socio-political institutions associated with rural subsistence farming. Indeed, as Raeymaekers (2011) has pointed out, youths often reject an agricultural lifestyle as a result of intergenerational conflict, and find themselves blocked from access to land and trading networks by (older) gatekeepers. Given the predominance and potential of the informal and agricultural sectors in Africa, however, efforts to promote more qualitative employment opportunities for youths in agricultural value chains in fragile contexts hold much promise. One



Women of Takalafiya-Lapai village (Niger State) Photo: Arne Hoel / World Bank, Flickr.com

of the objectives of the European External Investment Plan is to guarantee private sector investment “in contexts that are politically more risky than others”. The 2014 Malabo Declaration vows to a) create job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains and b) to support and facilitate preferential entry and participation for women and youth in gainful and attractive agri-business opportunities.

Operationalising a conflict-sensitive approach to agricultural value chains

It is less obvious, however, how both policy processes will operationalise a conflict-sensitive approach to agricultural value chain development and youth employment in fragile and conflict-affected environments. While the renewed attention from European and African policy makers confirms the potential for youth employment in informal and agricultural sectors, the contexts in which these value chains develop are extremely varied across the continent. Applying a conflict-sensitive approach and taking into account the potential impact of fragility (including violent conflict) on value chains will be key to operationalise a long-term sustainable and inclusive approach to youth employment.

The stakes are high: Africa is a young continent, with half of its population currently under the age of 18. Meanwhile, fertility decline remains slow, even as life expectancy improves. Africa moreover continues to face the highest level of violent conflict (together with the Middle East), and the majority of fragile contexts identified in the OECD's 2016 fragility assessment are situated in African countries. With youth as a key priority for the upcoming Africa-EU summit, there is an opportunity for policy makers to pay due attention to both the challenges and the potential agricultural value chain development offers for youth employment creation in fragile contexts across the continent. ■

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Youth employment opportunities in African agrifood systems

by Andrea Allen, Julie Howard, M. Kondo, Amy Jamison, Thomas Jayne, J. Snyder, David Tschirley, and Kwame Felix Yeboah

Rapidly transforming agrifood systems has the potential to drive the expansion of youth employment and broad-based economic development in sub-Saharan Africa. Focusing on Nigeria, Rwanda, and Tanzania, this article highlights the most promising opportunities and needed policy and programme changes.

Africa has the youngest population in the world, with almost 200 million people between the ages of 15 and 24 - a number expected to double by 2045. Job creation has not kept pace: 60% of Africa's unemployed are youth and even more are underemployed. Citizens across 34 African countries regard unemployment as the top problem facing their nations. There is an unprecedented opportunity for economic and social development if the talents of this increasingly better-educated generation can be tapped. Alternatively, in the absence of a significant expansion of economic opportunities, Africa's youth may also present a threat to social cohesion and political stability.

This article summarises the main findings from the *Agrifood Youth Employment and Engagement Study* (AgYees), one of the first studies to comprehensively examine the potential for and challenges to expanding youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa's agrifood systems - the set of activities, processes, people, and institutions involved in supplying food and agricultural products. AgYees was undertaken by Michigan State University in collaboration with The MasterCard Foundation.

Two analytical tracks generated insights into cost-effective strategies and programmatic entry points most likely to improve employment and livelihood options for youth. The strategic policy and foresight analysis reviewed economic megatrends for Rwanda,

Tanzania and Nigeria, and projected how economic changes - specifically farm productivity growth, changing farm size distributions, and dietary transformations - will affect future job prospects for rural and urban African youth. A complementary agrifood landscape analysis for Rwanda and Tanzania examined the economic and policy environment affecting youth engagement with the agrifood system, assessed the supply and demand for related workforce training and perceived gaps, and distilled best practices and lessons learned related to youth economic programming.

Strategic policy and foresighting analysis

Major dynamics are underway in African employment: labour is moving sharply out of farming as economies transform, yet farming remains extremely important for livelihoods and economic growth. The off-farm agrifood system is growing very rapidly in percentage terms and will offer important opportunities for new businesses, but it will not match farming in the absolute level of new job creation for at least ten years. Specific findings include the following:

African economies have been transforming rapidly over the past 15 years, with generally rapid but highly variable exit rates of labour from farming into off-farm segments of the economy. The exit rate from farming has been the most rapid in Rwanda, followed by Tanzania, and slow or no exit in

Nigeria. These findings are consistent with the broader literature, including on the negative effects of natural resource booms on economic transformation.

When computed as full-time equivalents (FTE), farming accounts for 43% to 48% of the labour force in Tanzania, 53% in Rwanda, and 34% in Nigeria. The proportion of the labour force in the off-farm segments of the agrifood system is about 8% in Rwanda, 17% in Tanzania, and 23% in Nigeria. The off-farm sector outside the agrifood system, mainly commerce and transport, construction and the public sector, employs more: roughly 37% in Rwanda, 35% in Tanzania, and 43% in Nigeria. Employment in the off-farm portion of the agrifood system is growing much more rapidly in percentage terms than employment in farming, but the growth is from a lower base, and thus the contribution to new jobs in off-farm employment is smaller than that of farming.

The potential role of the off-farm agrifood system in new employment varies greatly across countries. Farming's contribution to new job creation is highest in Nigeria and lowest in Rwanda. The off-farm agrifood system will contribute between 18% and 22% of all new FTE jobs in Tanzania over the next five years compared to 31% to 34% for farming. In Nigeria, the off-farm agrifood system currently accounts for 22% to 24% of jobs but only 18% of FTE new job growth, due to a very slow transition of the work force out

of farming. In Rwanda, the off-farm agrifood system accounts for only 8% of jobs and 11% of job growth, about one-third that of farming.

The pace of economic transformation from farming to off-farm employment is directly related to agricultural productivity growth, consistent with historical patterns of growth in Asia. Rwanda, having experienced the highest agricultural productivity growth over the past decade among the three focus countries, has experienced the most rapid decline in the share of the labour force engaged in farming. In contrast, slow agricultural productivity growth in Nigeria is associated with very little change in farming's share of the labour force there. The literature suggests that agricultural productivity growth, especially if broadly based, will generate strong multiplier effects that expand job opportunities in the downstream stages of the agrifood system as well as in the broader off-farm economy.

A key constraint to promoting labour productivity growth in farming is access to land, especially in land-scarce regions like Rwanda. Population pressures, increases in world food

prices, and associated rising interest in Africa's arable land are driving up land prices in the region, limiting the ability of youth, in particular, to access land.

In all three countries, food away from home (FAFH) should generate high quality jobs for youth. Because the FAFH sectors are much larger in Nigeria and Tanzania, activities and programming focused in this sector are likely to yield significant job growth. FAFH in these two countries offers the most rapid and largest growth in demand of any type of food, and the most rapid growth in output per worker in each country. Wages in these sectors (or returns to labour in own employment) are likely to be attractive and rapidly improving.

Food manufacturing in Tanzania offers the highest output per worker, the second-highest rate of growth in output per worker, and fairly large employment absorption, at 5% of all new jobs. In all three countries, results suggest that food manufacturing should offer high quality jobs, but with a much larger number of jobs in Tanzania than in Rwanda and Nigeria.

Fresh produce (fruit and vegetables) and dairy offer strong growth prospects

for young farmers in Rwanda. For each, local demand is growing rapidly and export possibilities are strong.

FAFH stands to benefit women in Nigeria and Tanzania especially, where 90% and 71%, respectively, of all FTE employment in the sector is female.

Agrifood landscape analysis

Both Rwanda and Tanzania experienced impressive economic growth during the 2000s. Rwanda's GDP growth averaged 8% between 2001 and 2014 and was accompanied by a 20-point reduction in poverty. Rwanda's progress was facilitated by agricultural policies and investments that resulted in significant improvements in on-farm agricultural productivity, lifting the incomes of rural families. Rwanda's severe land constraint limits further agricultural area expansion and especially youth access to land.

Unlike Rwanda, Tanzania's economic growth has concentrated mainly in urban areas, driven by capital-intensive sectors, including mining, telecommunications, construction and banking. Except for construction, these sectors create few jobs directly.



Uganda flowers. Photo: USAID Africa Bureau. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

The Tanzanian agrifood system's rate of growth has been consistently lower than other sectors, leading to a slower decline in poverty in rural areas, rising urban-rural inequality, and accelerating rural-to-urban migration. Tanzania faces the dual challenge of achieving faster growth while accelerating the shift of its labour force, especially youth, to more productive work. In contrast to Rwanda, Tanzania is well endowed with natural resources, including potential to expand agricultural land. In both countries, limited youth access to land and finance severely constrains youth agrifood opportunities. Specific findings include the following.

Agriculture is widely perceived by youth as an unappealing, traditional, labour intensive farm activity, not as a potentially high-profit business activity that involves a spectrum of new opportunities on and off the farm connected to marketing, processing, packaging, and food service, in addition to on-farm production.

There is a significant gap between the skills demanded by the private sector and those supplied by formal programmes and informal education and training programmes, including specialised technical skills, entrepreneurial/business skills, and soft skills.

Challenges remain in reaching out-of-school, rural youth via informal training, especially expanding the availability of informal learning opportunities that are linked to institutionalised technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and tertiary systems and are potentially more sustainable.

Small and medium enterprise (SME) development is a critical lever for connecting skills development and access to financial resources with concrete economic opportunities that lead to expanded youth employment, in line with agrifood sector comparative and competitive advantage. Youth entrepreneurs face a steep learning curve in starting businesses and responding to market demands on an ongoing basis. The reluctance

of financial institutions to lend to youth entrepreneurs and high rates of startup failure suggest the importance of providing a longer-term incubator environment where young people can practise essential technical and business skills as they are mentored, without the risk of catastrophic failure.

Youth entrepreneurs engaged in SMEs require assistance to analyse market potential, identify priority policy and regulatory issues, and access specialised training to address emerging downstream challenges, including meeting local and international food safety standards and developing low-cost packaging.

Although youth and women constitute the rural majority in both countries, few existing analyses examine factors affecting the development of specific value chains using youth as well as gender lenses.

Recommendations

A number of recommendations for youth-related programming in Rwanda, Tanzania and Nigeria can be derived from our analysis. These include:

- support action-oriented research and knowledge on strategies and policies that will raise agricultural productivity growth and economic returns to labour in farming, including land tenure policies;
- pursue a mixed programme strategy to increase youth economic opportunities both on and off-farm; focus programming especially on value chains and commodities for which consumer demand is expanding rapidly, including fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, poultry, fish, dairy and high-demand cereals and oilseeds.
- develop and implement comprehensive youth employment strategies;
- work to change youth mindsets about agrifood system-related opportunities;
- accelerate the application of ICT and other advanced technologies to agrifood system problems;
- expand agrifood system training programmes and improve curricula;
- increase private sector engagement in training programmes;
- integrate more and higher quality experiential learning in a cost-effective way;
- institutionalise monitoring, learning and communication;
- ensure that SME clusters can access up-to-date training, technologies, and market information, and identify and implement options for addressing policy/regulatory issues; and
- mainstream gender and youth in all programmatic interventions.

This article summarises some of the insights of Allen, A. et al. (2016), Agrifood Youth Employment and Engagement Study (AgYees), Michigan State University.

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Do jobs aid peace? The impact of employment interventions on peace, security and stability

by Tilman Brück, Neil T.N. Ferguson, Valeria Izzi and Wolfgang Stojetz

The idea that jobs build peace is the backdrop to many employment interventions, yet despite promising theories of change, weak systematic knowledge leaves the concept reliant on hope and assumption.

The notion that employment can contribute to peace and stability is the explicit backdrop to a large number of the labour, training and entrepreneurship programmes run by international organisations, and an implicit one in many more. The rationale behind this link is firmly grounded in strong and deeply considered economic theories, which are reviewed in a substantial new literature survey. In this literature, two key concepts underpin the assumption that employment can build peace: first, that unemployment is one of the reasons why individuals select into antisocial behaviour; and second, that provision of employment, therefore, becomes a means of deterrent to such behaviour.

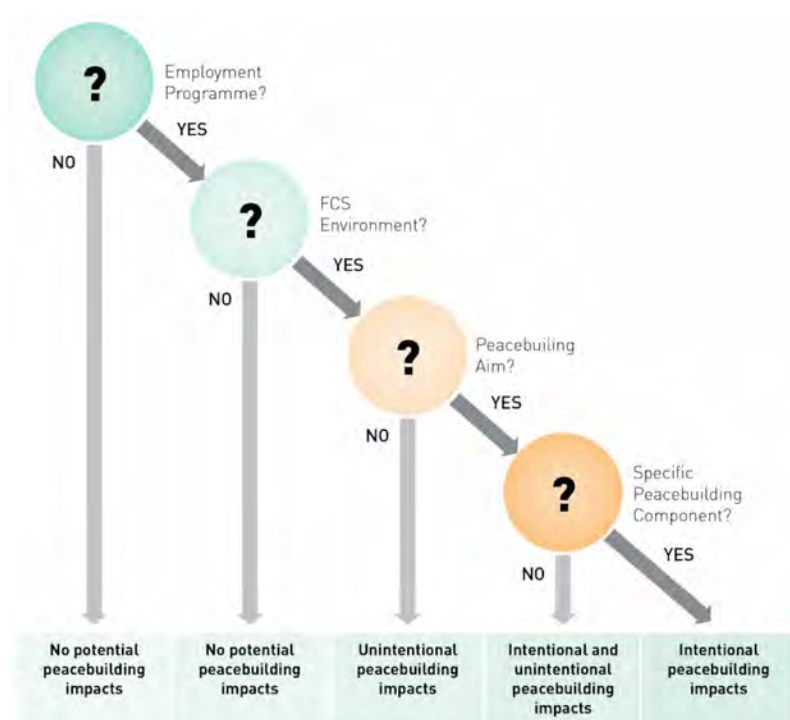
Despite strong theories connecting jobs and peace, there remains a lack of systematic *empirical* knowledge on many of the key relationships that causally could link employment and stability. This includes the two key drivers of the link between employment and stability. Why individuals select into antisocial behaviour at all, let alone how these decisions can be deterred is, as yet, poorly understood. Moreover, even in situations where individuals are willing to engage in antisocial behaviour, it is not clear how such willingness can be organised into the collective violence that characterises conflicts, rebellions and uprisings.

In these circumstances – particularly given the sheer volume of ‘employment for stability’ interventions

by both number and expenditure – one might expect that, instead of robust empirical analyses, a significant body of programme knowledge has been developed. Although in some interpretations, this is indeed true, with programmatic staff displaying a wide array of knowledge and talents, there is a critical lack of meaningful evaluation of the concept. In an analysis of over

400 employment-for-peacebuilding programmes by international agencies, it appears that not a single one explicitly analyses the impact of the intervention on conflictual behaviour or peace-related outcomes. It is, therefore, not only the anticipated relationship between *jobs* and peace that remains theoretical but also that between *employment interventions* and peace.

Figure 1: Which programmes lead to peace?



Despite these shortcomings, however, the strength of theory and conceptualisation implies that it is worth systematically closing these knowledge gaps. At the practical level, closing this gap requires support for the development of new research that looks at individual selection into antisocial behaviour and how such selection is organised into collective violence. At the programme level, it requires monitoring and evaluation for enhanced knowledge focussed specifically on isolating the impact of employment programmes on peace rather than simply assuming that it is an inevitable consequence of other programme outcomes. To do so, agencies must identify which programmes can have a peacebuilding impact (even when such an impact is not intentional) and understand the nature and probability of the effects that might occur. In this regard, employment-for-peace programmes must take place in fragile and conflict-affected scenarios (FCS); however, in such settings, it does not inherently follow that an employment programme need to intentionally have a peacebuilding focus to build peace.

In turn, there is much to gain from analysing programmes that aim only to stimulate employment as well as those aimed directly at building peace through employment.

Why should jobs lead to peace? Theories of change and empirical support

The assumption that employment or vocational training programmes are likely to impact jobs, incomes and skills is entirely plausible, as is the assumption that peacebuilding programmes should reduce antisocial behaviour and increase stability. The cross-pollination of these two ideas, however, requires more thought, as the impact employment programmes can have on peace is, effectively, a two-stage process. Such theories require the juxtaposition of the understanding of why individuals might select into antisocial behaviour in the first place and, consequently, how employment interventions could deter them from doing so.

In the first stage of this process, we identify three main mechanisms which subsume previously theorised drivers

of antisocial behaviour at the individual level: a lack of contact across different well-defined groups; the existence of grievances between groups; and a lack of opportunity. These concepts are represented in Figure 2.

In the second stage of this process, one must then consider how employment programmes can specifically encourage inter-group contact, reduce grievances between groups or stimulate opportunity.

Contact works on the notion that in-group bias is an important concept in conflictual societies. Therefore, anything that aims to bring individuals from different groups together in a productive environment provides an opportunity to reduce or entirely overcome such biases. Employment programmes inherently provide incentives to come together in multi-ethnic (or other mixed) environments. As individuals are remunerated for placing themselves in such an environment – directly, through wages, or indirectly through skills accumulation – they directly benefit, which encourages further participation. Such encouragement is not necessarily present in other

Figure 2: Drivers of adverse behaviour at the micro level

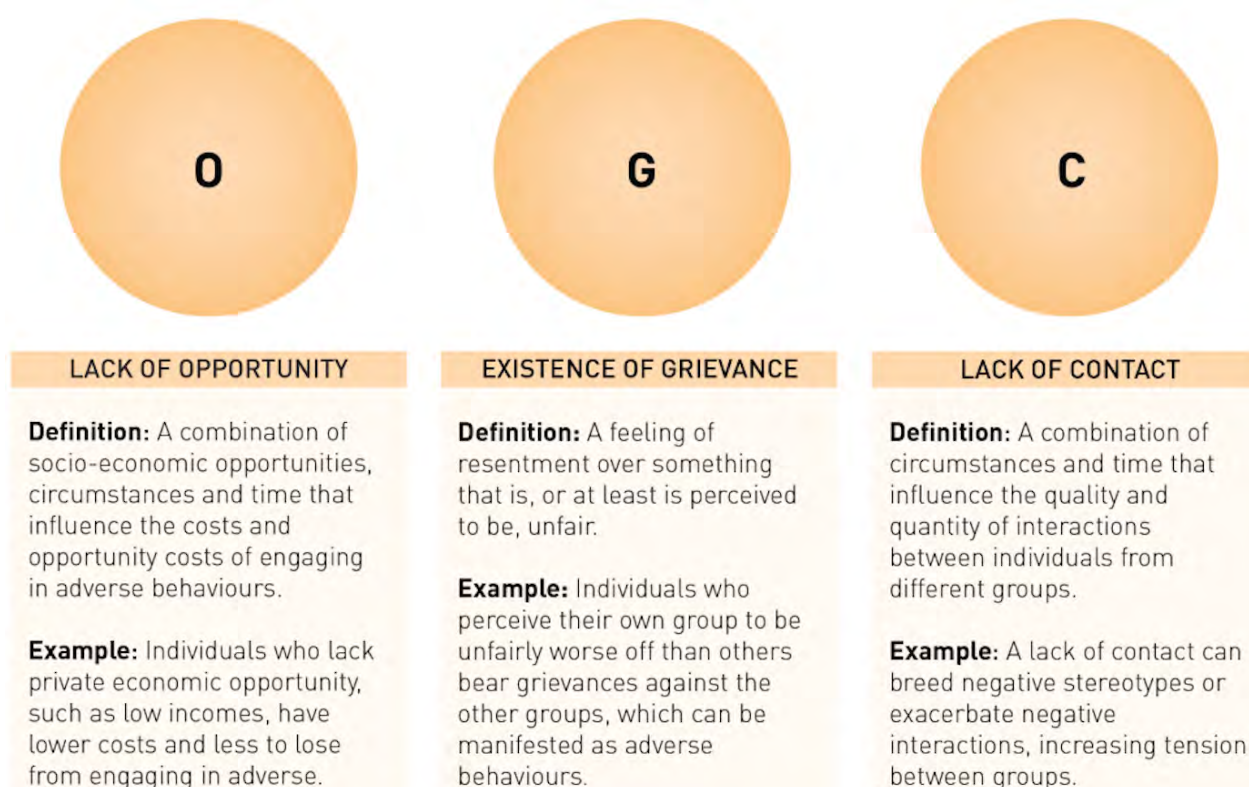


Figure 3: Drivers of adverse behaviour at the micro level - multiple theories can be at play at the same time

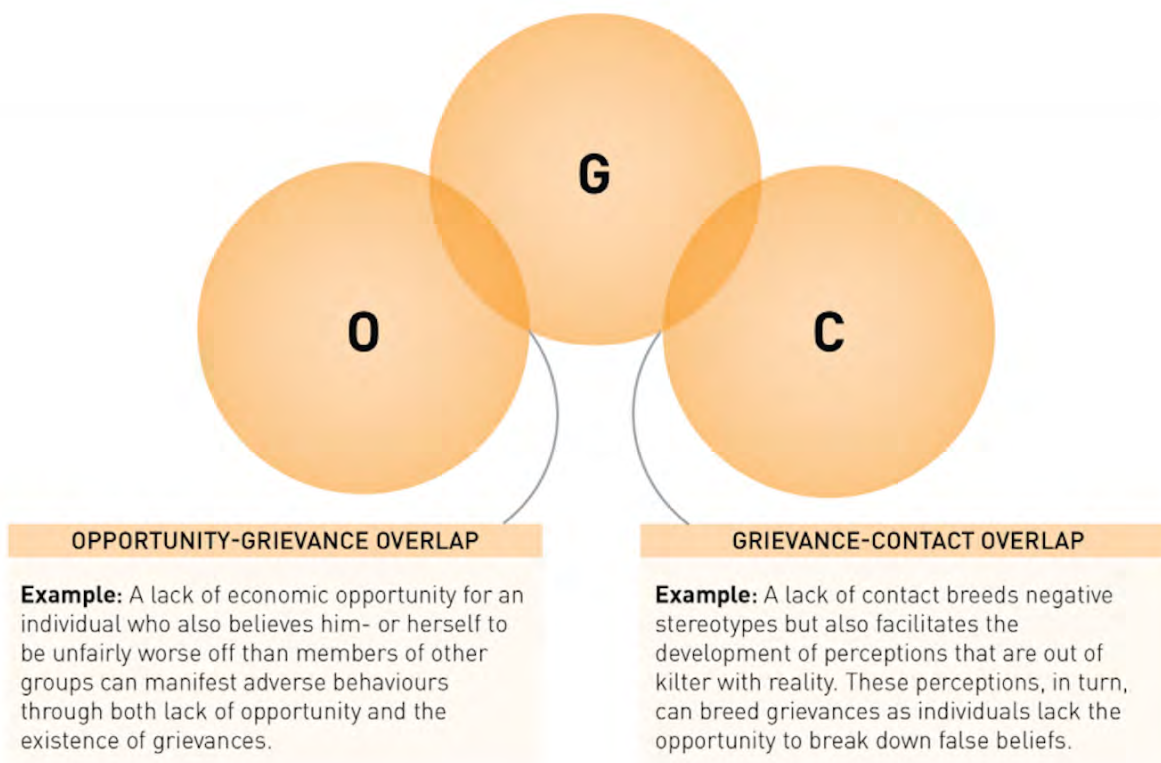


Figure 4: Large universe of employment programmes



voluntary forms of engagement – such as in social situations – suggesting that employment programmes are uniquely placed to boost inter-group contact. Moreover, employment is likely to create mutual reliance and trust between groups, due to the interactions that are necessary for efficiency and task completion, potentially replacing negative interactions with positive ones. Particularly given the documented stresses and risks that may be associated with other efforts to bring groups together, such as reconciliation programmes, the work environment, where the focus is not on creating such interactions, may be a particularly useful tool in building contact.

Grievance emphasises how perceptions of unfairness – real or imagined – between groups can create stresses that, in turn, can lead to manifestations of violence and conflict. These stresses can exist between any well-defined groups, ranging from individuals of different ethnicities to conflict between a government and (some of) the populace. Generating employment

could be a key way to reducing these perceptions of unfairness – a programme that targets or includes a particular ethnic group, for example, may reduce grievances towards other groups; one that targets the poorest in a population may improve the relationship between those in that group and the government.

Finally, *opportunity* builds on the idea that people with low opportunity costs from engaging in undesirable activities are more likely to do so. In the specific context of antisocial behaviour, this may imply that it is relatively easy or inexpensive for conflict entrepreneurs to incentivise individuals to take up arms; or that individuals themselves perceive there is little cost in doing so. Employment, or the income associated with it, is one way to increase these opportunity costs – someone with a regular income is likely to be more reluctant to engage in antisocial behaviour because this individual faces greater costs from engaging in such actions. Alternatively, access to jobs or income streams may also improve an individual's feelings of belonging to a society, or his or her

perceptions and expectations for the future. In combination, this should have the effect of reducing individual propensity towards antisocial behaviour.

As shown in Figure 3, more than a single one of these mechanisms (contact, grievance, opportunity) can be in play in any given programme.

Crosscutting these theories of change are two further important concepts: the 'programme effect' and the 'employment effect'. The programme effect implies that it is the programme itself – regardless of its employment impacts – that builds peace. The employment effect suggests that peacebuilding stems directly from the employment impacts of the programme. This jointly implies that peacebuilding impacts can be intentional or unintentional – there is, after all, nothing to stop the employment effect resulting from a programme that did not intend to build peace – and that an employment programme, ironically, may not need to stimulate employment to build employment.

In general, these theories of change are well-developed, yet

Figure 5: Our programme selection method

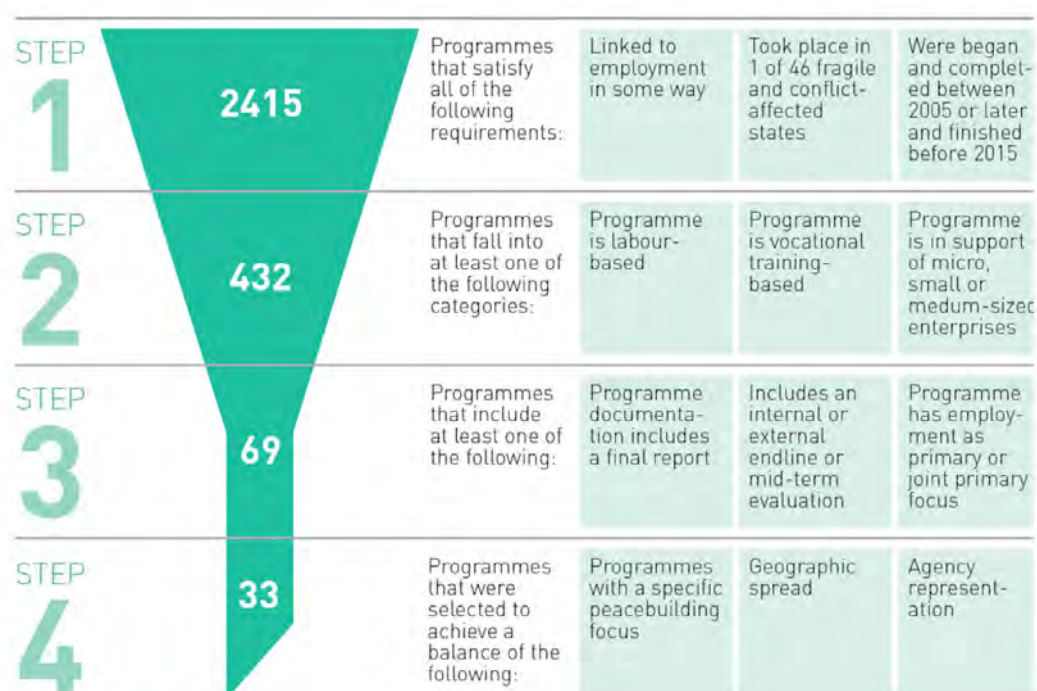
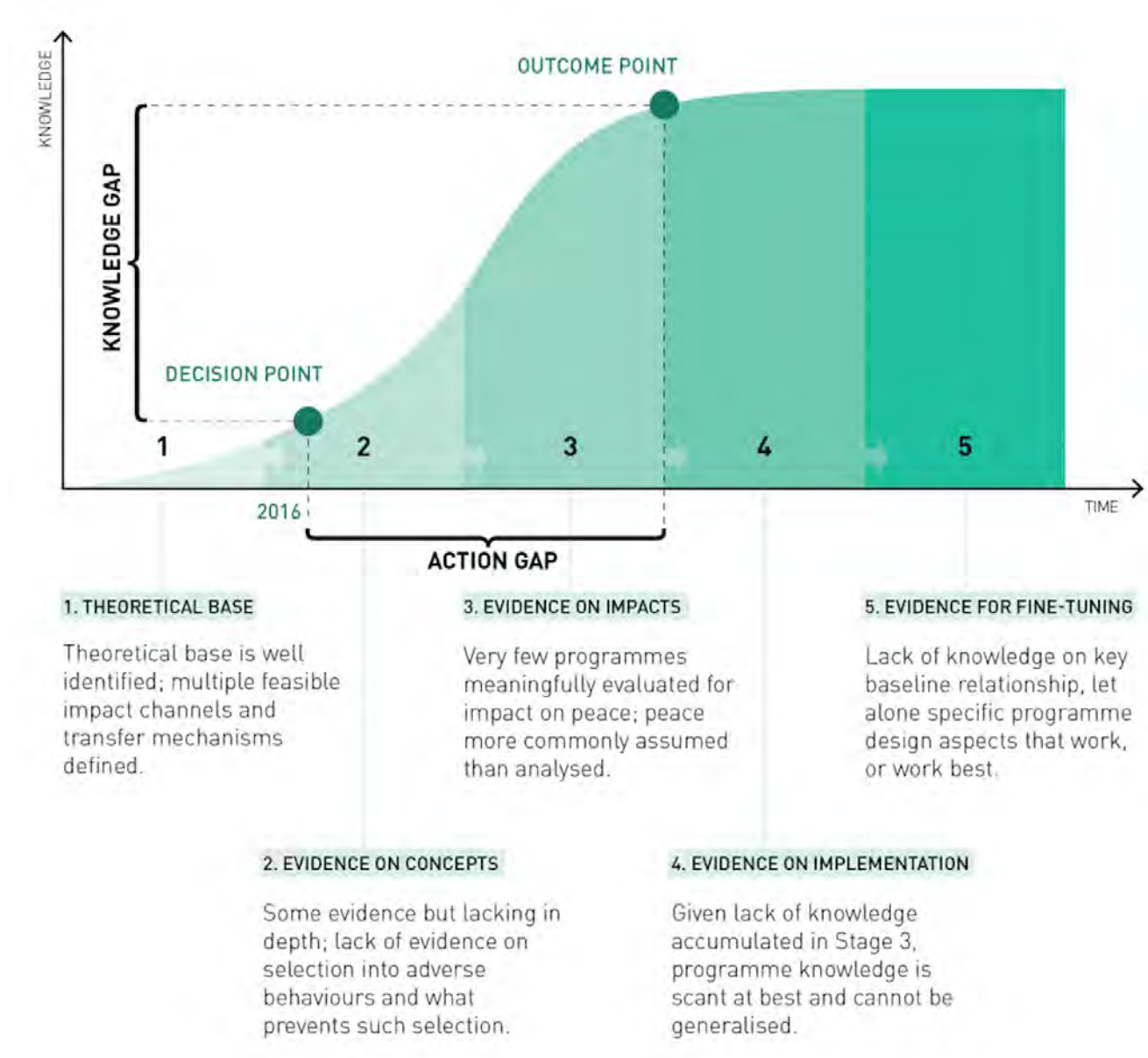


Figure 6: Closing the knowledge gap



they often rely on the interpolation of findings from other areas – such as the dense literature on crime – into conflict settings. In turn, empirical support for the steps involved in each of these theories is often weak, inconsistent, or entirely lacking in the literature. In part, this stems from missing information in the first stage of the theoretical process outlined above; many of the mooted reasons for engaging in antisocial behaviour are hypothetical, and a lack of data – not least because individuals might not like admitting their own engagement in antisocial behaviour – hampers deeper analysis. It follows that it is difficult to empirically confirm what deters antisocial behaviour when there is little systematic knowledge on what causes selection into it in the first place.

What do the programme outcomes say about this relationship?

ILO, PBSO, UNDP and the World Bank have implemented almost 2,500 employment-related programmes in FCS in the last decade, of which just under 450 were deemed suitable for analysis using a systematic review style methodology (see Figure 5). Of these 432 programmes, however, just over 1 in 10 have any kind of in-depth final report or evaluation. Particularly given that final reports are mandated by these agencies, this finding is of deep concern. Whether due to the fact that such reports do not exist at all, or are simply not available, the problem remains the same – the absence of final reports and evaluations is a significant

barrier to the systematic accumulation of knowledge. Of 432 longlist programmes, only 51 have an evaluation of any quality at all and of these, few have been conducted with recourse to any kind of counter-factual, and none with the kinds of counter-factual that stand up to academic rigour.

Even more damning is that not a single programme reviewed in the shortlist explicitly tested the cross-pollination hypothesis that employment programmes can build peace, which stands in contrast to the number that make substantive claims of having done so.

The absence of systematic knowledge accumulation places questions marks over the veracity of the concept itself, let alone acting as

a barrier to deeper understanding of what works, how it works, which programme features work best, and in which environments. When coupled with the academic findings in the field, which typically have shown mixed or insignificant findings, the knowledge gaps that stem from this are of particular concern, given the importance of the concept in funding and strategic decision-making.

Closing the knowledge gap

Despite the significant knowledge gaps, we remain agnostic on the impact that employment programmes can have on peace. Whilst there is little empirical evidence to support the notion, there is also little with which to condemn it. At the same time, given the importance of employment programmes in the peacebuilding strategies of international organisations, the absence of systematic knowledge on the relationship remains deeply concerning.

In this regard, it is important to understand what is currently known and precisely where we stand on the knowledge spectrum. As shown in Figure 6, we stand significantly further back on the knowledge curve than the extent of programming might imply. At the same time, accepting this as a starting point is an important part of closing the gaps that remain. Figure 6 indicates an overview of what needs to be learned and, more importantly, facilitates development of the tools to create that learning. The knowledge gap in question, therefore, stems from an action gap.

To close these gaps, two forms of action are needed. Firstly, organisations need to initiate, encourage and demand research that provides evidence on the key concepts that underpin the causal relationship between employment and stability; secondly, organisations then need to support and develop meaningful monitoring and evaluation

(M&E) frameworks on employment for peacebuilding projects. This M&E should be conducted with recourse to meaningful counter-factuals and should focus directly on the peacebuilding outcomes of employment programmes, rather than assuming them as a consequence of a successful employment programme.

In the meantime, given that present theories imply unintentional as well as intentional peacebuilding effects, agencies could well benefit from running and analysing programmes that focus only on stimulating employment in FCS. Suitably updating these programmes to meet the economic and market challenges in FCS should not only maximise their employment impacts but also provide the opportunity to study cross-pollination through both intentional and unintentional impacts. ■

This article is based on the report Brück, Tilman, Neil T. N. Ferguson, Valeria Izzi & Wolfgang Stojetz (2016). "Jobs Aid Peace: A Review of the Theory and Practice of the Impact of Employment Programmes on Peace in Fragile and Conflict-affected Countries". 16 September, Report for ILO, PBSO, UNDP and WBG, Berlin. <http://isd-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Employment-Interventions-and-Peace-Final-Report-Final-Version-2016-09-16.pdf>

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Youth employment in fragile states: Building the foundations first

by Michel Botzung

High and persistent youth unemployment only reinforces fragility. IFC's approach to supporting youth employment in fragile and conflict-affected countries is to help tackle structural issues in those economies, through an innovative 'fragility and conflict lens'.

The scourge of high youth unemployment is a source of deep pain to economies and societies around the world. When young people cannot find meaningful work, their pride is damaged, they might lose hope and, finally, slide into a life of long-term dependence or even crime.

In fragile states, the consequences of youth unemployment can be more drastic. Jobless young men might be lured into 'working' with militia or rebel groups, picking up guns when they can't pick up pay slips. Jobless women might struggle to feed or educate their children -- and themselves. High and persistent youth unemployment only reinforces fragility, keeping fragile places locked in spirals of poverty and instability. Worryingly, according to a recent report by the International Labour Organization, global youth unemployment is on the rise, reaching 71 million in 2016. The same report reveals that another 150 million young people -- most of them in emerging and developing economies, including fragile states -- live in poverty despite having a job.

The solutions to youth unemployment are complex, especially in fragile states, where insecurity, competition among groups and regions, and extreme poverty make them difficult to implement and sustain. Providing education, training, and skills is crucial. But so is supporting entrepreneurs and businesses with loans and other financial products. Finally, no economy can grow and create jobs without infrastructure: roads, ports, and power stations are the backbone of development.

Creating opportunities

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, places a high priority on creating opportunity where it is needed most. As the world's largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries, IFC has extensive experience supporting growth in countries recovering from conflict.

Countries affected by fragility and conflict are among the poorest in the world. Almost all suffer from dangerously high and entrenched levels of youth unemployment, in some cases over 50%. The problem of youth unemployment is not unique to these countries, of course. Especially since

the financial crisis, Greece, Spain, and other countries have witnessed surging numbers of unemployed young people. However, the problem for fragile and conflict-affected countries is compounded by another serious factor: soaringly high birth rates. Mali, Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan, and the DRC are but a few of the conflict-affected countries among the nations with the world's highest birth rates - a scenario that will only toughen their battle against youth unemployment in future decades.

The foundation first

IFC's approach to supporting youth employment -- and, for that matter, all employment -- in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCS) is to help tackle structural issues in those economies.

For obvious reasons, builders lay the foundations first. The same is true when building an economy: a strong foundation will help support job growth, business creation, trade, and even skills development. Building an economic foundation means mainly three things: first, creating a legal and regulatory environment conducive to business growth; next is establishing reliable infrastructure such as power and sanitation plants, roads, ports, etc.; and finally, strengthening the financial sector so it can play its part facilitating trade and funding businesses and projects, both large and small.

Working with public and private sector partners, and especially through its Conflict Affected States in Africa Initiative (CASA), co-funded by Ireland, the Netherlands, and Norway, IFC has helped a number of African countries implement reforms to sound economic growth. These reforms, sometimes minor regulatory enhancements, sometimes sweeping legal changes, have made it easier for entrepreneurs in fragile states to start a business, access credit, trade across borders, use collateral for loans, lease equipment, and obtain construction permits, among other benefits.

Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone -- all supported by IFC -- have ranked among the best-reforming African FCS in recent years as measured by the World Bank Group's 'Doing Business Report', a comprehensive guide



2014-Trainees attend UNIDO-supported workshop in Addis Ababa. Photo: Unido Flickr.com

to the ease – or difficulty – of doing business in countries around the globe. And as governments continue to take up the reform agenda, the 2016 Doing Business Report reveals gathering success on the ground. For example, it now takes an average of 27 days to start a business in Sub-Saharan Africa, compared with 37 days only five years ago. This improvement is seemingly minor, but when combined with dozens like it, the effect might be enough to help thousands of young entrepreneurs to stay fixed on their dreams.

Infrastructure

Cutting red tape and implementing a solid legal framework is necessary but not sufficient for business growth in fragile and conflict-affected countries, where a lack of infrastructure is often cited as a major hurdle to development.

Take Liberia, for example, where the lights really did go out – all of them. The country suffered through a long and brutal civil war that devastated its infrastructure, including practically wiping out its ability to generate power. According to reports at the time, power plants were specifically targeted by warlords, and everything was stripped for scrap, including cables, conductors, and transformers. Years after the fighting concluded, business growth, education, and even safety were all seriously compromised under these trying conditions. Invited by Liberia's government, IFC stepped in and helped establish a partnership between the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) and Canada's Manitoba Hydro to return power to parts of the country's capital, Monrovia. Working with other partners and the World Bank, IFC helped Liberia design and tender a management contract that enabled the Canadian firm to oversee LEC's operations for five years, starting in 2010. Besides transferring invaluable skills, expertise, and capacity building, the partnership proved a huge success for Liberia, connecting tens of thousands of homes and businesses to the grid.

In 2012, IFC spoke with one Liberian woman benefitting from

the electricity partnership. Marisa Thorpe paid about \$3 a day for power from costly sources before being connected to the grid. With a grid connection, that had fallen to only about \$5 a month: "My children can enjoy studying under light," Marisa said. "Electricity has really improved our lives and I have a freezer and sell ice and cold water, which helps pay the children's school fees." The ultimate goal here, and in numerous other infrastructure projects IFC has supported in fragile and post-conflict countries, either with advisory support or a direct investment, was to improve lives and create the conditions for economic growth.

Strong financial sector

The final building block for a solid economic foundation is a strong financial sector. Businesses can only blossom and create jobs if they have access to loans or other instruments to invest in raw materials, machinery, or other vital goods or services.

Unsurprisingly, financial institutions in most fragile and post-conflict countries lack the capital, capacity, and reach they need to facilitate economic growth and to do it quickly and consistently. One statistic in particular reveals this shortcoming: across sub-Saharan Africa, only about one in five people have a bank account (compared to 90% in high-income countries). IFC's SME Ventures programme is helping fill the financial gap in many post-conflict and frontier markets, where the demand for capital is enormous. SME Ventures' innovative model provides both risk capital and technical assistance to entrepreneurs, helping investee firms grow. It has also helped pave the way for other investors to enter these markets. The programme has six funds, which invest in West and Central Africa, as well as in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal and Bangladesh. Between 2012 and 2015, for example, the Central Africa SME Fund invested in 32 companies, directly creating hundreds of jobs and supporting many more indirectly.

Business unusual

IFC realises that supporting business growth in fragile and post-conflict countries is never 'business as usual'. Implementing a project or supporting reforms in a country recovering from conflict is markedly different from doing the same in a place enjoying relative national cohesion and decades of peace and stability. What IFC does differently in these countries is, increasingly, to view its projects there through a 'fragility and conflict lens'. This innovation, developed with Dutch partner Clingendael, helps IFC determine how its investments and advisory work can best contribute to stability, inclusion, and the fostering of economic growth that supports all groups – including women and young people.

Besides the conflict lens, IFC's work in these countries pays special attention to incubating local businesses, de-risking investments, and being present on the ground. Working at a shared table with public and private sector partners enables partners to understand and navigate the complexity, challenges, and strengths of these difficult environments.

Addressing the skills gap

While the macro-level improvements detailed above are critical for supporting job growth, no economy can grow without the sweat and perseverance of smart, motivated individuals. Building an economy's foundations can – and should – happen concurrently with addressing the skills gap, promoting and supporting entrepreneurship, and establishing schools or other institutions to offer young people the tools and backing they need to succeed.

In Sierra Leone, for example, IFC has supported an annual business plan competition that offers young people with innovative business ideas the chance to win training and funding to realise their dreams.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, IFC is exploring the possibility of an investment and advisory programme in the turbulent east of the country that would help young people find work and gain skills in the extractives industry. DRC has long suffered from conflict and instability and, according to a 2015 report, at least 70 armed groups are operating in the east. Elders there fear more and more of the region's unemployed young men will happily pick up guns if they can't find paying work. Investing in DRC's natural resources sector is one important way to create badly-needed jobs.

And in the Middle East and North Africa, where youth unemployment hovers around 25%, IFC launched a joint investment and advisory initiative that is supporting programmes that prepare students for work in fields like tourism, logistics and information technology. The Education for Employment Initiative for Arab Youth ('E4E') partners with

the private sector and governments to reduce skill gaps in Jordan, Tunisia, Egypt, and Morocco, specifically in high-growth industries like ICT and tourism. The Initiative supports public-private mechanisms to better inform both the demand and supply of skills for young people, and influences the content of training programmes to align them with market needs. The goal by the end of fiscal year 2018 is to equip about 15,000 young men and women with in-demand skills attractive to employers. Initiatives like these, when combined with a strong business environment, modern infrastructure, and ready access to capital, are a winning recipe for job creation. Countries that do more to build their foundations today will help secure the future of their young people tomorrow.

Doing more

IFC is also doing more. Five years ago, our FCS portfolio was a mere US\$300 million worldwide. Today, it is US\$3.5 billion, including US\$1 billion invested last year alone, US\$200 million of that in Africa. Our ambition is to go even further – and triple our portfolio in FCS by mid-2020 compared to where we were in mid-2016. Increasing our activities in fragile states is important because young people there do more than earn a living when they find or create a job: they contribute to the future peace and stability of their communities and countries. ■

About the author



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A New Deal is needed for youth

by Sarah Hearn

The New Deal offers crucial principles for fragile states, but political commitment is lacking and youth populations could be left behind in development. Leaders must recommit to prevent future conflict.

The New Deal for engagement in fragile states

The New Deal is a set of partnership principles for ending conflict and poverty. Agreed by the g7+ group of fragile and conflict-affected countries, it commits them to goals for inclusive politics, security, justice, laying the foundations for economic growth, and collecting revenues to provide services. These peacebuilding and statebuilding goals are intended to address the root causes of conflict and constitute the foundations for long-term development. The “deal” part of the equation hinges on compacts that bind together government, society and international partners towards the collective pursuit of these common goals, and mutual accountability for progress.

In 2016, I reviewed the New Deal and the progress it has made so far. Suffice it to say: simply signing up to the New Deal is not the panacea. Since its launch in 2011, the New Deal has been criticised for being too technical, for low uptake among national political leaders and international partners, and for not sufficiently involving society.

But the New Deal principles remain essential for advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One billion people could escape extreme poverty by 2030 if countries can resolve conflict and crisis, and build inclusive, accountable and effective enough institutions. But this foundational work for development must be well

underway by 2020 if countries are to achieve the SDGs by 2030. This is one of the reasons that all countries agreed SDG 16, which commits to building peaceful and inclusive societies, institutions and access to justice, as well as SDGs for jobs, equality and education, which help to address the causes of instability.

A need to involve youth in the New Deal

Youth have frequently been overlooked in New Deal processes. Yet many of the key risks of instability and conflict involve youth. The Middle East is a cautionary tale, where the UN has warned of a second Arab uprising driven by continued youth unemployment and exclusion. A growing youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa and fragile countries in Asia could drive rapid development gains if enough jobs can be created. But a burgeoning youth population could also challenge the legitimacy of states with limited capacity to attract investment and jobs and provide education. Rapid population growth is also likely to be accompanied by rapid urbanisation, but countries that previously experienced conflict also frequently experience more urban criminal violence. Violent criminal groups that probe countries looking to exploit youth grievances, weak institutions and porous borders could compound these factors in a growing number of g7+ countries, as they have in the Sahel, Horn of Africa, Middle East and Latin America.

To counter this, above all, political leaders in the g7+ countries need to recommit to the principles of the New Deal, and especially to political processes that bind all relevant actors into a shared vision for what needs to happen and how to resolve the causes of conflict, build peace and achieve the SDGs. These processes need to include parliaments, the private sector, media and citizens groups, including youth. They can be pursued at the national and subnational levels to address national and urban drivers of violence and instability.

In conducive political conditions, finding innovative ways to empower youth will also be key. The private sector creates 90% of jobs in developing countries. The g7+ has recognised that jobs are essential for sustaining peace and identified key priorities for: job creation through public works, focusing on the groups that have the highest potential to drive conflict; creating stability and an enabling environment for the private sector; and support for small- and medium-sized enterprises.

However, the international community could go further than it has to assist the g7+ in job creation and training. Fragile countries receive just 6% of total foreign direct investment in all developing countries. Aid modalities that attract private investment are under-utilised in fragile states, despite the fact that this is where they are needed most. These include publicly-backed risk guarantees and equity investment shares that help countries mobilise private investment



Bean packing enterprise in Ethiopia: Although more African countries have been registering stronger economic growth, poverty remains persistent. Photo: Panos/Sven Torfinn

and job creation in key sectors. The private sector, for its part, needs to be at the table to design and co-finance initiatives aimed at giving youth sufficient opportunities.

Building community resilience is the other side of the equation for building self-reliance and livelihoods. At the Addis Ababa International Conference on Financing for Development in 2015, countries agreed to spend US\$300 per capita on social protection; however, the gap between this ambition and affordability in g7+ countries is vast. Meeting the social protection target would cost countries the equivalent of 44% of GDP in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 25% in Guinea, and 32% in Central African Republic. Economic growth and raising domestic revenues will be crucial in the long-term, but with no new international aid commitments on the table now, making the best use of all available aid sources to build resilience will be key in the near term. The UN has proposed solutions to pool humanitarian, development and peacebuilding finances into social protection, education, and livelihoods programmes that build communities' self-reliance.

A political imperative to recommit to the New Deal

Europe's refugee crisis has focused aid partners' attention on job creation and resilience in fragile states to curb migration flows. The UK's post-Brexit bilateral aid review, for example, commits to creating employment in countries that are sources of refugees

and migrants. However, every country's individual response to crisis in the Middle East is leading to an overall decline in investment in least developed countries (LDCs). For the first time in over a decade, rich countries' aid spending on the LDCs dropped by 5% in 2015. g7+ countries, such as Sierra Leone, are now underfunded.

In the long-term, this trend may be irrational. The international community could find itself forever throwing money at the latest crisis unless it invests in long-term partnerships with the poorest and most fragile countries in the first place. This is why it is crucial for all partners to redouble political commitment to the New Deal principles. It is more important than ever for g7+ political leaders to pull together ministries, civil society, the private sector and international partners to jointly identify and resolve the causes of conflict and crisis by pursuing a next generation of development programmes that empower booming youth populations. ■

This article builds on Hearn, S. (2016), Independent Review of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. <http://www.g7plus.org/sites/default/files/resources/Independent-Review-Full-Review.pdf>

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The Weekly Compass



Want to know the direction in which development cooperation is sailing? Stay informed of all the latest news on EU-Africa and EU-ACP development cooperation with the ECDPM Weekly Compass (WECO) Newsletter.

Implications of the irregular migration and refugee situation on Official Development Assistance spending and practices in Europe

Weekly Newsletter, 6 February 2017

Increasingly high numbers of refugees and migrants have come to Europe over the past five years seeking protection. Beyond hosting and providing assistance to new arrivals, the European Union and its member states have used various political, development and humanitarian assistance tools to address the current displacement and migration challenges abroad. A newly published study, carried out by ECDPM policy researchers Anna Knoll and Andrew Sherriff, looks at the implications that irregular migration and the refugee situation are having on official development assistance by looking at five case studies in Europe, including the European institutions. The study was commissioned and launched by the Swedish Expert Group of Aid Studies during the recent seminar Migration and Foreign Aid.

De-securitising conflict responses in Africa: What prospects for a structural conflict prevention approach?

Weekly Newsletter, 30 January 2017

This discussion paper by ECDPM's Faten Aggad and Sophie Desmidt builds on the increasing importance of regional approaches to conflict, which have been gaining traction, reflected in the role of the African Union and of its African Peace and Security Architecture. The authors explore current approaches towards conflict resolution in Africa. Taking into account the issues of authority as well as institutional and financial capacity, they assess the feasibility of a more de-militarised approach of the African Union and the various African regional economic communities and mechanisms to promote peace and security on the continent.

How to adapt EU development and external action to new challenges in the Africa-Europe partnership

Weekly Newsletter, 23 January 2017

The Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU and ECDPM co-organised a seminar to launch and present our Challenges paper on Africa-Europe relations in 2017. This seminar took place on 1 February at the Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU in Brussels. It brought together officials from the European Commission, European Parliament, European External Action Services, members of the CODEV, ACP and COAFR Council Working Parties and Civil Society representatives to discuss key challenges in the run-up to the upcoming Africa-EU Summit at the end of 2017.

Does the EU have the right instruments to finance assistance in protracted crises?

Weekly Newsletter, 16 January 2017

At present, the EU is facing a number of crises in the Neighborhood region and beyond. Most of these crises are either protracted and/or recurring. They are characterised by a high volatility and bring about both the need for short-term humanitarian responses as well as structural challenges in terms of development and fragility, which require more long-term solutions. The European Parliament has commissioned a study that analyses whether the current set of EU instruments constitutes a good basis to the challenges associated with protracted crisis. The study has been conducted jointly by KU Leuven and by ECDPM, whose experts Matthias Deneckere and Volker Hauck have specifically focused on the analysis and evaluation of the EU instruments in response to protracted crisis. ECDPM's research around this topic has also led to one more publication, namely The EU engagement in protracted crises: Towards a comprehensive approach? which appeared in the monthly publication *Nação e Defesa* by the Portuguese Instituto da Defesa Nacional (IDN).

Talking Points

Our blogs aim to deepen the dialogue on policy issues, and get to the heart of the matter in an honest and concise way.



[Eight notable moments for Europe and Africa: Looking back at 2016 and ahead to 2017](#)

Talking Points, ECDPM Comms team, 13 January 2017

As we've entered a new year, we look back at some notable moments from 2016 – a turbulent time for international cooperation and global development. What were some of the highlights, particularly in Europe and Africa? What did we have to say about them? And what will 2017 have in store?



[Taking steps ahead: Towards a new vision for migration in 2017](#)

Talking Points, Anna Knoll, 20 January 2017

The issue of migration will continue to be pivotal in 2017. ECDPM's Anna Knoll explains why the European Union should adopt a long-term thinking towards the issue of migration and wishes 2017 to be the year when this shift will start its course.



[Tunisia's new law: another step towards local democracy](#)

Talking Points, Tasnim Abderrahim, 3 February 2017

This week, Tunisia's national assembly has passed the long-awaited law on elections and referenda, a step that has elicited mixed reactions. The new law, which completes and amends the basic law on elections adopted in 2014, will govern all types of elections and referenda, from parliamentary to presidential, from regional to municipal. Setting a unified law seeks to prevent potential confusion among voters regarding the conduct of elections and avoid any inconsistencies between separate laws. It is yet to be seen whether this proposal will pass the constitutional review.



[Did the 28th African Union summit meet its hype and hope?](#)

Talking Points, Philomena Apiko, Luckystar Miyandazi and Faten Aggad, 3 February 2017

In our annual Challenges paper, ECDPM authors stated that “strong and visible leadership within the AU Commission is an asset for shaping continental agendas”. In this blog, Philomena Apiko, Luckystar Miyandazi and Faten Aggad reflect upon the outcomes of the 28th African Union summit, the new AU leadership and the proposed reforms.

Latest ECDPM publications



ECDPM and EBA. 2017. Making Waves: Implications of the irregular migration and refugee situation on Official Development Assistance spending and practices in Europe. Maastricht: ECDPM.

A study of the impact of irregular migration on ODA in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and EU institutions.

Increasingly high numbers of refugees and migrants have come to Europe over the past five years seeking protection. Beyond hosting and providing assistance to new arrivals, the European Union and its Member States have used various political, development and humanitarian assistance tools to address the current displacement and migration challenges abroad. In all countries, this has profoundly impacted the use of official development assistance (ODA) with short- and longer-term implications for migration governance and for development cooperation.



Aggad-Clerx, F., Desmidt, S. 2017. De-securing conflict responses in Africa: What prospects for a structural conflict prevention approach? (Discussion Paper 209). Maastricht: ECDPM.

This discussion paper builds on the increasing importance of regional approaches to conflict, which have been gaining traction, reflected in the role of the African Union and of its African Peace and Security Architecture. The authors explore current approaches towards conflict resolution in Africa. Taking into account the issues of authority as well as institutional and financial capacity, they assess the feasibility of a more de-militarised approach of the African Union and the various African Regional Economic Communities and mechanisms to promote peace and security on the continent.



Mackie, J., Deneckere, M., Galeazzi, G. 2017. Matching means to priorities: Challenges for EU-Africa relations in 2017. (Challenges Paper Issue No. 8). Maastricht: ECDPM.

This edition of ECDPM's Challenges paper explores some of the political choices underlying the seemingly technical issues of financing for development and EU-Africa cooperation. It first considers opportunities in 2017 for adapting EU external action policy and practice to today's challenges, such as by reassessing the EU's financing instruments. Second, it casts an eye forward to the Fifth EU-Africa Summit, which represents an opportunity to advance joint European-African priorities on migration, peace and security, and youth affairs. Third, it looks at ongoing efforts towards greater financial autonomy for the AU and their potential to help deliver on the promises of Agenda 2063, the AU's vision on Africa's future. Finally, we dig into the topic of financing for development, to explore synergies and challenges in catalysing new public and private resources. These are illustrated by an analysis of key issues related to promoting sustainable agriculture in Africa – including linking food security and climate finance.



Burnay, M., Deneckere, M., Raube, K., Hauck, V. 2016. Does the EU have the right instruments to finance assistance in protracted crises and the needs of the upper middle income countries? Brussels: European Parliament.

This study pays critical attention to two specific issue areas with which the financing instruments ought to be concerned: First, the EU has developed tools and instruments to react to and prevent 'protracted crises'. The results of this study show that the current set of instruments forms a good basis to the challenges associated with protracted crisis.



Große-Puppenthal, S., Karaki, K., Bilal, S. 2016. Investment promotion for sustainable development: The roles of DFIs and export credit agencies. (Discussion Paper 208). Maastricht: ECDPM.

In recent years and in the aftermath of the world financial crisis, economic slowdown in Europe has encouraged European governments and the European Union (EU) to set up support programmes and instruments that can stimulate national economies and help create the jobs needed to tackle both (youth) unemployment and crumbling growth rates. By providing access to (trade) finance and mitigating risk, the ambition is to help enterprises to expand and grow internationally, as "foreign exposure by these companies can increase enterprise competitiveness, provide access to foreign markets and resources, create new opportunities for exports, and generate profits" (UNCTAD, 2015).

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