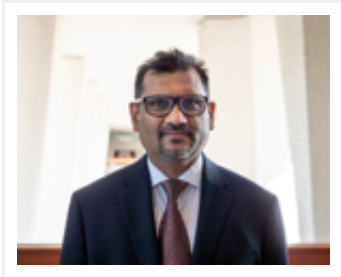


Quality Apprenticeships: Life-changing experiences

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It's easy to get caught up in day to day processes when you work for a large UN agency like the International Labour Organization. You can end up losing sight of the value and impact of your work. But the day I read an article in one of Tanzania's leading newspapers about a student who attended an ILO apprenticeship programme which trains young people to work in the hotel industry, I was literally moved to tears.

The young man in the story, Barnaba Barungi, was not able to pursue higher education because his family could not afford the school fees. So he helped to support his family by selling fish on the streets of Dar es Salaam. He most likely would have continued doing this for the rest of his life.

But he found out about Tanzania's first apprenticeship programme, which my team and I — from ILO offices in South Africa and Tanzania — helped constituents to design.

The programme was very attractive to the young man. It gave him an opportunity to learn in the best hotels and at the National College of Tourism. He would acquire a higher-level qualification and receive a stipend instead of paying fees. He applied and was selected by Hotel Southern Sun, a leading hotel chain.

The experience completely changed his life.

After the apprenticeship was over, the hotel employed him as a Chef. Now he has become a role model for youth and dreams of opening his own academy for chefs.

Barungi is not alone. Every single student on that pilot programme was able to find a job — in a country where youth unemployment is high.

That was four years ago. Since then, the programme has gone from strength to strength, expanding to other parts of the country. Today we have plans to start apprenticeship programmes in construction,



- Barnaba Barungi completely changed his life after the ILO's apprenticeship programme. Now he dreams of opening his own academy for chefs.

leather-working and the apparel industry in Tanzania.

World Youth Skills Day on 15 July is a reminder that in today's fast-changing labour markets, it's become ever more important that young people keep their skills up to date. Traditional institution-based vocational education and training systems are not always able to provide learners with the latest knowledge and skills required by employers. Apprenticeships are therefore becoming all the more important as they have the potential to provide a pathway to opportunities to both young people and adults.

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All the apprentices on the ILO pilot programme said they would strongly recommend young people to join apprenticeships. When I asked them why, they said that quality apprenticeships allowed them to:

- Learn by doing at an actual workplace with the latest facilities
- Earn while learning
- Receive high-quality training
- Have a contract that protects the rights of apprentices
- Acquire a higher level qualification
- Get a decent job after training.

Even though the benefits of apprenticeships are well known, many countries do not have well-established, large-scale apprenticeship programmes. Attempts to export and replicate apprenticeship systems from one country to another have not been successful. Therefore, governments and social partners are increasingly seeking advice on ways to establish or strengthen quality apprenticeship systems. To effectively respond, ILO initiatives focus on carrying out cutting-edge research, developing innovative knowledge products and approaches and building the capacity of constituents. It's led to the development of the "[ILO Toolkit for Quality Apprenticeships](#)", which recommends the following six building blocks of a quality apprenticeship system.

- Meaningful social dialogue
- A robust regulatory framework
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Equitable funding arrangements
- Strong labour market relevance
- Inclusiveness

Promoting quality apprenticeships is a top priority for the ILO, since they move youth into decent jobs and help enterprises to find the workforce they need for the future. For Barungi and many others like him, they have been a pathway to a better life.

Find out more about the apprenticeship programme in Tanzania [here](#).

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