Youth Employment in West Africa

WHICH WAY FORWARD?

Aeneas Chapinga Chuma, ILO Regional Director for Africa

« Youth employment: our top-most priority »

FOCUS
The PAMODEC conference on Social Dialogue
Telling you about our activities
François MURANGIRA
Director, DWT/CO-ILO/Dakar

Partnership for a green economy in Senegal
30,000 jobs to find
Training consultant job in Africa
A repository in gestation

Youth employment in West Africa
Which way out?

Study
- Diagnostic analysis of youth employment in Senegal (May 2014)
- Mapping and diagnostic analysis of youth employment in Burkina Faso (October 2014)

“Employment: our top-most priority”

Aeneas Chapungu
CHUMA, ILO
Regional Director For Africa

“Employment: our top-most priority”

Friar Godfrey NZAMUJO
Director of the Songhai centre (Benin)

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Focus
DECENT WORK

February 2015

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Decent Work/employment/working conditions/youth employment/roles of the ILO/West-Africa

Abdoulaye NDAO (layepro.com)

Telling you about our activities, our achievements, and listening to our beneficiaries

In the ILO 2010-2015 strategic framework, communication and information to the general public constitute the main tools that the ILO uses to inform the public about the way ILO analyses and deals with the core issues confronting the world of work. The Organization is thus committed to using communication methods and tools to secure stakeholders’ participation, take stock of the strategies themselves, disseminate information on tried and tested solutions, showing the contexts and the modalities adopted; it also seeks to design effective strategies to mobilize and further strengthen international support for decent work.

In this vein, the ILO Office in Dakar embarked upon a communication strategy aimed at disseminating information on the ILO mandate, and showcasing its activities and achievements in support of member States. And this is consistent with the directives of the new ILO Regional Director for Africa, Mr. Aeneas Chapinga Chuma, that communication be an integral part of our strategic planning framework. This quarterly news magazine is a component of the outreach package designed to reach the said objective. Its goal is to create a space for the sharing of information, knowledge, and good practices on major issues prevailing in the world of work in the West-African sub-region. The editorial approach is to disseminate ILO messages and standpoints on topics of interest, and sharing viewpoints coming from our tripartite constituents: – governments – employers – workers, as well as other ILO partners. For some topics, it will be possible to open our columns to experts, opinion leaders and the public at large. We also intend to publish news reports on relevant initiatives, as well as the profile of a personality who has distinguished himself through an outstanding initiative that contributed to solving problems in the world of work in West Africa.

We have chosen to dedicate the first volume of the magazine to the topic of youth employment, given its critical nature in the West African countries that are under our mandate. Indeed, in almost all of these countries, demand for jobs/employment is growing increasingly, while job offers remain low, and are very far from absorbing the massive waves of young people flowing into the labour market each year.

For ILO, the best way to take the affected countries out of the vicious circle of poverty is to create quality jobs in an environment of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. The Organization has thus formulated a clear vision of the strategies and actions to promote employment (particularly, youth employment) in the world. The subsequent pages will define that vision, and present to a large extent some of the actions conducted at sub-regional level to support States in the search for solutions to the problem of youth employment. In this publication, as well as in future issues, focus would be on the outcomes and best practices recorded, and also on the opinions of the partners and beneficiaries of those actions. In short, how do we make a difference, and offer greater hope to our young men and women confronted with issues of precarious employment, unemployment, or lack of professional qualifications?

Keeping faith with the objective of our Organization which gives precedence to social dialogue and negotiation as the process and mechanism to build consensus around the major challenges in the world of work, we decided to adopt an editorial stand that gives due recognition to constructive contributions and presentation of best practices and actions that bring hope to our young men and women.

You are hereby urged to assume ownership of this magazine by contributing articles, by reading and sharing it.

EDITORIAL

Communication is an integral part of our strategic planning framework.

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From January 19th to January 22nd, 2015, Mr. Aeneas Chapinda Chuma, ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa paid an official visit to Senegal. This visit was an opportunity for Mr. Chuma to have a working session with Mr. Mansour Sy, Senegalese Minister of Labour, Social Dialogue, Professional Organizations and Institutional Relations. He also held working sessions with social partners in Senegal (representatives of the Workers Unions and Employers Unions). At the end of his visit he kindly accepted to grant an interview in which he stated the ILO priorities in Africa.

You are heading the ILO Africa Regional Office since March 2014, can you tell us about your personal background?

Before joining ILO, for a long time, I was with the UNDP in several countries. However, my latest position was as a member of a peace-keeping team, being deputy to the Special Representative in Liberia. Concerning my academic background, I specialized in macroeconomics.

What are the ILO priorities in Africa?

We have identified four priorities for Africa. The first is youth employment. I mean providing employment opportunities for young people, because Africa's population is very young. It is extremely important to appreciate this population as a huge asset that must be given productive employment to enable it to contribute to the development of the continent. We must also acknowledge that it is not acceptable to have such a large number of underemployed and unskilled young people with largely unmet expectations. That is the reason why employment is one priority.

There is another priority which consists in building and developing a social protection system in Africa; particularly in these days of growing unemployment and worldwide inequalities. However, we are doing something about it in Africa; that is why we are currently discussing about this priority with the Governments and social partners in the region. Priority three has to do with labour migration, in particular within Africa. Most Africans move from one country to another or from one region to another; and it looks like we have a common system to provide constructive support to migration. We consider labour migration to be good, insofar as it contributes to the development of several countries. We can have an expansion of the African labour market through the movement of competences and knowledge from zones to zones, and the movement of labour from countries having a surplus of some competences and to countries with shortage of such competences. Therefore, our ambition is to develop a system to be mainstreamed into African economic integration process through ECOWAS or SADC, the Eastern-African community, or even at the continental level, rather than acting at sub-regional level only. The process under consideration should cover not only the movement of goods, but also the movement of competences and people. The issue of qualifications and training is equally important to us. Qualifications must comply with common standards, so that an engineer trained in Senegal could for example be certified and recognized in other countries such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa, or elsewhere. These are important labour migration issues that deserve some attention.

Priority four relates to countries called fragile States. We need to consider the type of support ILO can provide to them. But, in addition to those four priorities, we should not forget the key ILO cross-cutting issues. These mainly include the promotion of international labour standards, issues related to the informal sector, gender, equality at work, HIV/AIDS at work and child labour.

What strategies are there to get Member States involved in the implementation of these priorities?

The main reason why I visited nearly 20 countries over the last nine months exchanging views with governments as well as with social partners (workers unions and employers union) and informing them about the ILO priorities within the region. We are organizing a seminar in April for all the African members of the ILO Governing body to get them to buy into the identified priorities. The seminar would also provide us an opportunity to determine how we can work together; that is to say, we are operating on the ground while they represent Africa at the ILO Governing body. The other key strategy is the Africa Region Meeting of November 30 - December 3rd. This is an important platform organized every 4 years and is an occasion for the African governments, the ILO, the African representatives of workers, and of employers to come together to consider development challenges facing Africa, the issues impacting on the continent's development and also the opportunities that can be afforded ILO for the success in its mandate. This is an important event that ILO Africa Regional Office is currently planning, preparing particularly the relevant documentation and the organization of work.

What conclusion can we draw from your visit to Senegal?

You know Senegal is very important to us because this country hosts one of our largest decent work support teams made up of senior technical specialists based in this country. Furthermore, the Dakar Office covers nearly 16 countries. So we have a strong presence here. I am extremely pleased to state that this team works very effectively with the government, as well as with the social partners. Our work goes truly well in Senegal. In addition, the quality of the debate and commitment is highly progressive, that gives reason for hope. We are supporting our partners in building their capacities based on their various areas of interest. Workers for example are interested in the labour code, but from a perspective different from the employers’. You may know that employers tend to consider labour rights as a very restrictive and rigid body of rules, whereas workers want to protect the integrity of their role. Our role is to bridge that gap, putting on the discussion table the good practices that exist everywhere in the world. We also considered, with our three partners, the social stability Pact which was signed here, following negotiations between the government, the workers’ representatives and the employers’ representatives. We wish to ensure that this success be seen as a reflection of a good practice of tripartism and social dialogue. Consequently, we work with the Ministry of Public Sector Employment, Labour, Social Dialogue and Professional Organizations on the implementation; to this end, we are offering technical support and also making available our country-based specialists and other specialists that can be called-upon from other teams in Africa (Egypt, Cameroon and South Africa), and also from our headquarters in Geneva.

While we may not be able to commit substantial financial resources to the implementation of the Pact, however, we try to provide wide-ranging expertise, knowledge and technical support for the achievement of objectives of the Social Stability Pact. As you can see, we have covered many fields of the world of work during our visit; and I am happy and grateful for the way I was received by the Government and social partners. With this in mind, I want express my heart-felt gratitude to Honourable Minister Mansour Sy, Minister of Labour with whom we had very constructive working sessions and whom I had the pleasure of seeing once more in Senegal to discuss issues of common interest.
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN WEST AFRICA

Which way out?

In the light of the persistent demographic expansion, limited economic prospects, high illiteracy rate and of the mismatch between educational systems and the employment market, the volume of youth employment remains complex. This explains why the special report of this first volume of the Decent Work Magazine is dedicated to it. This special report gives the opportunity of exchanging views on the topic and of bringing out promising views, programmes and actions.

In this Special Report

- The place of youth employment in the national development policies of West-African States
- Youth employment: investment-intensive programmes
- Job creation for youth: the pathways offered by the ILO Tripartite Declaration on multinational companies
- The Benin CEJEDRAO and Senegal ISFP projects
- Community agricultural estates in Senegal
- The green employment niche
- Young girls and employment: Stereotypes and the path to equality
- The ILO’s position on the issue
- The ILO’s position on the issue
- The West-African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)
- Viewpoints of:
  - Employers’ union: The National Employers’ Federation of Côte d’Ivoire (EFCI)
  - Workers’ union: Interview with the Secretary General of ITUC Africa
  - Employment expert: Doctor Djibril Ngom
  - The West-African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)
- Profile of a visionary: Godfrey NZAMUJO, promoter of Porto Novo Songhai Centre (BENIN)
Youth employment in national development policies

GETTING WIDER SPACE

West Africa is facing chronic youth employment deficit which constitutes a threat to the States’ socio-political stability. This situation has gradually led the government authorities to recognize the need for a more effective intervention.

It is general knowledge that youth constitute the greater bulk of the un-employed people on the African continent. Most youth, to avoid being unemployed, accept low productivity and poor quality jobs. This situation which is prevalent in the informal sector draws them into vulnerability and extreme poverty, which are sometimes the drivers of delinquency, political instability, illegal migration, plagues of all kinds, including prostitution, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc.

Of all these consequences of unemployment and underemployment, threat of political instability would certainly be the one that most requires a great attention. As early as October 2011, the African Union, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and ECLAC rang the alarm bell through a document produced in preparation for the “joint initiative in favor of job creation for youth in Africa”. According to these authors, the situation “youth employment in Africa has not enjoyed high priority in national development policies”. They estimated that Africa was lagging behind in the design of policies, strategies and plans of action that promoted youth-focused job creation. They all agreed that youth-focused job creation for both male and female coming into the labour market each year is a crucial stage in the transition towards prosperous economies. Consequently, they welcomed the fact that Governments and development partners were increasingly mindful of the need for and urgency of a response to the challenge of “youth employment in Africa”.

For Côte d’Ivoire, the National Development Plan – Plan National de Développement (PND) 2012-2015, is currently the reference framework containing government policy. Its main objective is to make Côte d’Ivoire an emerging country by 2020. With the NDF, the country’s authorities are hoping to achieve three ambitions in the field of employment. First is the improvement of the employment and labour sector governance, specifically institutional and legal framework. This is followed by the creation of incentives for job creation; promotion of Labour Intensive Works (LIW) in government investment projects; and wider labour market integration into the labour market through entrepreneurship.

Regarding incentive measures for job creation, the Government of Côte d’Ivoire reported on the establishment of a system to monitor the job profiles requested by business organizations, the elaboration of a directory on jobs and skills, the promotion of a training and employment matching process, and the introduction of incentives for the recruitment of first-time job applicants. For the Government of Côte d’Ivoire, labour market integration through entrepreneurship would require the introduction of an entrepreneurship module in the education/training system, the promotion of business and self-employment success models and, the support to business creation by young people, women and handicapped people.

Lastly, the third expected impact of the NDF is the improvement of labour productivity. To achieve this, Côte d’Ivoire would need to promote support for human capital development in the informal sectors in urban and rural areas; the promotion of in-service training in the formal labour sector, and the sector of health and safety at work and, the promotion of social dialogue; the fight against child labour and trafficking also needs to be scaled up.

Like Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal has adopted a new development strategy to accelerate the pace of the Emerging Senegal Plan. This strategy known as Plan for Emerging Senegal – Plan Émergent Senegal (ESP) shall be the country’s economic and social policy reference until 2035. In the plan, the employment to youth equation occupies an important place in the section entitled “strategy for emergence”, specifically in pillar no.1, labelled “structural transformation of the economy and growth”. It is expressly written that “employment remains one of the key objectives of the PSE”. According to Senegalese authorities, this would entail creating opportunities in order to generate between 100,000 and 150,000 decent, productive and remunerating jobs each year. The attainment of this objective would require a series of measures including the promotion of Government investment into Labour Intensive Public Works; the execution of high-productivity job-generating projects; the promotion of youth self-employment through skills development; the creation of incentive measures to boost investments and job creation in the private sector; the support for labour market integration and the establishment of an accessible credit mechanism to promote viable projects. These incentive measures will go together with an enhanced labour market monitoring system, the structuring and upgrading of the informal sector, the establishment of a labour market information system, the regulation of the labour market and rationalization of funding agencies and mechanisms in support youth employment, and support to project promoters.

This last measure became effective in January 2014, with the creation of the National Agency for Youth Employment (NAYE) - Agence Nationale pour la Promotion de l’Emploi des Jeunes (ANPEJ) – born from the dissolution of the four agencies which were formerly charged with implementing youth employment policies. NAYE was officially launched on Wednesday, August 27th 2014, with the mandate to create 13 thousand jobs by 2017.

The West Africa regional issue of Africa Economic Outlook 2014 published under the auspices of AfDB, OECD and UNDP reports that, like Côte d’Ivoire and Senegal, the other countries in the sub-region are mainstreaming the issue of youth employment into their development strategies.

Youth employment in West Africa

What’s the ILO’s position?

Background. Youth employment status in West African is far from being flawless. Indeed, there is a disproportionate concentration of young workers in the informal economy. Shortage of permanent jobs for the youth is also on the increase. Insecurity and slowdown of the school to work transition remains worrying. There is a pervasive climate of discouragement and apathy on the labour market. Furthermore, the employment issue has an uneven impact on the young people. Some are more disadvantaged than others in the labour market on account of age, gender, national or ethnic origin, the socioeconomic area, training, education, qualifications, migration, HIV/AIDS, disabilities and other individual characteristics.

Our analysis also reveals that in Africa there are few comprehensive strategic frameworks with a clear and coherent set of policy priorities. Moreover, the allocated funds are inadequate and the resources underestimated. Most interventions focus on the supply, while the demand remains sluggish.

Principle. For a continent in search of the wherewithal for poverty eradication, sustainable development and peace, to address the challenge of youth employment would be a prerequisite for the attainment of those aspirations.

ILO is thus convinced that the best way out of poverty is jobs creation. Having effectively made this advocacy, we are getting more and more followers; indeed, looking at the second generation of the Strategic frameworks for growth and poverty alleviation launched by many African States under the drive of the IMF and the World Bank, employment is featured therein as the core issue.

To support the process, the ILO articulates its agenda around decent work. That agenda was presented in 2007 at the 11th African Regional Meeting in Addis Ababa. The decent work agenda is the response conceived by the country to enable every man and woman to have quality employment, under conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Regarding youth employment today, there is ground for hope owing to the on-going programmes and projects in West-Africa. In Mali for example, The Great Duke of Luxembourg offered to implement a youth employment project, with the assistance of our organization, to develop employment strategies with main focus on technical knowhow and labour intensive jobs in rural and urban areas. This pilot programme has enabled the creation of numerous jobs. Drawing from that, we have been approached by Governments in the sub-region to put in place youth employment agencies.

Our contribution also covers the strengthening the mechanisms which existed in each of those countries. Consistent with this idea, in Mali for example, the labour office has become the National Employment Agency (ANPE).

From the above, we are urging States in the sub-region not to classify employment as a residual issue, but to rather place it as a core element of their macroeconomic strategies. They should also be conscious that these macroeconomic policies should have the capability of sustaining an inclusive employment-rich growth.

Undoubtedly, macroeconomic policies can impact on youth employment provided economic diversification and productive transformation are encouraged. This is still possible if we remove constraints on the private sector growth, in particular, access to funding to improve the SMEs. The adverse impact of economic volatility should also be mitigated through engaging in appropriate and targeted policies. Given the vaisselins arising from the 2008 global financial crisis, Government spending on youth employment policies should be supported so as to set the economy back on path of growth. However, in many African countries, consolidation of public finances dominates the policy agenda. The decrease of government expenditures, which underlies that policy, is likely to aggravate the youth employment crisis. In this respect, Mr Guy Ryder, ILO Director General declared in Le Monde.fr (January 20th, 2015) that “Taking into account of the budget imperative alone does not work, there should be a fairer balance between the financial objectives and the employment policies, invest in vocational training, the employment services.”

Challenges. Two factors are responsible for this task being challenging in Sub-Saharan Africa. The first relates to the mismatch between economic growth and employment growth. Indeed, despite a sustained 5% growth rate in recent years, youth employment level has remained stagnant. The second factor is characterized by the mismatch between the educational/training systems and the needs of the labour market; in other words, youth low employability.

Hence the need to find stronger links between education, training and the labour world. For that purpose, action must be taken to adjust Education and Technical and Vocational Training (ETVT) to the needs of the labour market. ETVT quality, financing and management would have to be strengthened and its coordination safeguarded by the various institutions and stakeholders. Its monitoring and evaluation will also have to be improved.

Besides the removal of these stalling factors, ILO recommends that policies facilitating access to jobs comply with youth rights at work because the low protection levels often observed increase vulnerability and insecurity in the long-term.

Approach. In short, ILO youth employment approach is articulated around two main lines of action:

• The adequate integration of the issue of youth employment international programmes and policies;

• The design of an appropriate intervention . . .
Youth employment crisis

The ILO guiding principles

In its resolution entitled “The youth employment crisis: Call for action”, the International Labour Organisation’s General Conference, meeting in 2012 in Geneva, in its 101st session, has made the member-states adopt twelve guiding principles which should be complied with in the youth employment policy development.

- Take into consideration the diversity of the national situations to develop sets of multidimensional, coherent measures and fitting the context;
- Consider full employment as a central objective of macroeconomic policies;
- Ensure efficacy and coherence of the economic, employment, education, training and social protection policies;
- Promote the social partners’ participation in the development of policies through social dialogue;
- Make adequate policy dosages which are well balanced and which encourage more employers to invest and create new employment opportunities for youth;
- Ensure that all programmes and policies guarantee compliance with young worker’s rights, and are gender sensitive;
- Address the inadequacy between the available employments and the workers’ qualifications, which inadequacy limits the access to employment opportunities;
- Encourage youth entrepreneurship in rural and urban areas in order to promote the growth of sustainable enterprises, including cooperatives and social enterprises;
- Build multi-stakeholder innovative partnerships, and involving the Governments, social partners, educational institutions, communities and youth themselves;
- Possibilities of experience sharing which exist to inspire concrete and adapted actions to the context, while keeping in mind that the modalities of action are not systematically replicable;
- Guarantee effective monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes, and publish reports to guide future action;
- Youth being part of the solution, there will be need to hear their voice, free their spirit of creativity, and comply with their rights in address the youth employment crisis.

In its second phase in Senegal (read dedicated article).

Entrepreneurship training would also encourage more employers to invest and create new employment opportunities for youth, which are well balanced and which encourage more employers to invest and create new employment opportunities for youth.

Decent Work

February 2015

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We estimate at one billion the number of youth who will come into the working world in the coming decade. Assuring them of decent and productive employment is one of the most crucial global challenges. In Africa, youth aged between 15 and 24 represent over 20% of the population, including 40% under the age of 15. For the International Labour Organisation (ILO), 3 of every 5 employed persons in Africa are young. For the continent, like the rest of the world, youth employment challenge, on the long-term, is a key to the States’ social and economic stability.

Youth employment is a true paradox. Whereas young men and women represent the best educated generation, they have more difficulties than in the past finding a job. For millions of them, lack of decent employment prospects increases their vulnerability in the childhood to adulthood transition period. For a young person, getting employment is not an income issue alone. This is also an essential factor of personal fulfilment and social integration. However, the different analyses of African youth participation to economic activity reveal relatively low employment rates. If generally speaking, African youth have 2 to 3 times less opportunities than adults to access employment, it should be mentioned that unemployment and underemployment are higher among young girls than among young men. In West-Africa, the rate of young women’s participation in labour is lower than young men’s. In Senegal, for example, whereas the female population of working age is 1.13 times higher in number than men’s, their employment rate is lower (41.1% as against 62.1% for men) and their employment rate higher (14.1% against 9.9% for men). In a context of poverty, unemployment and underemployment, young women are particularly vulnerable, being victims of the labour world discriminations and inequalities. As a fact, professional segregation is one of the most persistent features worldwide. This labour segmentation and rating does not start within the labour-market, ...
A persistent income discrimination and inequality

Though young girls could have a higher level of education than boys’, it is when they look for employment that young girls face discriminations on the job-market. The gendered division of labour induces a dual horizontal and vertical segregation which will confine young girls to some sectors of the economy and grant them a lower professional status. The decent work country profiles reveal that in Mali, Niger and Senegal, as in most of the countries in the sub-region, working women are crowded in four sectors of activity: agriculture and livestock breeding, trading, production and processing activities and household activities, whereas conversely, some sector are strongly male-dominated, namely the construction, transportation, fishery, housing and public administration sectors. Women’s underrepresentation is even more visible in the public sector and in private companies. Thus in Senegal, the proportion of women working in the public sector is 1.4% against 3.7% for men, and in the private sector, the ratio is 7% for men, against 5.2% for women. This trend is the inverse in individual enterprises or in households, where women’s representation (92.3%) is higher than men’s (85.1%)3. This horizontal segregation is coupled with vertical segregation. The latter translates to the presence of less and less women as one goes up the ladder of the institution and socio-professional categories. In Togo, the characteristics of the 15-29 years old age group youth having an employment reveal that salaried work (20.1 per cent) and young employees (2.7 per cent) are more important among young men than among young women (respectively 10.2 percent and 1.6 percent). The gendered division of labour, horizontal and vertical, influences strongly male and female remunerations and gender-based economic inequalities. Other factors, like the training level, the experience, or size of companies contribute to modelling gender remuneration inequalities. The salary difference is sometimes very high. In Benin, in the 15-29 age group remunerations, young males are 35 times higher than young women’s remunerations. This gap, which is wider among salaried young people, leads to young men’s average remuneration to stand 45 per cent higher than young women’s. (Internatio- nal Labour Office – Young women and men’s transition towards the labour-market in Benin. ILO – December 2013).
Another concern is maternity support at work place. Despite some measures taken in this area of health, maternal and infant mortality rates remain high across West Africa. The importance, for both men and women, to have remarumed employment and be able to move forward in their careers, gives a crucial dimension to their professional life to their male counterparts. This disparity evidences an impact on the remarumed and open the road to equality. We must stop the «dilemma» and open the road to professional activity, which is not only a human right, but also a social function which should be protected as a social function which should be protected.

Worker and mother: the challenge of protecting maternity

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Job creation for youth in Côte d’Ivoire

The options offered by the ILO Tripartite Declaration on Multinational Corporations

Yukiko ARAI et Cheikh BADIANE

While the economy of Côte d’Ivoire is progressively recovering from the aftermath of a long period of crisis, building a future for the young generation is one of the major concerns of the authorities. In the light of youth (male and female) unemployment and underemployment, colossal efforts are required to be able to address the major concerns of the authorities. In the light of youth (male and female) unemployment and underemployment, colossal efforts are required to be able to address the major concerns of the authorities.

An approach grounded on a robust knowledge base and giving priority to the public-private partnership. Building on the recommendations of the tripartite principles Declaration on multinational corporations and social policy (Declaration on MNCs), since 2010he ILO has been providing Côte d’Ivoire with technical assistance by encouraging a public-private partnership approach to address one of the major challenges facing the country: youth employment. The first study on the MNCs was conducted in 2010, on the basis of the sampling of 30 multinational corporations: its purpose was to identify the ways and means these corporations could contribute to job creation in greater number and better quality for young men and women in Côte d’Ivoire, not only through their organization’s own operations, but also through their supply chains. Entitled “Promoting employment generation for youth in multinational corporations and their supply chains”, the study was conducted within the framework of the UNIDO-ILO project on youth employment funded by Japan. Its objective was to encourage positive contribution by multinational corporations in the national economic and social development based on the Declaration on MNCs, while ensuring, at the same time, that MNCs themselves draw benefits from it thanks to greater long-term competitiveness and sustainability of the interventions. The study also facilitated consideration of employment generation prospects in four economic sectors that most attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Côte d’Ivoire: agriculture and agro-industry, the banking sector, mining and telecommunications.

The conclusions and recommendations were there after presented to the representatives of the MNC, which then set up a multi-party working group for the promotion of youth employment and responsible investment, under the direction of the General Confederation of Ivorian Companies (Confédération Générale des Entreprises de Côte d’Ivoire - CGE-CI). Under the leadership of employers’ representatives, this working group that included representatives of multinational corporations’ representatives, training and research institutions, universities and governmental institutions responsible for youth employment, has ensured appropriate follow-up of the study’s recommendations, in particular, thanks to high-profile commitment.

High-profile commitment of all stakeholders to concrete actions. A High-profile policy dialogue and a technical workshop was attended by over 50 MNCs’ representatives (all members of the working group), as well as from the Government (the Ministry of Employment, the Social Welfare and Solidarity, the Ministry of Technical and Vocational training and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research). The policy dialogue has offered a platform enabling the key public sector and private sector stakeholders to discuss the way of jointly translating their commitment to youth employment into concrete actions.

Thanks to this dialogue, participants adopted a general policy declaration outlining the specific roles of the Government and the corporations in their contribution to employment generation for youth. Thus, plans of action were developed for each of the four economic sectors (agriculture, banking services, mining and telecommunications) covered by the study. The priority areas in each of the plans of action are the following: 1) strengthening the links between multinational corporations and SMEs, 2) analysing foreign and national investments on employment, and 3) accelerate the MNC-Youth Employment initiative at sub-regional level, drawing from similar studies also conducted in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Translating the commitments into actions. For this purpose, the organizations members of the working group for the promotion of youth employment and responsible investment have participated in championed by the General Confederation of Ivorian Companies. Thus, regarding assistance provided for the recruitment process, a network of human resources managers from the participating corporations has initiated collaboration with the Agency for employment monitoring and promotion (AGEPE) regarding internship opportunities for hundreds of young women and men...
Advocacy on the need to operationalize the plans of action

Implementation of the plans of action has given concrete results. Indeed, compliant with the recommendations emanating from the stakeholders’ dialogue, the ILO has supported the accomplishment of a second study on “The strengthening of the relationships between Multinational Corporations and SMEs within their procurement chains”, in collaboration with the Economic and Social Research Centre of Côte d’Ivoire (Centre Ivoirien de Recherche Economique et Sociale- CIRES). That study aims at evaluating the existing and potential relationships between multinational corporations and domestic SMEs and strengthening the supply chain dynamics. In July 2014, the representatives of the Government, the employers and workers participated in a workshop to discuss the recommendations and validate the study. They adopted afterwards a plan of actions which covers six strategic axes: 1) the promotion of domestic contracts, 2) the establishment of a MNCs-SMEs permanent dialogue platform; 3) building the human resources management capacities in SMEs; 4) the evaluation of Foreign Direct Investments on employment, 5) the promotion of an environment favourable to technology transfer from multinationals to SMEs and 6) stimulating SMEs development.

Moreover, upon request of the Investments Promotion Agency of Côte d’Ivoire (CEPICI) and the Employments Promotion Agency (EFCI), ILO provides technical support to the newly established national commission in its quest for a better assessment the impact of foreign, as well as domestic investments on employment. Furthermore, ILO has been urged to play an active role through facilitation of the dialogue between the government, enterprises, workers and new investors in Côte d’Ivoire.

In addition, ILO has shared the experience of its engagement with multinational corporations on the prioritization of youth employment in Côte d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Liberia during the meeting of the West-African Federation of Employers (FOPOMA), the sub-regional employers’ organisation for West-Africa. A regional plan of action has been developed, including a regional study on youth employment promotion within frameworks of partnerships with multinational corporations, of initiatives in pilot countries and a study on the mining sector.

Towards strengthening sectoral possibilities potentials

Following the study on the “Strengthening of the relationships between MNCs and SMEs within their supply chains” and its recommendations, ILO is now engaged in a process of technical support to the Chambers of mines (the professional association of Côte d’Ivoire’s Mining Companies), whose objective is to promote responsible commercial practices in the mining sector, pursuant to the principles of the Declaration of tripartite partners as to the implementation of the ILO Declaration on the MNCs. Currently, the mechanisms in place and the important prospects of new programmes taking shape, especially in the mining sector, constitute a powerful signal of the important role that multinational corporations can play in the area of employment generation for youth in Côte d’Ivoire and the countries of the sub-region.

The many actions initiated in Côte d’Ivoire in the past years have contributed much to greater knowledge of the ILO Declaration of tripartite principles on the MNCs and social policy by various stakeholders intervening in the country. The many actions initiated in Côte d’Ivoire in the past years have contributed much to greater knowledge of the ILO Declaration of tripartite principles on the MNCs and social policy by various stakeholders intervening in the country. Thanks to a deeper knowledge of the MNCs’ sectors of intervention and their needs for qualified human resources, appropriate measures can be taken at different levels (training institutions, employment promotion mechanisms, etc.) to better prepare youth to take advantage of available opportunities. As for the establishment of dialogue frameworks, this enables finding concrete answers to the many issues of concern to the various stakeholders in their business relationships in a context of employment crisis, the solution of which requires a change of mind-set by all.

The progress achieved in Côte d’Ivoire over the past years was possible thanks to the implementation of the principles of the Declaration on the MNCs. Currently, the mechanisms in place and the important prospects of new programmes taking shape, especially in the mining sector, constitute a powerful signal of the important role that multinational corporations can play in the area of employment generation for youth in Côte d’Ivoire and the countries of the sub-region.

The priority of these programmes is the youth in such proportions as to reach 80 per cent of the target population. LIP (Labour intensive programmes) have been used in several situations, including the post Second World War period, when public infrastructure projects were used to create jobs as a system to fight depression, to generate income and boost the demand. In Africa and Asia, there has been a generalized use of labour in public works, in particular, in road construction and maintenance. Labour has been mobilized to respond to emergency situations such as drought and flooding, or in post-crisis reconstruction activities. LIP programmes have evolved in the past years, not only to respond to situations of high unemployment, through income generation drivers by the works carried out, but also to improve the productive capacities of local communities through the execution of productive infrastructure such as irrigation systems, soil conservation systems and agricultural connectivity roads...
The LIP programmes are designed as permanent tools for employment generation through the creation of a broad range of productive assets by the grassroots communities. In very recent past, the use of labour intensive programmes for construction works has become a key component of the social funds created to mitigate the impacts of economic liberalization and structural reforms. South Africa, Kenya and Tanzania are countries where this is being done.

These programmes are linked to sectoral investments such as government construction works (farm-to-market roads, water and sanitation construction...) and community infrastructure (public buildings, marketplaces, etc.), but also multi-sectoral investments related to the preservation of the environment in response to climate change, irrigation and management of water resources and agricultural land resources in rural areas; and having employment generation as a key responds to the needs of the populations living in poverty. The capacity of the LIP programmes to contribute to employment generation and to the production of income generating assets has long been recognised by different LIP programmes in WestAfrica. Recently-introduced innovations in past years are meant to cover all aspects of the Decent Labour Agenda through LIP. The latter constitutes a local development vector for poverty reduction, and also for sensitization on enforcement of labour standards, SME’s productivity in the construction sector, enhancement of youth employability and the establishment of the employment component of the social protection floor for employable young people. Evidence shows that public investments are an effective method for job generation and employment opportunities for the youth through investments in labour intensive programmes. When using these programmes, the approach adopted shall draw upon inputs from local labour and resources, and be the driver of direct and indirect jobs, as well as of jobs resulting from an increase in the local consumption, all of which can translate into significant improvement of the overall economy.

In West-African countries, a very significant portion of the national investment budget is allocated to infrastructure development. This constitutes a guarantee of employability for employment opportunities, in so far as decision-makers take the option of channelising sufficient resources into infrastructural projects executed using intensive labour techniques.

These programmes provide employment opportunities to a wide spectrum of young people holding a wide variety of qualifications. Beneficiaries of LIP are not limited to unskilled workers; many semi-skilled and skilled workers; technical and local community workers are also included in the work sites, as well as management staff. Entrepreneurs, engineers, socio-economists, ICT specialists and financial managers are also involved.

Training courses are often integrated into LIP programmes, such as in the case of Mali, for example (see Box 1), where training sessions were given in upgrading the skills of young people participating in these programmes. Skills acquisition by the youth through being involved in working or managing the construction sites offers them an extremely valuable first-hand experience useful for their future career. LIP programmes bringing at least a hundred young people on the same site can create an opportunity to organize other specific services for their benefit. In several countries, there is a significant unmet need for youth friendly social services in various sectors: healthcare, literacy, technical trainings related to construction and public works’ trades, financial inclusion. Depending on the duration of projects, these programmes can include a social component to support youth to embark on a sustainable process of professional integration, after saving money from the remuneration received for the work done. The salaries of the young beneficiaries of these programmes are paid in directly into a savings account to enable them build-up a seed capital to start income generating activities and become micro-entrepreneurs from savings accumulated during the project. The youth employment and skills development project in Côte d’Ivoire (PEJPEJCD) and in Burkina Faso (PEJPDJ) are examples which prove that employability and possibilities of short-term employment in labour-intensive public works are accessible to unskilled to low-skilled skilled youth in urban, sub-urban and rural areas.

The target group being young people who, most often, are not attending any training, either formal or informal, the project provides the opportunity to organize early childhood development and community sensitization programmes on issues such as the environment, hygiene, nutrition and health (HEVAIDS, family planning), ICT programmes continue to be an important mode of knowledge in Construction and Public Works professions in particular, combining the technical courses to practical on the job experience on sites. In Mauritania, the ILI has implemented the component of “Working School” in support of the reform of the transport sector through provision of course-level training in collaboration with the private sector and the government departments in charge of civil engineering (see Box 2). Other civil engineering and construction technical training centres have adopted the LIP-based work projects’ execution methods in their curricula. Examples of massive job creation through LIP exist across the globe (see the examples of the innovation in Box 3). The project example provided in India by the National Mahatma Gandhi Act on Guaranteed Employment in rural areas (NREGA) is a good illustration. The programme launched in 2006, targets nearly 55 million beneficiaries. The programme guarantees 100 days of legitimate employment to adult members of all rural families ready to undertake a non-technical manual job at the official minimum wage rate for construction work. Another example as South Africa is the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP), whose objective is to create 4.5 million job offers over the next five years. Experiences conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1989 by NGTDp type agencies have demonstrated the feasibility of the labour-intensive approach (LIP) in the construction of public utilities in urban areas. The need for public investments programmes (PIP) has been the basis for the above. In general, youth job offers within the unskilled jobs segment being far more important than older people’s, the implementation of a massive employment programme similar to “the guaranteed employment programme in India” (NREGA) would enable the labour market to absorb a significant proportion of those youth lacking education, training and job. In Senegal, for example, the target population would be young people from households deeply rooted in poverty. Measurement of the depth of poverty at household level (Pr. Cabel, 2014) shows that earnings would respectively be FCFA 95,985, FCFA 212,415 and 257,073 for each household affected by poverty in Dakar, in other urban centres and in rural areas to get out of the poverty line. This means the State should guarantee a legal minimum wage of FCFA 31,184, 56,243 and 78,714 respectively for workers in urban areas, in rural areas, for workers in rural areas, two month wage to a young person coming from a poor household in Dakar, 117 days, or four month work to a young person from a poor household from other urban centres and 165 days, or five month work for a young person from a poor household in rural areas. This programme estimated to cost FCFA 120 billion, 1.8% of the GDP can be implemented through a variety of operational modalities. This includes the Public Procurement Regulatory Agency for the purpose of insuring those social provisions favourable to NEET’s (young people without employment, education, or training), the State and local communities in order to expand and mobilise the investment potential; the direct and indirect employment intermediation and the promotion organisations to ensure the establishment of information systems, training and professional integration for youth engaged in this programme.

**In general, youth job offers within the unskilled jobs segment being far more important than older people’s, the implementation of a massive employment programme similar to “the guaranteed employment programme in India” (NREGA) would enable the labour market to absorb a significant proportion of those youth lacking education, training and job.**

**«Evidence shows that public investments are an effective method for job generation and employment opportunities for the youth through investments in labour intensive programmes.»**
The International Labour Organization (ILO) has taken a three years commitment (2015-2017) to support Mauritania in the implementation of the Worksite school under the Institutional Adjustment Project of the transport sector (PAIST) funded by the European Union within the framework of the 10th EDF. The main objective of the project is the development of a vocational training branch of studies in road maintenance in order to increase the employability of young men and women and foster their professional integration in the growing sector of road maintenance in rural and urban areas. The general strategy of the project is focused around the strengthening of the training programme in road maintenance organized for hundreds of youths by means of 16-kilometer-tracks maintenance worksite training schools. The training gives right to the award of a skills testimonial. The project is implemented over 30 months based on a schedule that alternates theoretical training in technical and vocational training centres, practical training on a worksite and professional internship in companies.

The project responds to the challenges posed by the reforms in the road sector, which in the short-term will offer employment opportunities for young men and women in jobs related to road maintenance; this is with a view to guaranteeing long-term quality maintenance of the road network. The project will strengthen the capacities of 4 technical and vocational training centres, 150 company managers and their technicians and skilled workers. Lastly, the strengthening of the partnerships between government and the social partners, but also with the private sector stakeholders in the definition of the road maintenance strategies and operations favourable to youth employment will be promoted. The project’s interventions will enable designing a short-cycle certificate course model, creating a dialogue platform between the small and medium size (SME) road maintenance companies, the training centres, the intermediation and youth placement stakeholders to better align labour supply and demand in the sector.

More specifically, the project’s strategy is based on the development of a youth educational and vocational training and professional integration and road administration project. Enforcement of approaches based on labour-intensive techniques favourable to youth will be encouraged and will enable combining apprenticeship on real-life road maintenance worksites with 6 months academic studies for four cohorts of 100 young people, which makes a total 400 youth. The system will draw from the Mauritanian vocational training mechanism by focusing on skills building for youth, and the enhancement of the maintenance stakeholders of the Mauritanian road network.

Example of employment high impact LIP project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMMES</th>
<th>EXPENDITURE ON MILLIONS USD</th>
<th>EXPENDITURE IN % OF GDP</th>
<th>NUMBER OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>WORK OPPORTUNITIES % OF THE WORKING POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NREGA (India 08/2010)</td>
<td>7 687</td>
<td>0.48%</td>
<td>62.8 million</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSNP (Ethiopia 08/2009)</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.6 million</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPWP (South-Africa 08/2010)</td>
<td>3 962</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>843 000</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KKV (Kenya 2009) « KaziKwa-Vijana » (Youth employment programme), Kenya (18-35 years-old).</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
<td>300 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIWTEP (Liberia 2009)</td>
<td>1,6</td>
<td>0,7%</td>
<td>3 600</td>
<td>0,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefes (Argentina 2003)</td>
<td>3 068</td>
<td>0,9%</td>
<td>2 210 000</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The role of public employment programmes in national employment policies, Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song, 2011
THE CEJEDRAO PROJECT

An eye-opener on employment in rural areas

On June 30, the International Labour Organization (ILO) unanimously adopted the Declaration on social justice for a fair globalization. The Declaration postulates that the four strategic objectives which are “rights to work, employment, social protection and social dialogue are inseparable, interdependent and mutually reinforcing”. In that perspective, the International Labour Office (ILO) has initiated for West Africa a TREE programme called “Competence Enhancement Project for Youth Employment and Rural development in West Africa”, with the financial support of the Government of Denmark, the Danish Commission for Africa and the Post-Primary Education Promotion Initiative.

With a total coverage of 17310 direct beneficiaries, the project has enabled opening other prospective decent employment to young people in Benin, through promotion of the TREE methodology and the intervention model of informal apprenticeship. Given the induced changes (at individual and community levels) and the economic dynamic created in each of the localities of intervention, the CEJEDRAO project has contributed to the fight against unemployment which is becoming more and more rural, juvenile and female in nature.

The CEJEDRAO project, through its strategy, in this instance the TREE strategy, which was implemented for the first time in West-Africa, has proved to be a successful and efficient strategy, given the positive changes noted on its three lines of action which are: the creation of decent employment opportunities available in their localities. In so doing, the project proved to be an effective tool to curb rural exodus, and also a process of rapprochement, reciprocal opening and collaboration between men and women; handicapped and non-handicapped; educated and out-of-school; literate and illiterate populations.

The role of the technical departments in the ministries, the collaborative with the government’s skill at national level. The role of the technical departments in the ministries, the government’s skill at national level and extending CEJEDRAO practices through mobilization of diversified resources, as well as varied technical partners to further consolidate the approach in all the rural communes of Benin. The contribution of all development stakeholders in Benin is essential to support the State in significantly, efficiently and sustainably reducing youth unemployment and upgrading the standard of informal apprenticeship.

The editorial committee would like to thank Mr Michel Grégoire for the documentation provided for this article.

Mrs ABOUTA
“I used to sell foodstuffs (maize and beans). Thanks to CEJEDRAO, I started selling soybeans. To market soybeans and its by-products, I bought a motorcycle. Now, I no longer depend on my husband for the household expenses and for the needs of my child”.

Mr SABI Yetchabili
“CEJEDRAO has shown me the way to self-employment and wealth through beekeeping good practices. I have been able to easily start my activity with the equipment supplied by the project”.

“12,310 direct beneficiaries”

Testimonies

Kintche Alain, person with reduced mobility in his workshop, beneficiary of CEJEDRAO

30, illiterate, living in Kpodjion

Oppurtunities available in their localities. In so doing, the project proved to be an effective tool to curb rural exodus, and also a process of rapprochement, reciprocal opening and collaboration between men and women; handicapped and non-handicapped; educated and out-of-school; literate and illiterate populations.

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«The CEJEDRAO project has contributed to the fight against unemployment which is becoming more and more rural, juvenile and female in nature.»
To face the problem of unemployment and underemployment in Senegal, many young people turn to vocational training or traditional crafts apprenticeship. In spite of this, they have difficulty having access to the production system. To help the Government of Senegal in its quest for solutions to the difficulties of professional integration of youth who had apprenticeship or attended mainstream vocational training, the International Labour Office (ILO) designed and implemented, between December 2007 to December 2012, the project for the professional integration of graduates of vocational training schools in the administrative regions of Thiès, Louga, Saint-Louis and Matam. Its intervention strategy was based on a sector oriented professional integration process, the program-approach principle, and collaboration with institutional partners, and provision of support to GERME and CLE players.

The ISFP project started with a focus on the priorities of Senegal. ILO and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in the area of youth insertion into the professional world. The gender dimension was given as much adequate attention as the sustainability of the outputs of the project.

The project was considered relevant by stakeholders, and it stimulated the interest of the youth, national authorities, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the UNFPA, the Belgian Technical Cooperation, etc., owing to a combination of non-financial and financial support required for it. Some 2500 candidates came out of the schools after training in entrepreneurship skills development. 101 businesses have actually come into existence.«

In its first phase, the ISFP project had three specific objectives. The first was to enable graduates from vocational training schools to integrate the economic fabric. The second objective was to help the training institutions develop ownership of the principle of integration into the professional world and hereby justifying the argument of mainstreaming professional integration of holders of vocational school certificates into the professional world type of business.

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The second phase, (2013-2016), of the project is incorporated into the technical education and vocational training (ETFP) reform programme initiated by the Government of Senegal.

This time, the focus is on eight regions, namely Matam, Louga, Saint-Louis, Kaffrine, Kaolack, Thiès, Diourbel and Fatick. The project’s...
Michel Faye.
Director of vocational and technical training in Senegal.

“I commend the ILO’s spirit of cooperation and this type of generosity for the benefit of youth. ILO generosity is materialized by the fact that the Organization has given us permission to adapt some modules which were covered by copyright to materials we can integrate into the training centres’ curricula, in particular, modules on the TRIE, the CLE and the CREE. These three modules have been readapted at decentralized level, with the inputs of the pedagogical inspectors at the training centres, to provide for teaching-time in the learners’ schedules in these centres. It should be mentioned that this happened through a form of generosity of the ILO. But, it is also a way of saying: let’s try to experiment our own approach of entrepreneurial culture in our schools, the training-employment alignment approach. We must do in such a way that young people do not longer say to themselves – I am going to look for salaried work, but this is not possible because of demographic pressure. I would like to see the youth to be sensitized in developing entrepreneurship spirit, as this is being done with the ISFP project. Majority of African youth dreams of having salaried jobs, but this is not possible because of demographic pressure. I would like youth to be sensitized in developing entrepreneurship spirit, as this is being done with the ISFP project. I believe this is a first experiment in Africa and it is the interest of everyone to conduct it correctly to make it benefit all of Africa if it is conclusive. I have no doubts that it will be successful because sharing success at decentralized level is a fact: linkage with the chambers of trade is a reality. What remains is to be seen is the extent to which the beneficiaries will grow with the idea of being self-employed”.

Oumar Ndiaye.
Inspector at the Academy of Louga.

“The ILO's Strategy for sustainable entrepreneurship is an innovative project which deserves being supported in a sustainable way, because before its advent, we were doing vocational training without worrying about the future of the trainers. The future of the graduates was not our concern. The consequence was that we trained people who, after training went into technical unemployment. Now, this is what the ILO, certainly before the ISFP, to a lesser extent, the FORPRPFEM have started correcting. In the past, we only focused on training modules, concerns around integration into the professional world came up after the trainees had left school. With these programmes, issues of integration into the professional world and entrepreneurship are mainstreamed into the training modules. It is while students are undergoing the training that we sensitize them about their integration into the professional world, we assure them that we are taking all precautionary measures, making all arrangements to ensure that, immediately after training school, they be able to enter the job market.

I am inviting all stakeholders convinced about the relevance of this programme to mobilize for its effective and efficient implementation; to provide for a timely implementation of it, if the project is to escape the fate that befell many well-conceived projects that later ran into difficulty after roll-out. I think that it is an innovative project which deserves being supported in a sustainable way, because before its advent, we were doing vocational training without worrying about the future of the trainers. The future of the graduates was not our concern. The consequence was that we trained people who, after training went into technical unemployment. Now, this is what the ILO, certainly before the ISFP, to a lesser extent, the FORPRPFEM have started correcting. In the past, we only focused on training modules, concerns around integration into the professional world came up after the trainees had left school. With these programmes, issues of integration into the professional world and entrepreneurship are mainstreamed into the training modules. It is while students are undergoing the training that we sensitize them about their integration into the professional world, we assure them that we are taking all precautionary measures, making all arrangements to ensure that, immediately after training school, they be able to enter the job market.

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Joseylem Unurungi.
Consultant ISFP project.

On October 29, 2014, while attending an interactive workshop on the new approach introduced by the Ministry of professional education and the ILO on the topic of solving youth employment problem through the ISFP project, I got to truly realize the effort invested by the government and the institutions to the issue of youth insertion after training. Through the debate and the presentations at that conference, I was able to appreciate their strong commitment to this issue. Before attending such meetings, I was of the view, like most youth disillusioned because of unemployment, that what we see on television and all the plans announced by politicians are just empty words, I can now testify that government and national and international institutions are working to get us out of unemployment. I would wish the youth to be sensitized to imbibe entrepreneurial spirit as advocated by the ISFP project. Majority of African youth dreams of getting salaried jobs, but this is not possible because of demographic pressure. I would like youth to be sensitized in developing entrepreneurship spirit, as this is being done with the ISFP project. The majority of African youth dreams of having salaried work, but this is not possible because of demographic pressure. I would wish young people to be taught, from early age, entrepreneurship spirit. That way, they will grow with the idea of being self-employed”.

The editorial committee would like to thank Mrs Ndeba Samouma for the rich documentation, guidance and data provided for this article.
Senegal

A new thrust of interest in agriculture among young graduates

“The solutions to the recurrent problems in our large urban megacities are to be found in rural areas.” This is the message on the PROCFE’s Facebook page. The PROCFE (Programme des Domaines agricoles communautaires) – the Farm Settlements Programme – is one of the Senegalese Government’s responses to the issue of youth employment in the country. With a total cost of 100 billion FCFA, this programme launched in 2014 is full of promises for young people that our reporter met in full farming activities during the month of October.

The Sèfa (southern part of Senegal) Community Farming Estate (CFE) covers over eighteen kilometers in length and is about ten kilometers wide. It has radically changed face with the launching of the Valley development works. The valley was left uncultivated since the departure of the colonial powers. These thousands of hectares were left untilled by the farmers who did not have the means to exploit them. Our tour of the farms and community lodgings gave us an opportunity to feel a renewal of happiness among the populations, thanks to these three hundred hectares of cultivated land during the 2014 farming season; that being year 1 of the FSPs. “Never before have we seen such large areas of cornfield and as much promise of harvests” says Amadou Baldé, Sedhiou Regional Director for Rural Development (RDRD). Farmers like Abdoulaye Diallo, President of the CFE’s management committee, hope that, with good marketing, they will have a “rich Pakao (local name of the locality) capable of feeding Senegal”. Bakary Demba, a farmer aged over sixty years said this: “For the first time in my life, I will be a millionaire”. He justifies his statement by the yield of 10 tons/hectare that was obtained. He gave, in a very happy mood, a graphic description, and said: “If I harvest...
thus supplement the extension
Rural Economics; they would
holders of Master’s Degree 2 in
by 25 other young people,
integration. The 47 agricultural
securing their socio-professional
awarded contracts by the FSP, thus
these young graduates were
schools, institutes and universities.
agriculture from Senegalese training
supervised by young graduate in
hybrid seeds and the technological
Programmes (FSP) which provided
support from the Farms Settlements
which exist in
with all the
civil servant
becoming a
civil servant with all
the idea of
no longer nursing the idea of
“Agriculture is the future. I am
is far from being disillusioned.
Mamadou Ndiaye
village of BOC, Mamadou Ndiaye
community lodges within the
working in Casamance (south
of private investors wishing to
in agricultural trades and related
invest in agriculture in the area
from training schools (specialized
in agricultural production in that mountainous
municipalities have difficulties getting
fresh fish supply. The fish consumed
in this region comes from the Petite Côte (Mbour), or Kafountine
region of Ziguinchor).
Car Car and Keur Momar Sarr will be the largest poles for market-
beneficiaries; and would help with
organizations’ business plans.
this graduate student from Gaston Berger University of Saint
Louis never thought he could be working in Casamance (south
of the country) one day. In the
community lodges within the
village of BOC, Mamadou Ndiaye
is far from being disillusioned.
On the contrary, he sends this
message to young people saying:
“Agriculture is the future. I am
no longer nursing the idea of
becoming a civil servant with all
the opportunities which exist in
the jobs”.
The Séfa plain (South), the Car Car Valley (central region), Keur Momar Sarr (Northwest) and the
Salémata Valley (East) hosted the
first generation of FSPs.
Development works of the Salémata fish-farming basins will enable fish
production in that mountainous
region of Kédougou, where the
populations have difficulties getting
fresh fish supply. The fish consumed
in this region comes from the Petite Côte (Mbour), or Kafountine
region of Ziguinchor).
Car Car and Keur Momar Sarr will be the largest poles for market-
gardening and livestock production,
in addition to fruit production.
300 thousand jobs to be created
The Farms Settlements Programme
is a response to the challenge of
employment in Senegal, especially
youth employment. This concept
which was initiated in 2013,
is based on a dual approach of
creating economic competitiveness
poles and restructuring agricultural
settlements, enabling the
development of large estates of
1,000 to 5,000 hectares by a single
farmer. This constitutes a true
agricultural development pole and
a suitable place for the integration
into the world of work for young
people from rural areas, graduates
from training schools (specialized
in agricultural trades and related
jobs), but also for the promotion
of private investors wishing to
invest in agriculture in the area
of production, processing and
extension services.
The Programme will generate over
three hundred thousand jobs in the
next five years.
Fish-farming, bee-keeping and
agricultural activities and the
addition of agricultural processing
and marketing to the value chain
will transform the ten estates into
real economic development poles.
By promoting the localization in
the rural area of various services
to farmers (centralized financial
system, trained mechanics,
provision of agricultural
mechanization and motorization
services, etc.), the FSP is thus
responding to the call for
development of rural agricultural
projects and it constitutes a
laboratory for testing the public-
private partnership.
A community farming estate
consists of several autonomous
farming units (AFUs) covering an
area between five (5) and twenty
five (25) hectares.

Testimonies

Abdoulaye Diagne
Abdoulaye Diagne is a genuine
sére. Born in Ndalaté, in the
region of Diourbel, he discovers
in Séfa a new life, a new culture
and a different form of social
organization. If he had fears
about Casamance when he was
signing his contract, such is
no longer the case. “I am not
ready to give up” he answered,
when we asked.
In this rural commune of Koushy, where he
supervises the farmers, the pre-
vailing atmosphere of brotherli-
ness among Sérères, Diolas and
Mandingos is what impressed
him most. “We must help the
populations ensure they reach
their food security objectives
in this area where, from the testi-
omies we heard at our arrival
in this village, there was often
malnutrition”. Abdoulaye and
his colleagues want to become
farming entrepreneurs.

“A community farming estate
consists of several autonomous
farming units (AFUs) covering an
area between five (5) and twenty
five (25) hectares.”

“I am no longer nursing the idea of becoming a civil servant with all the opportunities which exist in the FSP’s.”

“I am not ready to give up”
Green employment

Senegal explores aquaculture

The International Labour Organization (ILO) considers that green employment constitutes the key simultaneous response to two important challenges of the 21st century. The first is to prevent climate change and its negative impacts. The second is ensuring social development and decent jobs for all. Such is the spirit of the Green Employment Programme initiated in 2009 by the ILO, and with many protagonists here in Senegal.

For ILO, “green jobs encompass the notion of the transformation of the economies, enterprises, workplaces and labour-market towards a low carbon-emission sustainable economy offering decent jobs.”

In Senegal, Government has announced ownership of the concept of green jobs such that in translation to the context of aquaculture has made it a veritable employment pool. In an interview held on the sidelines of a workshop on green economy held in Dakar on November 18th 2014, Dr. Magatte Bâ, Director General of the National Aquaculture Agency (ANA) in Senegal gave a long list of job creation ideas in this sub-sector.

According to M. Bâ, the fish farming sub-sector is in full expansion. While agricultural growth stands at 2.5% and livestock recording a growth rate of less than 9% worldwide. He argues that jobs can be created everywhere we find a pond. Dr. Magatte Bâ quoted figures for an area of less than one hectare. There is no agricultural crop production in Senegal that provides such annual earnings.

In his opinion, these are the opportunities motivating the private sector in Senegal to construct 90 production ponds we visited on the ground, we find the potential. “Take the National Aquaculture Agency (ANA) in Senegal gave a long list of job creation ideas in this sub-sector. In his view, income in aquaculture or vegetal production persists to create the desired conditions for the transformation of the national economy.”

In his opinion, income in aquaculture or vegetal production persists to create the desired conditions for the transformation of the national economy. The development of aquaculture in Senegal requires the intervention of the National Aquaculture Agency (ANA) to promote, supervise and train the youth and women’s employment programme, co-funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB). In this programme, there is an FCFA one billion two hundred million fish farming sub-component which will enable the Government of Senegal to construct 90 production farms in the coming three years. “This is an important potential for jobs creation…” says the ANA Director General.

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“Between 2003 and 2014, the fish farming sub-sector in Senegal recorded the creation of at least 450 direct jobs.” Dr. Magatte Bâ, Director General of the National Aquaculture Agency

The diagnosis of our system shows that the supply of technical and vocational training suffers from an inadequate and sometimes confused institutional environment. Training is not adequately guided and managed in collaboration with the productive sector of the economy. Regarding specifically the relationships between the educational system and its environment, the diagnosis highlights the following elements:

• The mismatch between training and employment (the training system is not addressing the needs of the productive sector and of the society;
The private sector is capitalizing on the exploration of new employment opportunities and the urgent need to transform the rural economy, on the development of skills and qualifications as initiated in the reform of vocational training, higher education and scientific research.

The EFCI would like to share its vision on the necessity to develop green economy in order to create new employments and thus, bring down unemployment.

The sectors of renewable energy, reforestation, waste recycling and organic agriculture are good sources of employment generation.

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The sectors of renewable energy, reforestation, waste recycling and organic agriculture are good sources of employment generation.
Mr Kwasi Adu-Amankwah, if you were asked to give an analysis of the youth employment challenge in West-Africa, what main issues would you have highlighted?

The economic policy has unduly focused on GDP growth, inflation, international reserves and other macroeconomic indices, without targeting employment creation. Decision-makers in our economies continue to wrongly think that once a certain level of GDP growth and price stability (usually, one digit inflation) are achieved, growth and price stability (usually, one digit inflation) are achieved, they were isolated from the crisis. The response was: nothing has changed. Consequently, even when some sectors of the West-African economies were affected by loss of earnings from global demand, there was no policy intervention in an attempt to preserve employment.

Generally, regarding West-African youth-employment public policies, are there in some countries successes and/or good practices which we can mention? While admitting a number of youth employment policies have been adopted in West-Africa, their implementation remains a challenge. Operational and funding challenges have hindered achievement of the desired objectives of youth employment policies in West-Africa. In addition, most of these policies have been a burden on the Labour Market Active Policies (LMAP). While West Africa actually needs macroeconomic policies that create sustainable employment. Transition from these LMAP is thus a challenge.

In the same declaration referred to earlier, you said “it is urgent to adopt a geographical and sectorial distribution of the employment strategy”. Could you be more explicit and tell us how we should implement that strategy? There is need for a clearly specified programme on public sector labour intensive works, especially in infrastructure development.

Youth employment policies must target and channel economic resources toward specific geographical localities. This would contribute to solving the issues of labour migration. Greater attention should be paid to the manufacture sector to enable it to grow and create jobs.

Besides conclusions and proposals, what is ITUC-Africa doing regarding youth employment in West-Africa? Appeal for a better labour market information system in West-Africa. One of the challenges associated to employment in West-Africa is the lack of up-to-date labour market information systems. This has made evidence-based interventions difficult.
February 2015

Patricia Zoundi Yao, QuickCash managing director

The itenary of a women company manager

"When I decided to create QuickCash, I did not have a penny in my pocket," says Patricia Zoundi Yao, QuickCash Managing Director. Today, this money transfer company of this young Ivorian is thriving and has the ambition to become a multinational firm with the objective of inserting all of Africa. "The itinerary of Patricia Zoundi Yao should be emblematic for any young person looking for employment, or afraid of embarking on self-employment. This is the reason why we have decided to tell you her story, hoping she will be a role-model to many."

Indeed, that experience enabled her to note that the money transfer platforms which then existed could not operate in rural areas because of constraints such as lack of electricity and the absence of internet. To make their transactions, the rural populations had to travel long dis- tances, sometimes two days. In addition to this, there was insecurity on some road segments. All these contributed to making money transfer a luxury for the rural world.

It is to solve that problem that Patricia made the decision to set up in 2010 the QuickCash money transfer company. With much pride, she gives an account of her beginnings: "When I took the decision to create QuickCash, I did not have a penny. I remember that for the incorporation of the company, I paid the notary fees on credit (let me point out that I thank the notary for granting me that exceptional favour). My initial fixed assets were a second-hand com- puter, which I bought at ECFA 60,000 and a ECFA 10,000 mobile phone. We did not even have money to pay office rent and we worked in a shed at home. You can image that in such a situation I could even not talk about salaries with my collaborators (I started with two employees)!

The context of her beginnings was hard and competition were fierce. Being conscious of their limit, Patricia and her team segmented the clientele, identifying a precise target they know perfectly well and which, quite often, is left aside: the rural world. They developed thus their business model in close collaboration with the rural communities, which are full stakeholders of their operations. Coming to communication on their product, they decided not to use the same channels as other money transfer companies because they had very limited financial resources, if not, none at all. They developed their own marketing strategy, making it very close to the culture and customs of rural populations. Beyond these strategies, Patricia adds that she hired a young and dynamic team, which, though having (98%) their first professional experience, has always loved keeping up to challenges and has never given up in front of any kind of difficulties. She does not forget her husband's support and encouragement and, as a very religious person, "God's help, without which nothing would be possible" she says.

As it is often the case with such companies, capacity-building, especially in the area of business management, negotiation techniques and social dialogue is of crucial importance. This is what Patricia confirms through these words: "You know, in three years, our staff grew from 2 salaried workers to 15. It is obvious that if you do not have the necessary tools, you will not reach such results, in spite of all your goodwill. This is why, at QuickCash, we give much importance to training. For example, with the training we had in social dialogue, I understood that the quota- tion by Jean Bodin saying there is no greater wealth than people can turn into nightmares if you cannot exchange idea, negotiate and build a dialogue with your business partners and all stakeholders in your business. That training has mostly enabled me to have a positive perception of conflict and draw benefit from them whereas such was not the case before. In-house implementation has enabled us not only to develop good practices, but more importantly to have a closer-working and more united team around me to lead the big battles. We have been invited to share these good practices during international forums, such as the Lille International Forum on Responsible Economies and the World Human Rights Forum in Marrakesh, in Morocco, next to major multinational companies."

In terms of capacity-building, Patricia has attended many management training (espe- cially the Dale Carnegie sessions). She is also holder of Mediation Degree from the IFO-MENE (Institut de Formation à la Médiation et à la Négociation) of Université Catholique de Paris. - The Mediation and Negotiation Training Institute of the Catholic University of Paris. She also attended a social dialogue training organized by the ILO with the Turin International Centre.

Today, five years after its creation, QuickCash operates in Côte d’Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Niger, and does not have any intention to stop with such good results. Its objective is to cover the entire West-African region first, before conquering the entire African continent. When we asked her to deliver a message to young people in the sub-region who want to embark on entrepreneurship, Patricia refers first to the definition of entrepreneurship according to Professor Yunus Muhammad, the 2006 Peace Nobel Prize and founder of the Grameen Bank, whom she had the privilege of meeting in October 2014 at the Lille Interna- tional Forum on Responsible Economies. That Bangladeshi entrepreneur, called the "banker of the poor", defines the entrepre- neur as someone who confronts a problem in society, brings solutions. The solutions being sold out should be profitable to ensure sustainability, which will contribute to crea- ting employment and changing citizens' lives, while paying attention to the environment. "Hence, I tell myself, there are so many problems to solve in society in Africa that all youth should become entrepreneurs. I admit money is important to start in business. But we should not always take financial means as an excuse never to venture anything. You should always start with what we have. That's good to have great ambitions but one must always start small to reach the top"

According to the QuickCash General Manage- r, all the corporate business leaders that we admire around the world started from scratch. "They insin, people should persevere and not hesitate to start again if in case of failure because "the profile of a successful entrepre- neur is that of a person who has encountered failure repeatedly. The only difference is that he/she has not given up but has continued to forge ahead. Lastly, being a good networker is important to have continued training and a good team, because a General without an army does not win a war."

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Mr. Ngom, could you please give us a brief reminder of your experience as expert on the issues of employ-
ment? My experience of employment issues did not start with studying aboutanddeveloping employment programmes focusing on youth, or designing national policies on the matter. It started in 1987, when I was appointed Delegate for employment in Senegal. Indeed and innovative appointment, appointed special com-
misioner on employment in Senegal. Indeed, subsequent to the harsh structural adjustment programmes, it was decided to introduce measures to mitigate the social impacts of the real and monetary sectors adjust-
ments. Presidents Abdou Diouf and Léopold Sédar Senghor created the DIRE (Commission for labour market insertion and reinsertion, and employment generation) under the direct authority of the Office of the President. In order to provide the highest possible institutional linkage, the Special Commissioner was ranked as and called a Minister. You will note that nowadays, more than in the past, the institutional linkage with youth employment management organs is still tricky. With the DIRE, I had initiated in 1987 the Fonds national de l’Emploi (FNE) - National Employment Fund - to finance self-employment. This is the mechanism that set the pace for all similar funds that exist in Africa today. To buttress this, in Cameroon and Tunisia, it is the FNE acronym which continues to be in use. I later got appointed as the Minis-
ter in charge of the Budget, then Director General of the Port of Dakar and lastly Managing Director of the largest company in Senegal, the Chemical Industries of Senegal (Industries chimiques du Sénégal). I have always remained influenced by my passage in the Department of em-
ployment. Thus, in 2003, I set up the Poverty Alleviation Support Project at the ICS (PALPICS) with a USD 500,000 annual fund, piloted by the ILO and the UNDP. The PALPICS has an employability and micro-pro-
jects funding component. In 2004, I started providing consultancy services in many countries to help establish youth employment generation programmes, and I participated in the process of designing national policies and cross-cutting integration of the employment dimension into economic development, and into projects and programmes evaluation in Mali, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Repu-
blic of Congo and lately Côte d’Ivoire.

How is the youth employ-
ment challenge experienced in Africa? The problem of employment in general and more specifically youth employment show the same indicators everywhere, with the same difficulties, whether in Africa or elsewhere in the world. The challenges, due to variations and nuances, result from the fast growing demographic in West-Africa in the context of an economy unable of providing adequate responses through massive jobs creation. And when these jobs exist, they do not match the existing demand on the labour market. In short, issues as varied as employability, skills development and growth friendly employment remain unsolved. Hence, promotion of decent jobs for youth is confronted many internal and external challenges at the institutional level and within the youth themselves. These challenges are related to the design and backup of the organ, the mechanisms for its integration into macro-economic sectorial policies, and shortcomings in the field of applied research. From countries I visited, and based on my knowledge of the labour market, many chal-
 lenges lie on the way of policy-
makers, and these include: limited knowledge of the issue of youth employment; the absence of a shared vision of youth employment promotion; the weakness of the vocational and technical training system; difficulties for financing the initiatives; institutional ins-
tability and insti-
tutional linkage ; the absence of technical and vocational skills that match the needs of the labour market. Still, in relation to the challenges decision-makers face, there is limited entrepreneurship culture ; the weak managerial capacities of young entrepre-
neurs ; the mainstreaming of the gender dimension in youth employment policies ; limited access to information on the thriving sectors and business opportunities ; the public procurement system that does not integrate the job creation criteria ; and finally, the levels of exemptions and tax credits for companies that make so many efforts to employ or host young boys, or girls as interns. Today, it is more than necessa-
ry, in each country, to seize the opportunities to pro-
mote economic potentialities in order to find an adequate response to youth unemployment. This is why the promo-
tion of youth employment is now the major priority of the African Government, especially the Head of States in Ouagadou-
gou made it a priority for the decade.

The employment creation strategy, through its income generation dimen-
sion, is the ideal poverty alleviation instrument. It is and should be one of the priorities, in the same ranking as rural develop-
ment, gender equality and women’s empower-
m ent. As a result, the pro-
motion of the private sector. All Governments have tried, with varying degrees of success, to translate its cross-cutting dimension in the various development plans or poverty alleviation strategies. The problem of employment in West-Africa, focusing on youth employment, is the impatience many heads of States in the world. The challenges, issues did not start with studying about and developing employment programmes focusing on youth, or designing national policies on the matter. It started in 1987, when I was appointed Delegate for employment in Senegal. Indeed and innovative appointment, appointed special commissioner on employment in Senegal. Indeed, subsequent to the harsh structural adjustment programmes, it was decided to introduce measures to mitigate the social impacts of the real and monetary sectors adjustments. Presidents Abdou Diouf and Léopold Sédar Senghor created the DIRE (Commission for labour market insertion and reinsertion, and employment generation) under the direct authority of the Office of the President. In order to provide the highest possible institutional linkage, the Special Commissioner was ranked as and called a Minister. You will note that nowadays, more than in the past, the institutional linkage with youth employment management organs is still tricky. With the DIRE, I had initiated in 1987 the Fonds national de l’Emploi (FNE) - National Employment Fund - to finance self-employment. This is the mechanism that set the pace for all similar funds that exist in Africa today. To buttress this, in Cameroon and Tunisia, it is the FNE acronym which continues to be in use. I later got appointed as the Minister in charge of the Budget, then Director General of the Port of Dakar and lastly Managing Director of the largest company in Senegal, the Chemical Industries of Senegal (Industries chimiques du Sénégal). I have always remained influenced by my passage in the Department of employment. Thus, in 2003, I set up the Poverty Alleviation Support Project at the ICS (PALPICS) with a USD 500,000 annual fund, piloted by the ILO and the UNDP. The PALPICS has an employability and micro-projects funding component. In 2004, I started providing consultancy services

Djibril Ngom, Employment expert « My suggestions toward the reduction of youth unemployment »
The conclusion is that a good number of stakeholders involved employment promotion are confused with regard to their roles and responsibilities in terms of training, management, as well as funding. In the specific area of skills building and employability improvement, national capacities to build a strong and efficient system to support youth employment are either very low, or insufficiently developed. Regarding the strengthening of entrepreneurial skills, there are very few, if any, certified or registered trainers using internationally-tested and proven training modules. ILO would increasingly have to play the role of provider of technical backstopping and advice.

The impatience manifested by the various stakeholders has led to some essential stages in the process of establishing employment programmes being skipped. And as you know, the risks mapping in entrepreneurship starting from the identification of the entrepreneur and his/her idea, then his/her training background, the writing of his/her project document, financing and monitoring-evaluation, all have to be managed rigorously and each critical point has its importance.

Could you suggest directions which could give concrete results in the field of youth employment promotion in West-Africa? Guidelines for an efficient management of employment creation for young boys and girls shall include, and not limited to, six lines of action which I may mention. Action one is the realization of synergies and collaborations among all the stakeholders that intervene directly, or indirectly, in youth employment generation (programmes, projects, institutions, ministries, funds, etc.), through platforms of services, with the purpose of optimizing the use of the available resources. A mechanism for oversight, support and evaluation (coordination boards, presidential councils, steering committees) and monitoring-evaluation instruments of the various income generating actions, both at national and local levels of the various sectorial ministerial departments will have to be set in place. Consequently, accountability on the employment dimension of Government’s programmes and projects becomes one of the key assessment criteria of the success of sectorial projects.

Action two would elicit the argument that the “Employment” criterion should be given greater significance than is currently the case in the public procurement procedures in our countries. So a preference consideration should be introduced on grounds of employment generation in the bids for government-financed contract, beside consideration such as the lowest bid. It should clear that introducing this preference consideration should not alter the quality of the works to be executed and the quality of the public infrastructure and equipment. Efficiency and optimum performance should be sought at all times.

Action three: given that government investment programmes with domestic or external funding do not adequately factor in the employment consideration, and where they do, the jobs generated are not accounted for, a new vision should be adopted to make employment a topmost consideration in economic policies. This implies an adjustment of the macroeconomic and sectorial policies to make them to focus more on labour intensive investment (LIP). Thus, employment generation should be at the core of macroeconomic policies for sectorial and government investments. Above all, this implies that part of government investments should be channelled to sectors and projects likely to impact on employment, while giving due consideration to viability. This way employment ceases to simply be an outcome of the various economic policies, and will have to be perceived as a key determining factor of wealth and values creation.

Action four, the various funds in support of employment creation initiatives should be merged; there should be provision therein for various windows for the financing of specific initiatives such as rural employment, microcredit, bail-out of business in crisis, micro-finance. There will be need to merge the various employment generation initiatives support funds and create country-wide platforms for the financing of specific initiative through counters for rural employment, microcredit, the refloating of companies in difficulties, micro-finance. In that framework, we should have the minimum number of units within dispersed ministries and get a proper focus on the employments generated.

Action five: I propose the coherent prohibition of financial and non-financial services and products that support and guide youth economic inclusion. This should facilitate their access to information, documentation, training and supervisory services for the achievement of their initiatives, and contribute to growth and development through alleviating the poverty of these youths.

Action six and last proposal is about consolidating the information mechanisms and improving market transparency. This should be done on the premise of full transparency. Funding allocated for the definition of policies and the financing of self-employment should be seen as an invested fund, and not operational funds; it should serve for the promotion of a new generation of entrepreneurs in Africa.

The conclusion is that a good number of stakeholders involved employment promotion are confused with regard to their roles and responsibilities in terms of training, management, as well as funding.
Mr. Sissouma, the issue of youth employment remains worrying in West Africa. Has the WAEMU done any diagnostic study on the problem? If yes, what does that study say?

For over ten years now, the Commission has been paying special attention to employment, and specifically youth employment. Even if it is not compelled by the Treaty to make employment a policy matter in the Union, the issue remains crucial in the programmes it implements. Consequently, the vision of all of the Union’s interventions in support of higher education and training systems aims at developing the human capital, which is known as one of the major instruments to fight unemployment. I will deal with that aspect later. But to answer directly your question, the Commission has just finalized a comprehensive study on employment policy and monitoring of unemployment in all the WAEMU member countries. The conclusion is that if we stick to the unemployment methods defined by the Labour Statistics Internatio nal Conference (LSIC), the situation of several of the Union’s member countries would show full employment (Less the 3% unemployment). It goes without saying that these rates are far from reflecting the intuitive knowledge that we have of our daily realities. That is why we are more focused on the structure of employment than on the unemployment rate as such. On that specific issue, the study says the situation is far from brilliant within the Union. Employment is characterized by a very low rate of salaried employment (on average, only 12% of all jobs are salaried) and a domination of self-employment or work within households (up to 70% in some countries). When we continue the analysis, we note the predominance of the informal sector as the space of occupation of people declaring they are employed (70%).

This observation is confirmed by the disaggregation of unemployed persons on the basis of educational level. The rate highlights that within the WAEMU space, the higher your degree is, the lesser the likelihood of your finding a job. This clearly shows that our space is characterized both by very low availability of quality employment and the inability of training to enhance the employability of the graduates produced by the system.

What is the view of the WAEMU on that issue?

For the WAEMU, response to the issue of employment should not be sectoral. The design of employment policies and programmes conducted solely at sectoral level cannot bring sustainable solutions. Employment is a crosscutting issue in the economic context. It should then be understood as an economic policy objective. This is why the WAEMU Commission is more and more insisting on this issue in its economic policy recommendations. Within the countries, it is necessary to set the employment growth objectives at the moment the economic policy choices are made, and have these objectives drive all sectorial policies, especially during the development of the major investment programmes.

In addition, the Union’s efforts to guarantee our member States sustained growth, attract productive investments, improve the business environment, create a true regional market, facilitate the movement of goods and people, develop the human capital and provide it with means of empowerment, are critical contribution to improving the situation of employment. Notable reference is the Union’s interventions in support of innovative training systems aiming at enhancing the employability of the graduates produced by the system. The WAEMU has many leverage capacities of national players in the field of employment, and in the implementation of sound public policies, community programmes are implemented. Such is the case of the big higher education support project spearheaded by the Commission and funded by the African Development Bank. The project has thus supported the establishment of consultation mechanisms between training institutions and the world of work to promote the sought dialogue. In fact, within the framework of that project, the Commission is currently conducting a reflection on the North-American concept of community colleges which constitutes good illustration of what successful collaboration between the professional world and training systems can be with a view to enhancing the employability of graduates. The outcome of that thinking should serve as a lever for the launch of a large support programme to innovative training systems.

To assist the Union’s member States Ministers in charge of employment and vocational training, the Commission has been supporting, for four years now their consultation framework. That support enables the Ministers to speak to each other, share views on their practices, initiate joint operations and above all, mutually strengthen each other, and thus fulfill their central role in the field of employment promotion.

What actions is the WAEMU conducting, or plans to conduct to help Member-States put in place decent employment policies and programmes?

The WAEMU has many leverage options. Generally, we pass laws and adopt guidelines aimed at improving the business environment. The Union ensures that it can help the States respond to the legitimate needs required for the well-being of their populations.

More specifically, the objective of the laws of the Community is to encourage member-States to introduce reforms and adopt measures that lead to greater efficiency. Such is the case of the laws passed in various areas aiming at ensuring better coordination of the policies. The series of guidelines on the right of establishment in any of the Union’s member States aims at facilitating the mobility of expertise and labour within the entire community space.

In the areas of higher education and training, Community guidelines and decisions have been adopted. The objective of LMD (Bachelor’s, Master’s and Doctorate Degree) Guideline, by which the Union invites member-States to adopt a new architecture for their university degrees, is to help bring about the necessary changes to ensure greater relevance of the training systems.

Another lever is the Community programmes. Passing a law, however necessary, is not always enough to guarantee the desired changes. Thus to help member-States to reform, adopt the best practices and enhance the capacities of national players in the field of employment, the Union’s interventions in support of innovative training systems are implemented. Such is the case of the big higher education support project spearheaded by the Commission and funded by the African Development Bank. The project has thus supported the establishment of consultation mechanisms between training institutions and the world of work to promote the sought dialogue. In fact, within the framework of that project, the Commission is currently conducting a reflection on the North-American concept of community colleges which constitutes good illustration of what successful collaboration between the professional world and training systems can be with a view to enhancing the employability of graduates. The outcome of that thinking should serve as a lever for the launch of a large support programme to innovative training systems.

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What actions is the WAEMU conducting, or plans to conduct to help Member-States put in place decent employment policies and programmes to fight unemployment?

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Friar Godfrey Nzamujo,  
Director of the Songhai Centre  
A priestly love for Africa

We are in the early 80s. Drought and famine are plaguing Ethiopia, and it is virtually the only topic international media are broadcasting when talking about Africa. From California where he is completing an academic stay, Godfrey NZAMUJO, an American citizen of Nigerian origin (West Africa), laments this vision. Deep in himself, he knows that Africa is actually truly rich because of its huge environmental and human potential. He knows what he is talking about, as he has just finished his studies in physics at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California, the University of California at Irvine, the International Institute for Advanced Studies. «These studies have opened my eyes and doors into a new world, he said. I studied IT and electronics, then microbiology and development sciences. After having completed my studies and earned several doctorates, I started a career in teaching and research.» So he starts to think about the future of his continent of origin; according to him, the continent became very poor because Africans are no longer able to deploy the inner forces that can help them channel their potential to acquire goods and services that correspond to their needs and desires. He believes that his Africa is not the continent of poverty and all the evil perceived from the United States in the 80s. He decides to show his African brothers how to value the potential that the continent was endowed with and also to show the world the other face of Africa. «How am I going to do this if I am totally outside the continent?», he wonders. He resolutely thinks that he has to be inside to make things happen. He then reached the time for him to set projects and personal development plans aside. Rather, he committed himself to an ambitious project: the new African society. This put an end to his greatest dream: the dissemination of African driven innovations for sustainable development. In Ndjamena, in May 2012, Songhai received an honorary award from CORAF (West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development) for the significant contribution of the Songhai Centre for agricultural research for development in the sub-region during the 3rd Agricultural Science Week and the 10th General Assembly of CORAF.

There is some family gene behind this man’s success. He was born on September 5, 1949, and his mother Eunice and father Uberti William taught him to understand that life is not easy. He still remembers what his father told him and his brothers and sisters: «My children, I do not pray that your way be nicely cleared, without pitfalls. Instead, I pray that you gain experience and have the inner capacity and strength that can help you overcome the difficulties of life.»

He promotes this among his brothers, whom he believes must stop seeing themselves as «homo sapiens» only and begin to act more like «homo empathicus». In his view, every human has to fight against injustice, excess, against anything inhuman and defend any effort to build human relationships for the social well-being of each and every one. «We are all connected. And so for me, what matters is the relationship with others. For me, these relationships are important and transcend the natural ties, i.e. family, ethnic, etc.»

Godfrey NZAMUJO believes that this is the basis of human goodness. He continues: «For example, I have experienced the Biafran war in Nigeria. The absurdity of war proves that war stems from the absence of relationships between humans, the alienation/social and spiritual interaction) between us. In other words, if you destroy somebody else’s life, you destroy yourself.»

This is how this man, Founder and Director of the Songhai Centre, lives.
In 1985 Godfrey NZAMUJO created the Songhai Centre in Benin. The centre is named after the Songhai Empire, known for its prosperity and located in West Africa before colonization.

The Songhai Centre was founded, according to its founder, to restore Africans' dignity, develop a new African Man, a standing African. For him, the purpose was to wash away the shame of Africa, change the negative view on Africa, restore hope and show a new image of Africa as a standing continent. The aim of the initiative is to create a new African society, which promotes values and productive capacities once developed in the Songhai Empire but tend to disappear today. It is an approach that goes back to history, and comes up with a comprehensive development vision of the continent. This new socio-economic goal involves a commitment to active and regenerative use of use of all resources. It is designed to have a snowball effect. This initiative revitalizes the work and basic structure of enterprises, which form the modern economy. Here, new types of enterprises become focal points where resources and human relationships are oriented towards the continuous creation of social, environmental, spiritual, and economic wealth. Thirty years after its launch, the initiative is a true success. While offering a new field of invention and creativity, the Songhai Centre has incubated thousands of Africans (impacting knowledge, life skills, and know-how). All this involves a different entrepreneurial approach based on authentic and noble technologies that respect the environment and bring benefits at all levels. The use of these technologies helped develop an integrated, diverse, multi-functional, sustainable, and competitive agriculture by producing more with less," the Director of the Songhai Centre asserted that the development of a critical mass of entrepreneurial communities and individual entrepreneurs is the key to job creation and poverty eradication. To this end, he strongly relies on agriculture, adding that addressing the youth employment issue involves matching training with the real needs in this new agro-ecological perspective. For him, the youth will need to be incubated in a setting that will allow them to gain cross-cutting skills. With these capabilities, the agricultural sector will provide a variety of entrepreneurial and employment opportunities.

Thanks to the Songhai Centre, an entrepreneurial community called «start-up community» was established in Benin. It is an innovative institution, characterized by four components:

- A technology park where new ideas and techniques are designed, developed, shared and locally adapted;
- An industrial park where techniques and ideas are transformed into companies and where many types of production activities are grouped to produce synergy and integration; The Songhai agricultural system is designed to be profitable and competitive. It works in such a way that it helps produce healthy and nutritious rich food for an increasingly growing population. This makes it attractive to young people. It is a sustainable agriculture and easily practiced by all; it is fine with and reinforces the environment; provides sufficient commodities for agro-industry;
- An incubation centre for agro-entrepreneurs, a true «space» where new skills are developed. Thanks to the technological and industrial parks, it produces entrepreneurs and functional people.
Mapping and diagnostic analysis of youth employment in Burkina Faso

Study carried out as part of the Joint Initiative for Youth Employment in Africa. October 2014. – 89p.

This study was carried out based on a participatory approach as part of the Joint Initiative for Youth Employment in Africa (ICEJA). This initiative stemmed from the partnership between the African Union (AU) Commission, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

In the country, different job opportunities have been developed for young people. The primary sector employs almost half of employed young people. The challenge is to fill in large numbers the poorly and semi-skilled labour market segments, and in quality the highly skilled and unskilled labour market segments. To this end, corporate culture should be developed at school. Moreover, an effort to ensure consistency of supply and demand for skills is needed.

The labour market legal framework in Burkina Faso is favourable to the promotion of youth employment, but remains unknown to the different stakeholders.

Following these findings, the Joint Initiative for Youth Employment recommended the following strategic lines of action for its intervention:

- Direction 1: Improve the employability of young women and men in both urban and rural areas.
- Direction 2: Promote entrepreneurship for young women and men.
- Direction 3: Improve governance in the labour market.
- Direction 4: Build technical and institutional capacity for stakeholders in order to design development policies that can really promote decent employment for young women and men.
- Direction 5: Management, monitoring and evaluation of ICEJA.
Partnership for a green economy in Senegal

30,000 jobs to find
Training consultant job in Africa

A repository in gestation

Two workshops were held in Dakar from 16 to 19 December, 2014, gathering the members of the African network of vocational training funds and institutions (RAFPRO). It was an opportunity to reflect and discuss the monograph produced on the consultant training job and the capitalization of experiences and practices in terms of accreditation and labelling of training organizations. During an interview at the end of the workshops, the President of RAFPRO, Mr. Ahmed Al Khoudar Ali Fadel, announced that the network will develop a repository for training consultants. Since its creation, the network has various supports, including the International Labour Office (ILO).

RAFPRO describes the training consultant as someone who works upon request from companies to determine the training needs for their employees. Once this information is available, the consultant will then discuss with the trainers to get a feedback for the request. These are men and women who must know how to build a career. Unfortunately, according to the president of RAFPRO, these training consultants may face some limitations due to the fact that they are recruited on-the-job within vocational training institutions and funding institutions where they are working. So is the supply of this problem. This is why we thought it is necessary to address these two issues, Mr. Ahmed Al Khoudar Ali Fadel said.

The meetings allowed participants to be familiar with practices in different countries. They hope to be able to harmonize them in order to lay the foundations for a repository with world-accepted standards. Our interlocutor added that “the other aspect of the issue is to indicate the steps to follow so that we can identify which specific training expert would be able to meet the demand of companies. This critical point was discussed, and so the foundations were laid in order to keep up the effort and have a repository for training consultants. This way, we can identify what must be done and how to move forward to build a career for training consultants.”

During the Dakar meeting, materials that can contribute to develop the repository were shared. It was decided to set up a team comprising different funding agencies. The team, led by the permanent secretary of RAFPRO, Mr Jean Y. Touré, will work on this repository. He said that the first step would be to identify in clearer terms the functions of consultants, the different tasks they perform in order to assess quality from upstream to downstream. Mr Touré and his team will also review ways to motivate the consultant to remain faithful to the institution. They will also offer solutions to improve the quality of the training offer. Moreover, RAFPRO plans to conduct advocacy on the composition of the training funds and institutions boards so they have more visibility in governance and decision making. In this regard, the President of RAFPRO recalls that «the training funds are tripartite resources (government, employers and workers). But the government always manages to have the largest number of board members, and this can influence decisions. We hope that this will change and that the number of consultants will be tripartite and equal so that decisions are taken collectively. We insist on it so that concrete action is taken in the boards of directors or management boards in order to follow the principle of tripartism.»

RAFPRO was created during its constituent general meeting held in Conakry, Bénin, from 25 to 29 September, 2006. It currently comprises 11 countries with 12 agencies, with Senegal, one of the countries, having two members. Since its creation, the network has various supports, including the International Labour Office (ILO).

The ILO and the Ministry of Labour, Social Dialogue, Professional Organizations and Relations with the Institutions (RAFPRO) were represented in the discussion, national actors.» For this reason, young people with disabilities; improve governance and financial partners, the private sector and social actors to address the issue of unemployment and underemployment of youth in a more effective, coherent and integrated way over the next 5 years. It consists of thirteen (13) projects costing 15 billion 182 million CFA francs for the first (5) years to come. These projects aim to reach 195,720 young beneficiaries including: 35,000 to improve employability and 160,720 direct jobs.

The Youth Employment Program (PEJ) validated

The National School of Administration of Senegal Introduces Students to the Basics

The Youth Employment Program (PEJ) was validated at a workshop held in Lomé on October 3 and 4, 2014. This program is intended to ensure a better contribution of the youth employment sector in the acceleration of economic growth by giving young people more opportunities to access decent and sustainable employment or self-employment. It will help increase insertion opportunities of different groups of young people to reduce the unemployment and underemployment rate. The PEJ is based on five (5) sub-programs: take into account youth employment in sectorial policies; improve the employability of young graduates; increase employment opportunities for young people; facilitate access to employment for young people with disabilities; improve governance and actions for youth employment.

It offers a set of concrete actions formulated as budgeted projects to enable the government, technical and financial partners, the private sector and social actors to address the issue of unemployment and underemployment of youth in a more effective, coherent and integrated way over the next 5 years. It consists of thirteen (13) projects costing 15 billion 182 million CFA francs for the first (5) years to come. These projects

Togo

Fundamental rights at work

The ILO and the Ministry of Labour, Social Dialogue, Professional Organizations and Relations with the Institutions paid tribute to the participants. Mr Manoussy, who was there to provide the launching ceremony of this initiative, was delighted by this attendance, as he said that “taking ownership of the principles and mechanisms of social dialogue can significantly enhance the actions of senior officials of the Administration.”

The Ministry took the opportunity to inform participants of the decision of the Senegalese government to have a High Council for Social Dialogue, whose mission and composition will advance social dialogue and make it a lever for growth, competitiveness, and social progress.

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The PAMODEC panel discussion on Social Dialogue brought together a diverse panel of seven high profile people on October 25, 2014 in Dakar. The panel was chaired by the President of CNSS (National Social Dialogue Committee), Mr. Youssoupha Wade and Mr. Cheikh Awa Balla Fall, Director General of ENA (National School of Administration), and each of the panellists answered to one or two questions related to social dialogue in their respective area of focus or structure. Focus on this event, which brought together a very interested audience of trade unionists, students, journalists and eminent personalities including the former Minister of Labour of Senegal and former international civil servant of the ILO, Mr. Yiro Di.

«Worded differently, this question means: what is the ILO’s strategy for social dialogue? This strategy is based on three pillars. The first pillar relates a support to the legal framework, that which sets the scene for social dialog and how it should take place. In this regard, all ILO units provide their input.

The second pillar includes the institutions of social dialogue. Whether these institutions are tripartite or bipartite, wherever necessary, we support and encourage countries in which we operate, using the countries’ expertise so that they can go beyond traditional institutions to put in place institutions that are thought to be best suited to support social dialogue. These tripartite institutions include a variety of committees that are social dialogue platforms, namely: national employment policy development and implementation committee, national social protection policy implementation committee, national social dialogue committee, economic and social councils. The third pillar of our intervention is around capacity building. We do a lot of capacity building, and this support can be broken down into several components. One example is capacity building for the social dialogue stakeholders. In addition, we design procedures and tools made available to our constituents. Beyond this, we also try to promote social dialogue at the sub-regional level. Regional economic groups are environments suitable for the promotion of social dialogue, because it enables the social dimension to be taken into account in the economic integration process. We have worked for years to be able to take into account social dialogue at the sub-regional level. For example, it took ten years for the Heads of State to accept an amendment to the treaty establishing the WAEMU and set up an advisory body called the Council for Labour and Social Dialogue.

What are the contributions of social dialogue to the process of reforms of labour regulations in Senegal?

If today, we have to address the issue of social dialogue along side the process of regulatory reform, we must distinguish two issues, namely mandatory consultations and non-mandatory consultations.

Regarding mandatory consultations, the advisory body for excellence under Article L205 of the Labour Code is National Advisory Council for Labour and Social Security (CCNTSS). The mission of CCNTSS is to address all matters related to labour and social security. Any bill or draft made under the Labour Code must always go through CCNTSS. And the most representative organizations of employers and workers designate their representatives in the board whose members are appointed through an edict from the Minister of Labour. The most recent example I can give regarding CCNTSS is of course the draft text on internship and learning. Indeed, the social partners and the Government, together with the members of the National Assembly and the Supreme Court, as well as the relevant ministries, reviewed three drafts: a bill on internship, a draft decree on internship and a draft decree on apprenticeship. So these are what I would call the mandatory consultations. On all issues related to labour or social security, consultation with social partners is mandatory. These texts must be submitted to the authorities subject to a positive endorsement of the Advisory Board.

But apart from that, there is what I would call non-mandatory consultations, which naturally result from the prevailing positive social dialogue disposition in our country. We have set up a steering committee and a drafting committee in charge of the reform of the legal framework on social security. In these committees, both employers and workers belonging to the most representative organizations were asked to nominate their representatives. This means that the instrument produced by these reforms, namely a single draft social security code, which is the main objective of these reforms, will reflect the opinion of the social partners who have been involved in the process right from the outset. Obviously, mention could also be made of the various drafts produced, including the consultations we had on the draft decree establishing and defining the conditions for the organization and function of the High Council for Social Dialogue. This means that today, there is no way to undertake a regulatory reform in the labour and social security sector without prior consultation with the social partners.»

«Regional economic groups are environments suitable for the promotion of social dialogue.»
How would the delegate of the French government to the Governing Body of the ILO appreciate the evolution of Social dialogue in France over the last decade? How did the French experiences in social dialogue help improve social dialogue at the international level?

Bernard Thibault
workers' French Delegate at the ILO’s Governing Body

«Social dialogue is much easier if the actors respect each other.»

It would be a surprise to you if I told you right away that I totally agree with what Mr De Robien has just described. And yet in some respects, I do not feel the need to voice out any disagreement. What I mean by this is that in France there are tools for social dialogue. This does not mean that these tools are necessarily adaptable in their present state, to all other countries. There are in fact many other countries in Europe and elsewhere that have their internal social dialogue mechan-isms, which do not work the same way as ours. It is not enough to have good tools. You must also have the skills and know-how to use them. In this regard, sometimes one could experience some shortcomings.

It is also necessary that stakeholders recognize each other. As mentioned by Mr De Robien, there have been many reforms in France, particularly regarding the representative-ness of stakeholders. There was still a big gap that was experienced for decades, and because of this, it was enough for employers’ social dialogue. And to declare themselves as representatives or trade unions to be designated as representatives, in order to have an agreement applicable to all. Both parties sign it. This was definitely not democratic. This is the rationale that the 2008 reforms aimed to achieve greater democracy in the repre-sentativeness of stakeholders. And I am pleased to tell you that, since 2008, criteria have been established for representativeness. In other words, social dialogue provi-sions would only be valid if, on the employers’ side, the signa-tories represent a minimum of 30% of these employees. Generally, in a democratic context, 50% is what should be recognized as the majority rule. But let us consider that 30% is a magic number to reach 50% in the future. The other issue is that it is not enough to have tools. We must also ask whether we are considering all the issues that may be discussed in the social dialogue. And in this regard, let me tell you that it is not be-cause we have good tools that French workers are satisfied with the results of the social dialogue. This is evidenced by the serious social discontent in our country. This is not restric-ted to France. It is experienced globally and to a social and economic crisis. Unemployment and precari-ousness are on the increase. So what I wanted to say, by the way, is that we should not reduce either the list of topics that could be discussed in the social dialogue. I think we do a lot of cutting, especially in times of crisis. Social dialogue should not focus only on the material concerns of the workers. Of course those are important, but the other issue is to consider this special arrangement on the solutions to be sought and applied in regard to economic, fiscal and invest-ment options... In short, it is also about recognizing workers’ ability to express an opinion on the choices that are critical to a nation, acontinent, and from this point of view, I have to say that too often, while we have tools that could help address these issues, the ability of workers to also take action in this area is not recognized. So too often, social dialogue is re-duced to having people accept predefined choices or already-adopted guidelines that would not be contested. But today, it is quite pretentious to say that there is only one solution to get out of the crisis, and the solution is this or that. It is not about questioning the political legitimacy of the elected representatives of the nation, ministers, and governments. Rather, it is about recognizing that political legitimacy can also be enhanced through stronger social dialogue. Social dialogue is much easier if the actors recognize each other and are in a relatively transparent economic configuration. And in this regard, it is important to move towards a generalization of the formal economy.»

Ambassador Gilles de Robien

French Government Delegate to the ILO Governing Body

If I had to give a feeling or opinion, I would say it could be better. You know the French social dialogue partnership system is original and unique in Europe. This is what we call the principle of co-manage-ment. I think in terms of instru-ments, laws, agreements, we’ve made tremendous progress within a couple of years. The 2007 law, called Loi Larcher, brought a lot of improvements. But it is worth mentioning. It is a modest improvement, but it is worth mentioning. Obviously the answer is no, there was no rule then for employers, and this is why we’ve made progress, because we have the CESGDS investigation released in October 2013, reflecting an improvement of the social environ-ment in businesses and government entities for the first time since 2008. It is a modest improvement, but it is worth mentioning. 52% of employees in France are satisfied with the social environment in their business or adminis-tration. That is 5 points more compared to 2012. But social dialogue is not just about legislation. For me, it is, above all, a matter of culture, a matter of mind-set, a matter of good will, and a matter of political will. And I believe that a certain level of mutual trust must be the primary condition to meet. We should tell the truth to each other. We may have conflicting arguments or interests that may be totally or partially different, but having always a cli-mate of trust, more than anything, is the determin-ing factor. Creating a real social consensus does not happen overnight; it is a process that takes time, and it may be difficult or even risky. It’s about negotiation. In any case, social dialogue must be rooted where it can be, i.e. in companies, in culture, unions’ traditions (they are strong in France), as a principle, in the social fabric. Ready-made Social dialogue does not exist.

To answer your second question: Is France committed to it? Naturally, all that we want is to share with others our experiences with the workers. Of course, that is the system we’ve built in France since 1919, but also because we have participated in the development of international labour standards through the Employers’ group, the Workers’ group, and through the repre-sentative of the government, whatever it may be. Thus France has been a leader in a convention on the status of seafarers, her position is reckoned with regard to a text on domestic workers, and has set up a path, hopefully as powerful as possible, a triple path in the National Industrial Labour Organization. These are a couple of ways to show that France and social dialogue are the same side of a coin, and that social dialogue is part of the French culture, even if it has filled that gap. The other issue is that it is not enough to have good tools. You must also have the skills and know-how to use them. In this regard, sometimes one could experience some shortcomings.

It is also necessary that stakeholders recognize each other. As mentioned by Mr De Robien, there have been many reforms in France, particularly regarding the representative-ness of stakeholders. There was still a big gap that was experienced for decades, and because of this, it was enough for employers’ social dialogue. And to declare themselves as representatives or trade unions to be designated as representatives, in order to have an agreement applicable to all. Both parties sign it. This was definitely not democratic. This is the rationale that the 2008 reforms aimed to achieve greater democracy in the repre-sentativeness of stakeholders. And I am pleased to tell you that, since 2008, criteria have been established for representativeness. In other words, social dialogue provi-sions would only be valid if, on the employers’ side, the signa-tories represent a minimum of 30% of these employees. Generally, in a democratic context, 50% is what should be recognized as the majority rule. But let us consider that 30% is a magic number to reach 50% in the future. The other issue is that it is not enough to have tools. We must also ask whether we are considering all the issues that may be discussed in the social dialogue. And in this regard, let me tell you that it is not be-cause we have good tools that French workers are satisfied with the results of the social dialogue. This is evidenced by the serious social discontent in our country. This is not restric-ted to France. It is experienced globally and to a social and economic crisis. Unemployment and precari-ousness are on the increase. So what I wanted to say, by the way, is that we should not reduce either the list of topics that could be discussed in the social dialogue. I think we do a lot of cutting, especially in times of crisis. Social dialogue should not focus only on the material concerns of the workers. Of course those are important, but the other issue is to consider this special arrangement on the solutions to be sought and applied in regard to economic, fiscal and invest-ment options... In short, it is also about recognizing workers’ ability to express an opinion on the choices that are critical to a nation, acontinent, and from this point of view, I have to say that too often, while we have tools that could help address these issues, the ability of workers to also take action in this area is not recognized. So too often, social dialogue is re-duced to having people accept predefined choices or already-adopted guidelines that would not be contested. But today, it is quite pretentious to say that there is only one solution to get out of the crisis, and the solution is this or that. It is not about questioning the political legitimacy of the elected representatives of the nation, ministers, and governments. Rather, it is about recognizing that political legitimacy can also be enhanced through stronger social dialogue. Social dialogue is much easier if the actors recognize each other and are in a relatively transparent economic configuration. And in this regard, it is important to move towards a generalization of the formal economy.»

Decent Work

February 2015

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How would the National Confederation of Workers of Senegal take stock of social dialogue in Senegal since the conclusion of the Charter and the establishment of CNDS? What are the prospects and challenges for social dialogue?

Atoumane Diaw
Representative of the National Confederation of Workers of Senegal (CNTS)

«Taking stock starts with the signature on November 22, 2002 of the National Charter on Social Dialogue: the inaugural meeting of the Presidential Investment Committee (CPI), a real Economic Partnership Agreement, which is obsolete (dates from 1987), omits some professions, and does not take into account new ones. Regarding economic challenges, issues to note include improving the business environment (factor of increase in productive investment and high domestic production value); improving productivity and competitiveness; considering good governance that ensures the traceability of public resource use; transparency in company management; both on the Government’s, the shareholders’ side; and public accountability. That said, I think that success in this sense, participating in the ratification of Convention 144 of ILO, which was also an appropriate way to boost the promotion of social dialogue at all levels. Regarding the prospects and challenges to relate to restructuring, we believed that they are no longer disciples, but masters, and that we are entitled to claim copyright from France for integrating social dialogue in its Ministry of Labour. As far as we are concerned, we have always talked about social dialogue. We have always practiced it. We would add that our own organization has changed the former name “social committees” to “social dialogue and labour standards committees.” This committee was previously chaired by President Youssouf Bado, who was active at the CNP and I have had the honour and privilege to be his successor.»

Charles Faye
Representative of the National Council of Employers of Senegal (CNP)

«We fully confirm all the achievements listed by M’Boutoum-NeDiaye, representative of the National Confederation of the Workers of Senegal. These achievements, in fact, are the fruit of a partnership among us, social partners. That said, that success in taking our social dialogue to its current level is a major achievement. I used to recall that it is difficult for someone who has jumped on the bandwagon to match its predecessors. But here, as you will see when I finish my remarks, we exceeded the precursors to the point of becoming the masters of those who have taught us how to dialogue. Social dialogue in Senegal is not a new phenomenon; at least in the employers’ industry, because as from 1987, when we heard from workers terms like union renewal, we ourselves had understood that it would not be serious to let the authorities alone decide about the definition of a Code of Conduct. We take a collective bargaining process as a public policy, but never about private policy. However, we are the ones who bring growth. Government does not enact employment or social dialogue, but it supports this process and helps create an enabling environment for social peace. But we are the real designers and actors on a political, social, and economic level. We do not receive any grant and yet, we create considerable wealth for the greater benefit of people in a sustainable way. Regarding this inter- vention on social dialogue, we took a retrospective look, recalling the signing of the Charter in November 2002 and also the establishment of the National Social Dialogue Committee that followed. Since then, social dialogue has experienced exceptional development. Indeed, dialogue and consultation have occupied the professional field, reducing all these disorderly movements and removing at the same time any confrontation, be it verbal or physical. This happened because unanimously the tripartite constituents accepted to make the virtues of social dialogue a reality. It was also about recognizing all that social dialogue can bring to the various actors in the pursuit of collective exploitation objectives. In this regard, it is not superficial to recall the ratification of Convention 144 of ILO, which was also an appropriate way to boost the promotion of dialogue at all levels. Regarding the prospects and challenges to relate to restructuring, we believed that they are no longer disciples, but masters, and that we are entitled to claim copyright from France for integrating social dialogue in its Ministry of Labour. As far as we are concerned, we have always talked about social dialogue. We have always practiced it. We would add that our own organization has changed the former name “social committees” to “social dialogue and labour standards committees.” This committee was previously chaired by President Youssouf Bado, who was active at the CNP and I have had the honour and privilege to be his successor.»
What kind of contribution the press can provide to social dialogue?

«The role of media in social dialogue in Senegal is primarily an ethical issue. Social dialogue needs ethics, good faith and trust to lay the bases for negotiation between the parties in social conflict in order to achieve a win/win outcome; it’s a bit the substance of the definition, but I will add that to succeed, social dialogue needs ethics, good faith and professional conduct of the media which deal with information related to strikes, social movements, negotiations and all news related to the social front. It is a question of ethics and professional conduct, since the journalist’s work must be guided by these values and principles, respect for facts, faithfulness, honesty and balance when reporting the facts. The media must provide information that is correct and true, separating comments (free from facts) from facts (correct). As part of social dialogue between government, workers and companies, the media constitute a tool to generate awareness for change of attitudes, behaviors as long as they are guided by the desire to seek truth and equity. Otherwise the media are a weapon in the hands of the conflicting parties. This risk is all the more real that everyone knows the power of the media; it has the capacity to manipulate the various factions depending on the interests at stake. And the danger at that moment is to see the media shape the policy, or serve as a popular forum to influence decisions or to see the media develop an independent agenda, and the facilitators of these media becoming the other side of the political power by influencing such power. For example we have seen in our country social conflicts resolved overnight with the intervention of religious, political, customary or financial leaders. In the same way the media can contribute to «social polarization»; they can also bear the seeds of solutions to the crisis if they are free from any type of influence (money, political, religious) and act within the ethics of the profession.

Our FM band and TV frequencies have many radios and television stations linked to different religious affiliations or are subject to donors or under the influence of politicians who want to voice out their own interest; and, in our newspaper shops, there also numerous newspapers that publish various headlines. For the media to play their role in promoting social dialogue between the different labour stakeholders, and participate in creating a peaceful environment, they must be guided by ethics.»

Racky Noel Wane
Senegalese journalist

«For the media to play their role in promoting social dialogue, they must be guided by ethics.»

Decent Work

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- Put employment at the centre of economic and social policies to overcome poverty and economic and social underdevelopment;
- Address the massive unemployment of young women and men seek to help them and their governments through policy advice and concrete training and employment initiatives;
- Helping employers and workers to move out of the unproductive, insecure, poorly renumerated and annoying the informal economy;
- Promote the development of small business by improving skills and micro financing.
Promoting decent work for all women and men

- Promote and realize standards and fundamental principles and rights at work
- Create greater opportunities for women and men to decent employment and income
- Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all
- Strengthen tripartism and social dialogue

Eight (8) areas of critical importance for priority action in 2014–15

1. Promoting more and better jobs for inclusive growth
2. Jobs and skills for youth
3. Creating and extending social protection floors
4. Productivity and working conditions in SMEs
5. Decent work in the rural economy
6. Formalization of the informal economy
7. Strengthening workplace compliance through labour inspection
8. Protection of workers from unacceptable forms of work

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