

YOUTH PERSPECTIVES: EMPLOYMENT

YouthMap, a program of the International Youth Foundation, is a four-year initiative to assess youth circumstances and support promising youth development programs and practices in eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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The International Youth Foundation (IYF) invests in the extraordinary potential of young people. Founded in 1990, IYF builds and maintains a worldwide community of businesses, governments, and civil-society organizations committed to empowering youth to be healthy, productive, and engaged citizens. IYF programs are catalysts of change that help young people obtain a quality education, gain employability skills, make healthy choices, and improve their communities.

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THIS BRIEF HIGHLIGHTS YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES

on employment and entrepreneurship in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, based on findings from the YouthMap assessment report. It discusses opportunities presented by the labor market and related challenges faced by youth seeking formal jobs and employers looking for qualified workers. This brief gives specific attention to youth perspectives on work opportunities in the agriculture and tourism sectors.

This research is supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through a cooperative agreement with the International Youth Foundation (IYF). YouthMap is a four-year program designed to assess youth circumstances and to support promising youth programs in up to eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Tanzania, IYF conducted the assessment in partnership with Restless Development.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 367 young people (referred to as YouthMap participants) and 118 stakeholders across 12 districts in the six target regions participated in the assessment. YouthMap participants represented all research locations and consisted of 118 in-school youth, 125 employed youth, 114 inactive youth, and 10 positive role models. Stakeholder participants included public, private, civil society, and donor organizations.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF YOUTH

At the time of interviews in 2013, 54 percent of YouthMap participants were unemployed. In both mainland and Zanzibar, they identified the lack of formal job opportunities as a prominent common denominator hampering youth employment. More than half of unemployed youth had stopped looking for work. Youth and other key stakeholders revealed the following factors causing young people's economic inactivity: lack of youth motivation and initiative, lack of technical and soft skills, social stigma and poor perception towards certain jobs, low wages and salaries, drug abuse, and financial reliance on parents.

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT: EMPLOYERS' PERSPECTIVES

All employers interviewed by YouthMap identified high turnover (34 percent) and the lack of relevant technical (27 percent) and soft skills (23 percent) as the main barriers to hiring qualified young people. Specifically, employers highlighted communication deficiencies (e.g., lack of English language proficiency), particularly in relation to customer service-oriented industries, as a key factors hindering youth employment in Zanzibar. Employers also noted that Zanzibari youth generally were not invested in employment, contributing to the high youth turnover rate.

Employer perceptions of vocational training quality are mixed. Some employers stated that new employees were sufficiently trained and that schools, such as the National College of Tourism in Dar es Salaam, were beginning to reach the standards set by other countries in the region. However, many employers expressed concerns about technical training institutions' low capacity to provide marketable technical skills (e.g., electrical and mechanical engineering). To augment training and skills gaps, some employers reported utilizing in-house training systems, hiring independent trainers to develop the capacity of their staff, or recruiting from regional neighbors who have a higher skilled labor force. Despite these limitations, all employers interviewed stated that they would seek to hire Tanzanian youth (i.e., 30 years and younger) if their firms grew.

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT: YOUTH PERSPECTIVES

Focus group discussions revealed a number of barriers preventing youth from accessing formal employment: the lack of networks to locate and procure employment, low pay, nepotism, need for prior experience or references, and inadequate skills training. A student in Morogoro illustrated this last example, saying, "Skills like computer knowledge and use are necessary, and these are not found in rural primary schools."

Young people in mainland Tanzania reported receiving job information various ways, including some illegal channels (i.e., bribes). YouthMap participants who had completed secondary school or university reported accessing employment postings online and through social media (e.g., Facebook, Jamii Forum, and Zoom Tanzania) and volunteering. YouthMap participants with less education noted they find work through direct solicitation of employers. For example, some young men and women said they approach companies and leave their contact information in hopes of procuring employment, while others reported looking for casual work on agricultural farms and plantations during production or harvesting season. Regardless of the approach, youth's job searches typically fail to yield sufficient formal employment.

The formal sector does not offer a secure and sustainable means of income generation for youth participants, and even those youth who do secure formal employment continue to face challenges. For example, only five percent of all employed YouthMap participants stated that they earn enough to pay for their on-going expenses. As such, more youth look at entrepreneurial ventures, especially within the informal sector, as a viable alternative.

YOUTH AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Ten percent of YouthMap participants reported being self-employed, with equal distribution across rural and urban areas and genders. These participants were engaged in both owner registered and un-registered businesses (Table 1).

When interviewed, representatives from key educational institutions observed that entrepreneurial skills (e.g., being creative or taking initiative) are critical to youth employment. They cited the need to integrate such skills into training curricula to increase young people's readiness to create jobs for themselves. "Young people should be trained to be entrepreneurs and not just depend on employment from the government and private sector," noted one stakeholder from a youth training center in Zanzibar. "They should be trained to start their own businesses in growth sectors such as tourism and agriculture."

Young people and stakeholders often had conflicting perceptions of how youth engage in entrepreneurial activities. Stakeholders cited the influence of culture and the lack of entrepreneurial drive in Zanzibari youth. "Young people would rather stay at home and continue depending on their parents than go to the streets to vend goods," one representative said. In contrast, in-school Zanzibari youth point out that some young people who have graduated from higher level formal education (i.e., Form 6 or above) start informal tutoring centers to train others, especially in English. In doing so, they help fellow young people while generating income. Additionally, students at colleges and universities on the mainland are engaged in entrepreneurial activities such as cleaning on campus or selling goods (e.g., books, handbags, clothes, and cosmetics). Although both

Table 1: Informal Income-Generating Activities of Youth

SECTOR	ACTIVITY
Transport	<i>Bodaboda</i> (motor bike taxi) or personal vehicle driving <i>Daladala</i> (minibus) conducting
Construction	Masonry Carpentry
Cosmetology	Hairdressing (i.e., salons and barber shops)
Agriculture	Cultivating and selling crops (e.g., groundnuts, sunflower, millet, maize) Casual labor in the agricultural value chain such as weeding plant beds Raising and selling small and large livestock (i.e., poultry, sheep, goats, and cattle) and their products Acting as a middlemen (i.e., buying from farmers and selling to consumers)
Fishing	Supporting fishermen through marketing and the transport of fish and fish products
Small business	Vending clothes, soft drinks, and alcoholic beverages Serving meals or snacks at kiosks Selling phone vouchers and phone money transfers business (e.g., M-Pesa)
Entertainment	Waiting tables, tending bar, or working as an attendant at a bar or restaurant
Tourism	Guiding tours Driving tourists Making and selling souvenirs

operations are conducted on a very small scale, they demonstrate the entrepreneurial drive and untapped potential of young people.

YOUTH INTEREST IN AGRICULTURE

In Tanzania, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty and Zanzibar Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty both prioritize agriculture, tourism, and infrastructure as key growth sectors. While agriculture employs 74 percent¹ of mainland Tanzania and 41 percent² of Zanzibar’s labor force, youth involvement remains low.

In focus group discussions, YouthMap participants expressed interest in the agriculture sector but were not fully aware of the income-generating opportunities. Although interested, youth associate the agriculture sector with strenuous work, barriers to entry, and low returns. Employers need to capitalize on youth interests and demonstrate the broad opportunities and income-generating potential found in the sector. As one key participant highlighted, “The youth in Zanzibar are not aware of the business opportunities available in the agriculture sector, and there is a need to demystify the value chain.”

1. Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP II), July 2010, 52 and 65, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2011/cr1117.pdf>.

2. ILO, et al., “Zanzibar Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Review and Social Budget,” 2010, 33, http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_120152/lang-en/index.htm.

Youth disengagement from the agricultural sector is of concern to both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. It will be a missed opportunity if the country cannot prepare the next generation of farmers to leverage the land's rich natural resource potential. Given the results from this study, the government and development partners should make a deliberate push to attract and expose youth, especially in rural parts of the country, to the diverse opportunities in the sector.

YOUTH INTEREST IN TOURISM

Across all research areas, more urban YouthMap participants were interested in tourism than their rural counterparts. Their preferences fell in three main areas: tour guiding, hotels and hospitality, and food and beverage service. Further investigation revealed cultural gender associations that can determine youth access to the labor market. Young women were interested in hotels and hospitality and food and beverage service, while young men were more inclined toward tour guiding and transport. YouthMap participants in Zanzibar observed that the first two areas are considered “suitable” for young women, while tour guiding and transport are considered sectors for men. A tour operator in Zanzibar noted his company does not receive applications from young women seeking to be tour guides. He said he would like to hire and train young women, but cultural norms limiting their public visibility prevent them from applying.

Although there is interest from youth in the tourism industry, interviews with tour operators and hotel managers in Zanzibar highlighted the difficulty in finding reliable, qualified staff, specifically ones experienced in working with foreign tourists. Participating employers stated that they often have hired non-local workers who are more qualified. As the tourism industry continues to grow, young people must be trained to have the skills required for these promising jobs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although young people face broad labor market challenges, optimism and employment opportunities are present in Tanzania. If the great human and natural resource potential that resides in the country can be tapped and leveraged, there is tremendous opportunity to raise the economic prospects and conditions for all Tanzanians. Young people can be a key driver in that growth process. To stimulate and increase youth employability and entrepreneurship skills development in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, YouthMap makes the following recommendations:

- Conduct targeted youth employability interventions, especially in Zanzibar where unemployment is highest. Such interventions should create partnerships between training institutions and employers through apprenticeship and internship programs—while being cognizant of the nation's varying gender, cultural, and religious dynamics.
- Educate youth on the diverse economic opportunities available in the agriculture and tourism sectors. Young people need to learn about the viability of agriculture as a business. Affordable financing incentives would promote youth entrepreneurship in both sectors. Mentorship opportunities should also be encouraged through partnerships between training institutions and multinational agricultural companies supporting youth with technology and access to markets.
- Establish entrepreneurship training programs through cross-sectoral partnerships; they would foster an entrepreneurial spirit as well as technical know-how. The curriculum should incorporate experiential learning opportunities that provide aspiring entrepreneurs tangible work experience, access to mentors, and exposure to funding.

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