



# Empowering Young Africans to Live Their Dreams

Report to the Fifth Tokyo International  
Conference on African Development  
(TICAD V)





# Empowering Young Africans to Live Their Dreams

**Youth is an asset for Africa.** Young Africans are dynamic, vibrant, resilient and entrepreneurial. The African youth population is projected to grow fast and surpass that of any other continent in the world in the next few decades. Once empowered, a growing youth population will be Africa's strength in the global economy as populations in the rest of the world get older.

**African governments and the international community must invest in building the human capital of young Africans** – nutrition, health, education, and life skills – from conception through young adulthood. Nutrition and stimulation in a loving home during the first 1,000 days of life are crucial. Quality and relevance of education are at least as important as quantity.

**Economic growth and transformation must be strengthened.** More and better jobs will be created by raising productivity, reversing the decline in manufacturing, and leveraging better natural resources. Economic transformation should also better embrace disadvantaged people, including pastoralists and women.

**It is necessary to alleviate the burdens of the current and next generations of youth struggling without a decent job** because building human capital and transforming the economy will take time. Bolder interventions to raise productivity and quality of work in the informal sectors and small-holder agriculture are required. Evidence-based, time-bound action will be important to help the youth find jobs, counter labour-market imperfections, and overcome barriers to job search.

**Empowering young Africans to live their dreams is the way to achieve Africa's potential.** The dynamism of young Africans will drive the economic and social transformation which we look for across Africa.



*Policy Brief*

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Report to the Fifth Tokyo International Conference  
on African Development (TICAD V)

June 2013

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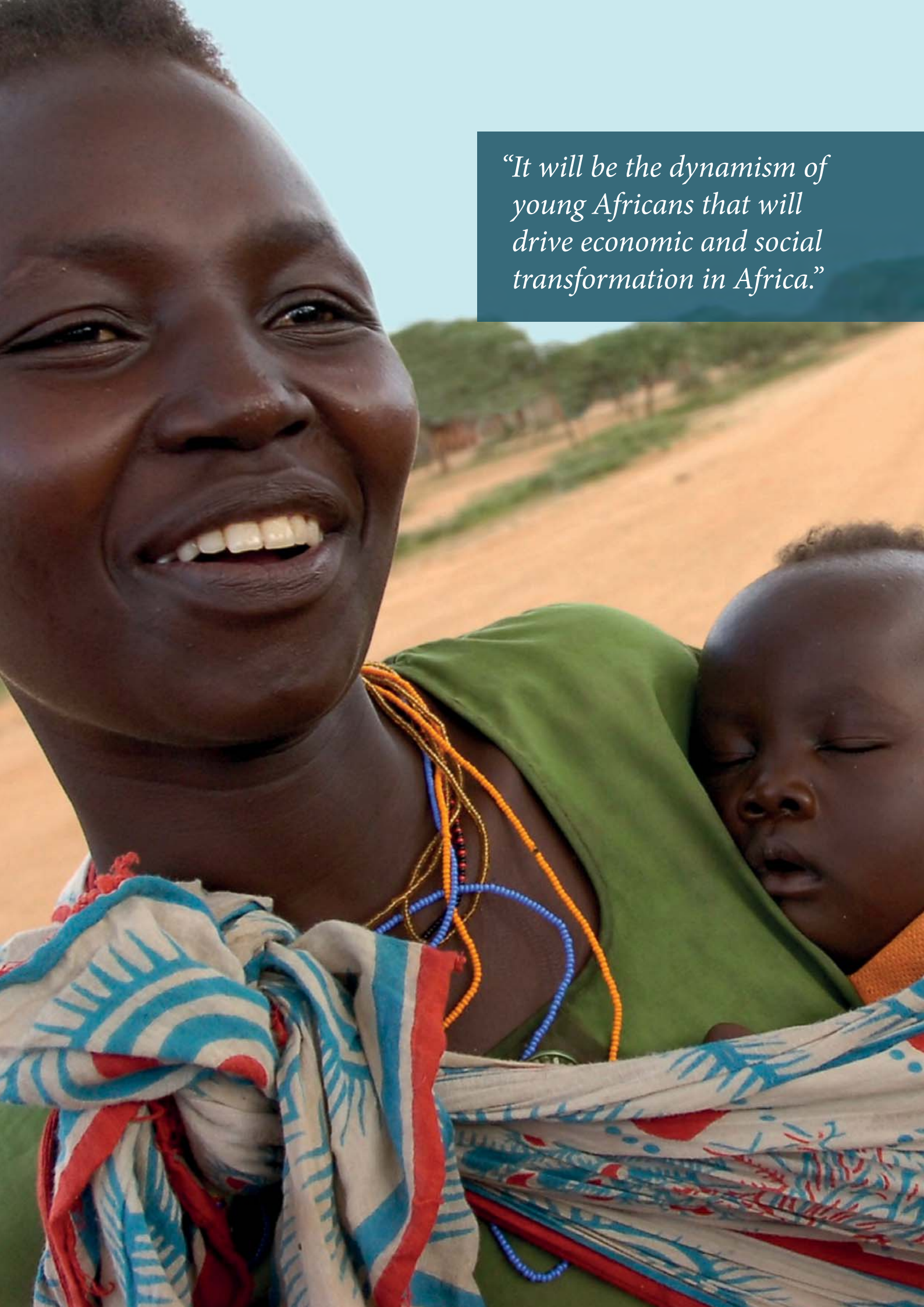
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A close-up photograph of a young African woman smiling warmly. She is carrying a sleeping child on her back, secured with a patterned cloth. She wears a green top and several colorful beaded necklaces. The background shows a dry, sandy landscape with sparse green vegetation under a clear sky.

*“It will be the dynamism of young Africans that will drive economic and social transformation in Africa.”*



# Foreword

The joblessness of young people is undoubtedly one of the most pressing social, economic and political challenges that confront policy makers across the world. The situation is especially serious in Africa because unemployment, or more precisely underemployment, is intertwined with low productivity and pervasive poverty.

Governments of African countries and their development partners have devoted enormous human and financial resources to tackle this problem. But the magnitude and complexity of the problem continues to grow.

As its contribution to addressing this challenge, JICA has assembled a team of top level scholars from Africa, Europe, North America, and Asia to prepare a comprehensive report on this subject for presentation at the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

The aim of the study is to develop policies, programmes and projects that can remove pervasive unemployment and underemployment from the continent, based on a thorough review of recent and on-going research as well as global best practices.

This report presents the recommendations of our team of international researchers. It suggests that the way forward will be to empower the current and future generations of young Africans.

We should ensure that all young Africans will be endowed with strong human capital through loving care at home and quality education at school. We should ensure that African economies are transformed into industrial states, with abundant opportunities for good jobs.

We are grateful to Professor Hiroyuki Hino, the Economic Advisor to the Presidency of the Republic of Kenya (JICA Expert), for leading this study. We are also most thankful to all members of the study team, each of whom contributed tremendously to enrich our report.

We would be most pleased and honoured if African policy makers, their development partners, civil society, and all others committed to African development found this report useful in charting their own contributions to make certain that all young Africans can live their dreams.



Akihiko Tanaka

**President**  
Japan International Cooperation Agency

# Acknowledgements

This report is a product of a research project entitled 'Youth Employment in Africa: Challenges and the Way Forward', which was organised by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and commissioned to Kobe University Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration (RIEB) and Oxford Policy Management (OPML). The research was conducted by a team of distinguished scholars.

The report summarises the main findings of the research, in particular the way forward in addressing the challenge of unemployment and underemployment of the youth in Africa. The papers that underlie these findings are contained in *Youth and Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa – Working but Poor*, edited by Hiroyuki Hino and Gustav Ranis, Routledge (forthcoming), and *Youth Employment in Africa; Challenges and the Way Forward*, edited by Hiroyuki Hino, Mark Henstridge, Germano Mwabu, and Nobuaki Hamaguchi (forthcoming).

This is a collaborative effort among JICA, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank, partners in the presentation of joint recommendations at TICAD V. We are most grateful to the staff of the World Bank and the African Development Bank, who have generously contributed their expertise

and support, including Shanta Devarajan, Ritva Reinikka and Deon Filmer at the World Bank, and Mthuli Ncube and Zuzana Brixiova at the African Development Bank.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Dr. Tanaka and his senior staff for support and encouragement, to Dr. Rachel Glennerster of MIT and Professor Michael Kremer of Harvard University for helpful inputs in the initial design of this research, and to Professor Gustav Ranis of Yale University for his guidance and valuable contributions.

We are also thankful to Mr. Lee Crawford of OPML for his efficient and effective research assistance. Finally, we wish to thank Ms. Takako Kitano and Ms. Asaka Miyamoto of RIEB for their assistance in the overall management of this research project, and Ms. Annie Ward of OPML and Ms. Eva Gladwell Mithambo of the former Office of the Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya for their administrative assistance.

**Nobuaki Hamaguchi, Mark Henstridge,  
Hiroyuki Hino, and Germano Mwabu**

# Introduction

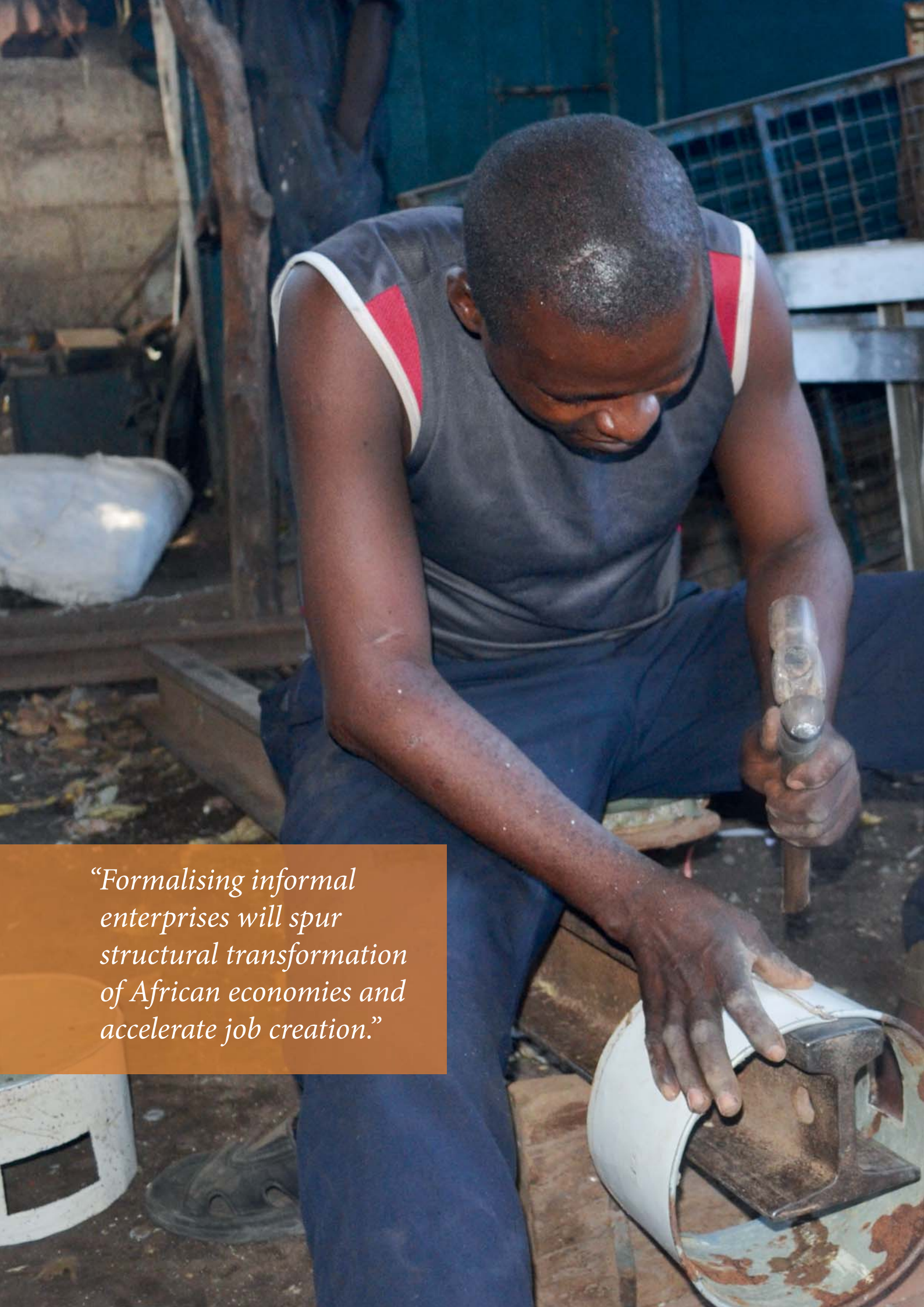
This report presents a diagnosis of the employment problem of youth in Africa, and proposes a programme of action to address this challenge. This report is intended for high level policy makers. For this reason, this report is succinct and concise. More detailed discussions and supporting data are in the two volumes compiled for the preparation of this report. A full bibliography can also be found in those volumes.

This report represents an advance from previous reports on this subject in two important respects.

First, it approaches youth employment problem not as a labour market phenomenon but as an outcome of a broad range of factors. We bring in, for example, the underdevelopment of cognitive skills in early childhood, the history and tradition of land ownership, macroeconomic fundamentals, and the political dispensation that favours short-term results, as important causes of the employment problem and low productivity in many African countries.

Second, this report draws on the latest research, in particular the rigorous evaluation of existing programmes and of the proposed innovative interventions. We emphasise the importance of objective and verifiable evidence of effectiveness in selecting and sustaining interventions. Findings from rigorous evaluations and other research underpin our discussions.

Two caveats are in order before we proceed. First, each African country is unique in its challenges of youth and jobs. We may not capture some of the unique features of individual countries because we strive to draw lessons that are common across African countries. Second, this report is a product of the contributions of numerous researchers. Views naturally differ in one or two areas among the people involved. In such cases, the discussions below present majority views while reflecting minority opinions to the greatest extent possible.



*“Formalising informal enterprises will spur structural transformation of African economies and accelerate job creation.”*

# The extent and nature of the youth employment challenge in Africa

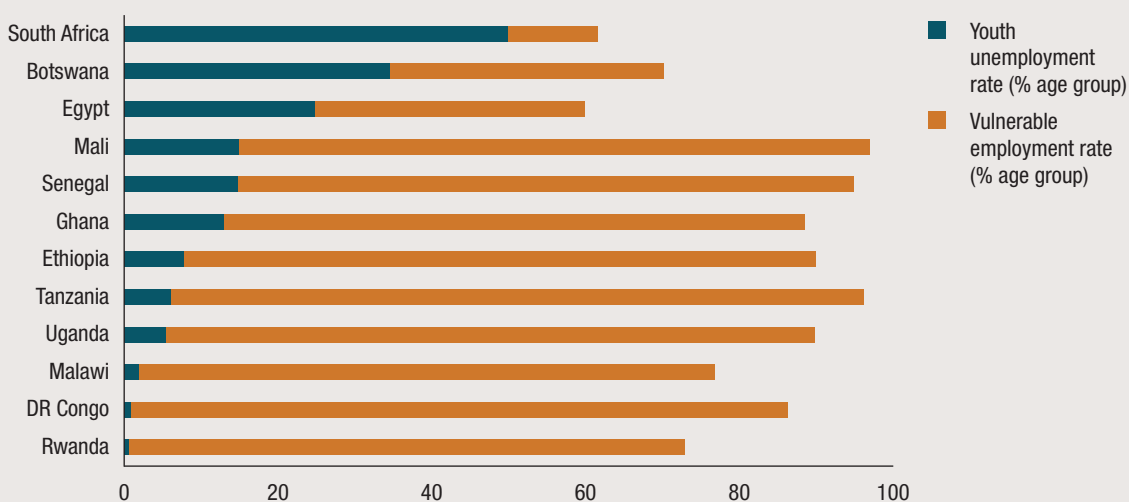
**J**oblessness among young Africans is far more pervasive and complex than commonly understood. The portrayal of youth unemployment by the standard ILO definition fundamentally understates the extent of the problem. The ILO defines a person as being unemployed if they are older than the minimum age, actively looking for and available for work, and have recently not worked for at least one hour. According to this definition, youth unemployment is estimated to be 12.8 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa and 27.1 per cent in North Africa.

**Two-thirds of young people are not gainfully employed in most African countries.** In addition to those who are “unemployed”, even more young Africans are only partially employed or discouraged to look for jobs. Yet others, the largest in number, work long hours under vulnerable conditions but earn very little: they are working but poor.

**The nature of youth employment problem is not uniform among African countries.** Formal unemployment is high in southern and northern Africa, where labour markets are well structured and formal sectors are large. Vulnerable, low-pay employment in the informal sector and smallholder agriculture is predominant in most low-income African countries. Several countries are in the middle with high unemployment and large vulnerable employment (*e.g.*, Kenya, Zambia, and Zimbabwe).

**In most African countries, 60-90% of the youth do not have a good job.**

Figure 1: Youth unemployment and vulnerable employment (selected African countries, 2004-11)



*“If children are working they don’t have time to study.”*



# Causes of the employment problem

**T**he human capital of most young Africans is underutilised, with productivity too low to earn a decent wage. More than 60 per cent of children under the age of 5 in Sub-Saharan Africa are disadvantaged, either because they are stunted, or living in poverty, or both. Most of those disadvantaged children grow to adulthood with their cognitive development weakened because of malnutrition, poor health and insufficient stimulation at home in their early childhood.

**Major progress has been achieved in increasing access to schooling; yet most children receive substandard education.** Universal primary schooling has increased enrolment but has reduced progression to higher grades. Although 50-80 per cent of children at grade 6 acquire basic literacy, only a small proportion achieve the level of literacy expected for that grade.

**Although most African countries have achieved high levels of primary school enrolment, many of these children are not learning – around 1 in 5 not even achieving the most basic levels of literacy by Grade 6.**

Figure 2: Percentage of people by highest completed level of education (population aged 15-64)

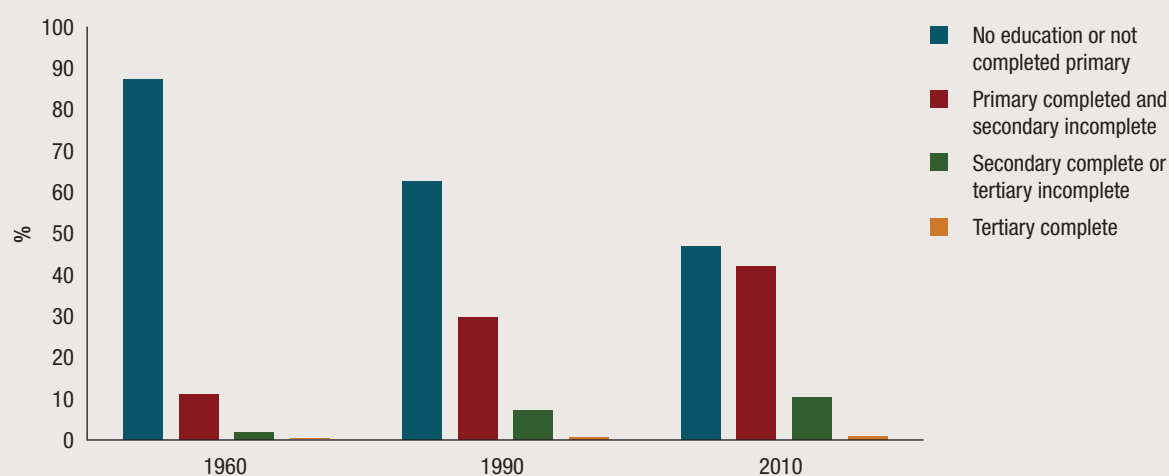
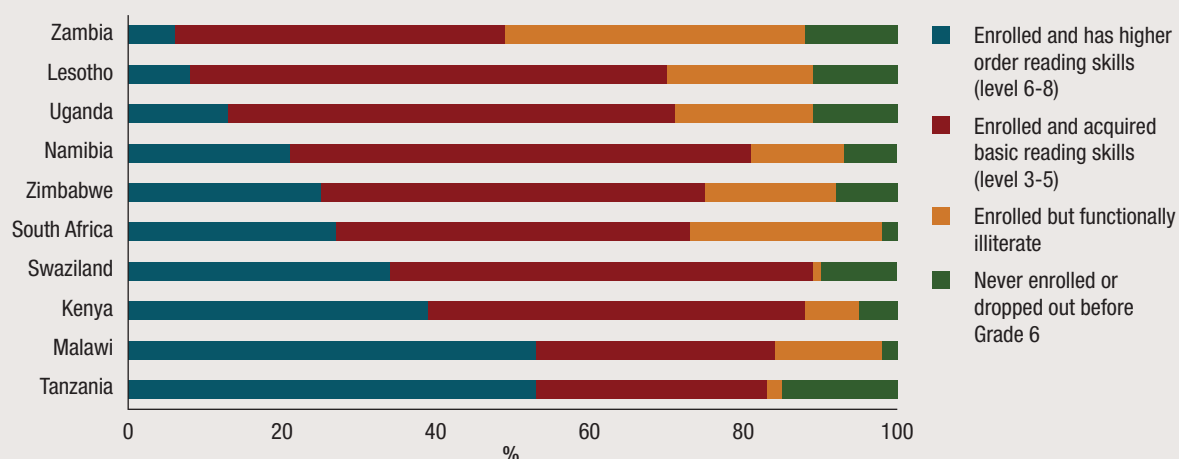


Figure 3: Literacy of Grade 6 children



## Causes of the employment problem

**Learning is made more difficult because far too many children work.** One out of five children regularly works long hours. Poverty at home and the limited availability of social safety programmes drive children to work.

**The work available for young people today is mostly in low-productivity jobs.** Except for a few countries in southern and northern Africa, jobs are predominantly in urban and rural non-farm informal sectors and smallholder agriculture. About one half of rural employment is in non-farm informal sectors.

**Informal sectors in Africa are dynamic, yet their productivity has not risen.** Low productivity is due partly to inadequate public policy and investment, including in infrastructure, legal protection, and finance. As a result of these hurdles, and inadequate organisational capabilities, informal enterprises rarely grow out of small units which remain unproductive, being operated by one or two workers largely on the basis of kinship, and specialised in narrowly defined products.

**The Green Revolution has yet to occur in Sub-Saharan Africa.** Agricultural productivity remains low in most countries. Over-cultivated land, insufficient capital, inadequate use of farm inputs, poor rural infrastructure, and limited use of science to raise yields and control weeds, have contributed to this situation.

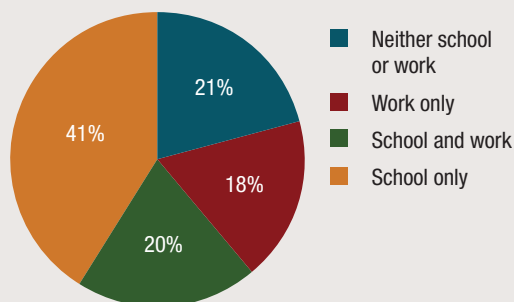
**Pastoralism has been marginalised.** There are 50 million pastoralists in Sub-Saharan Africa, constituting 8 per cent of total population. Pastoralism accounts for 10 to 40 per cent of GDP across several African countries. Livelihoods in pastoral areas have worsened as a result of climate change and desertification.

### If children are working long hours, they don't have time to study.

Figure 4: Time spent by children on school and work

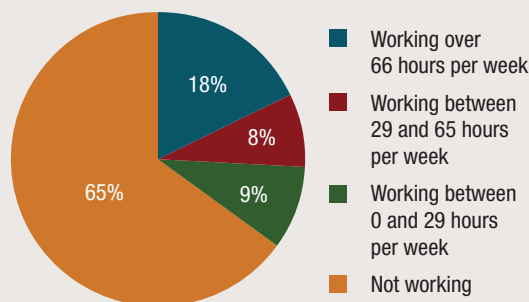
#### Sub-Saharan Africa

Time spent by children on school and work (aged 7-14)



#### Kenya

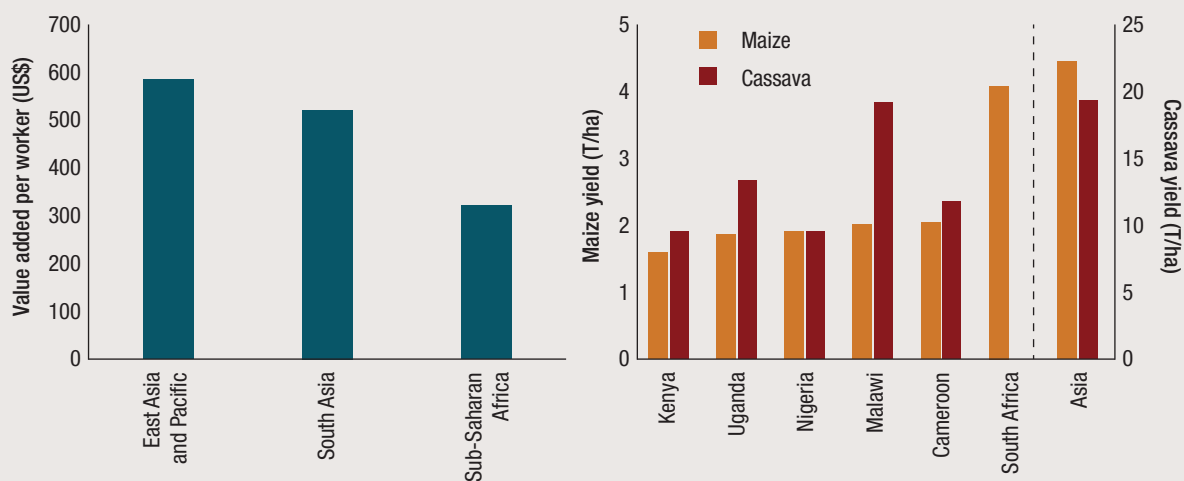
Average weekly hours worked by children (aged 5-14)





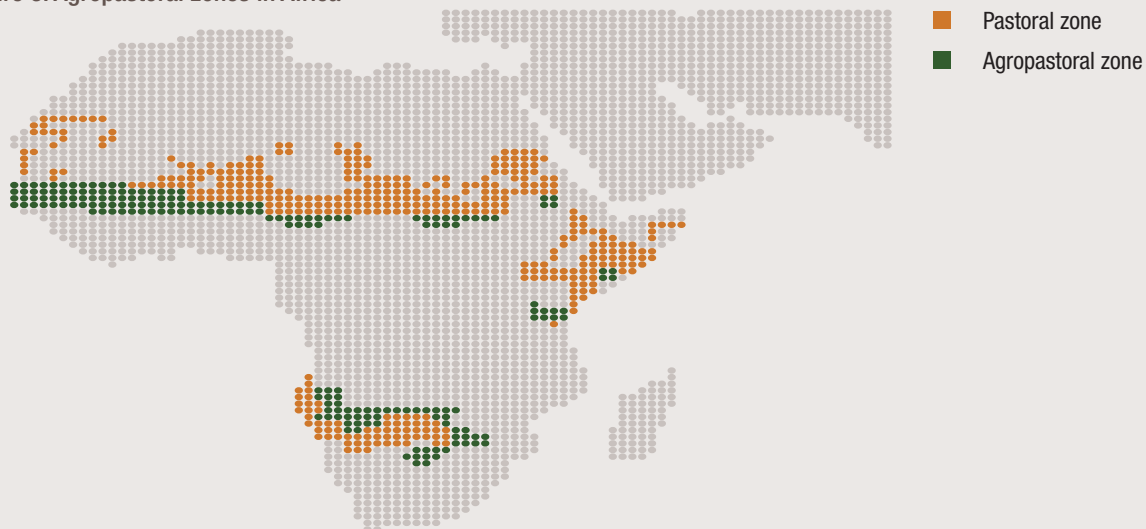
**African agricultural productivity remains low.**

Figure 5: Agricultural productivity



**Pastoralism has been marginalised.**

Figure 6: Agropastoral zones in Africa



## Causes of the employment problem

### Young Africans are caught in a poverty trap.

With an abundant supply of labour available for low-productivity jobs matched by the demand for such jobs in the informal sectors and small holder farming, a sub-optimal equilibrium persists with wages fixed at subsistence levels. Poverty – and inadequate human capital – is transferred from one generation to the next.

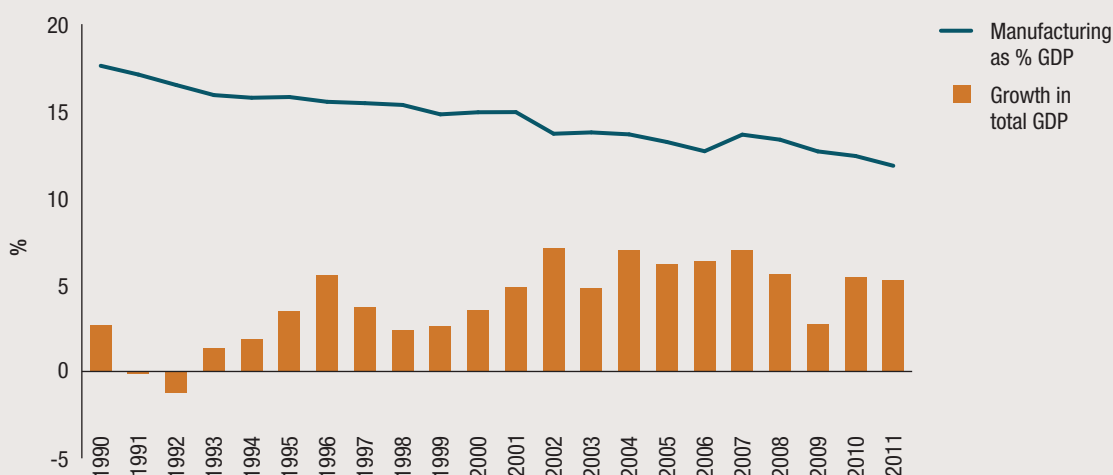
**Throughout Africa, high-quality private sector jobs are in short supply.** Africa's economic growth has been impressive, but job growth in the modern private sector has been slow. Such jobs constitute 10–15 per cent of total employment in most African countries. Growth in formal private sector jobs has not made a dent in the large pool of unemployed youth.

### Manufacturing, the backbone of job creation in Asia, has declined in Africa.

Manufacturing has fallen steadily from 16 per cent to 11 per cent of GDP over the last 20 years in Sub-Saharan Africa; the share of manufacturing has declined in more than 20 countries during the last 10 years. Although this decline partly reflects closure of inefficient state-owned manufacturing enterprises, economic growth in many countries has been driven by capital-intensive natural resource extraction. Consequently, the employment intensity of economic growth has been low. An erosion of competitiveness is at the heart of this de-industrialisation.

### Manufacturing in decline even as GDP growth accelerates.

Figure 7: Manufacturing as share of GDP, and growth in total GDP



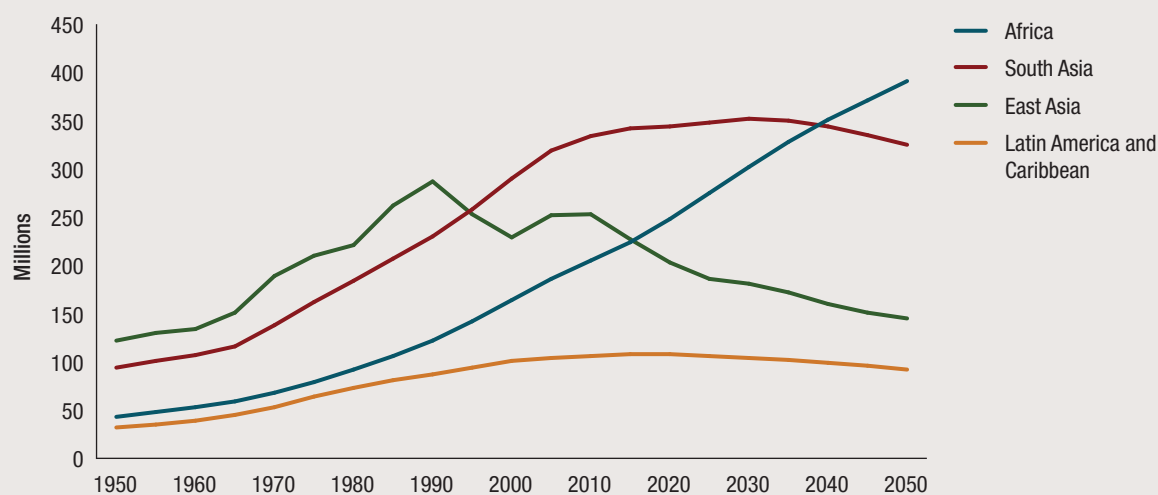
**Even for the relatively well-educated, opportunities for good jobs are few and far between.** In the countries of southern and northern Africa, typically about one-third of graduates of tertiary education are openly unemployed. In Sub-Saharan Africa, open unemployment of graduates ranges between 20 per cent (Uganda) and 46 per cent (Ghana), with some exceptionally high and low cases.

**The group of educated jobless youth constitutes a potent force of discontent.** While most young Africans languish in joblessness, the fortunate few prosper in newly found affluence. Those in the top bracket of the income distribution belong to the middle class even by international standards. Such polarisation could foment social tensions in African societies.

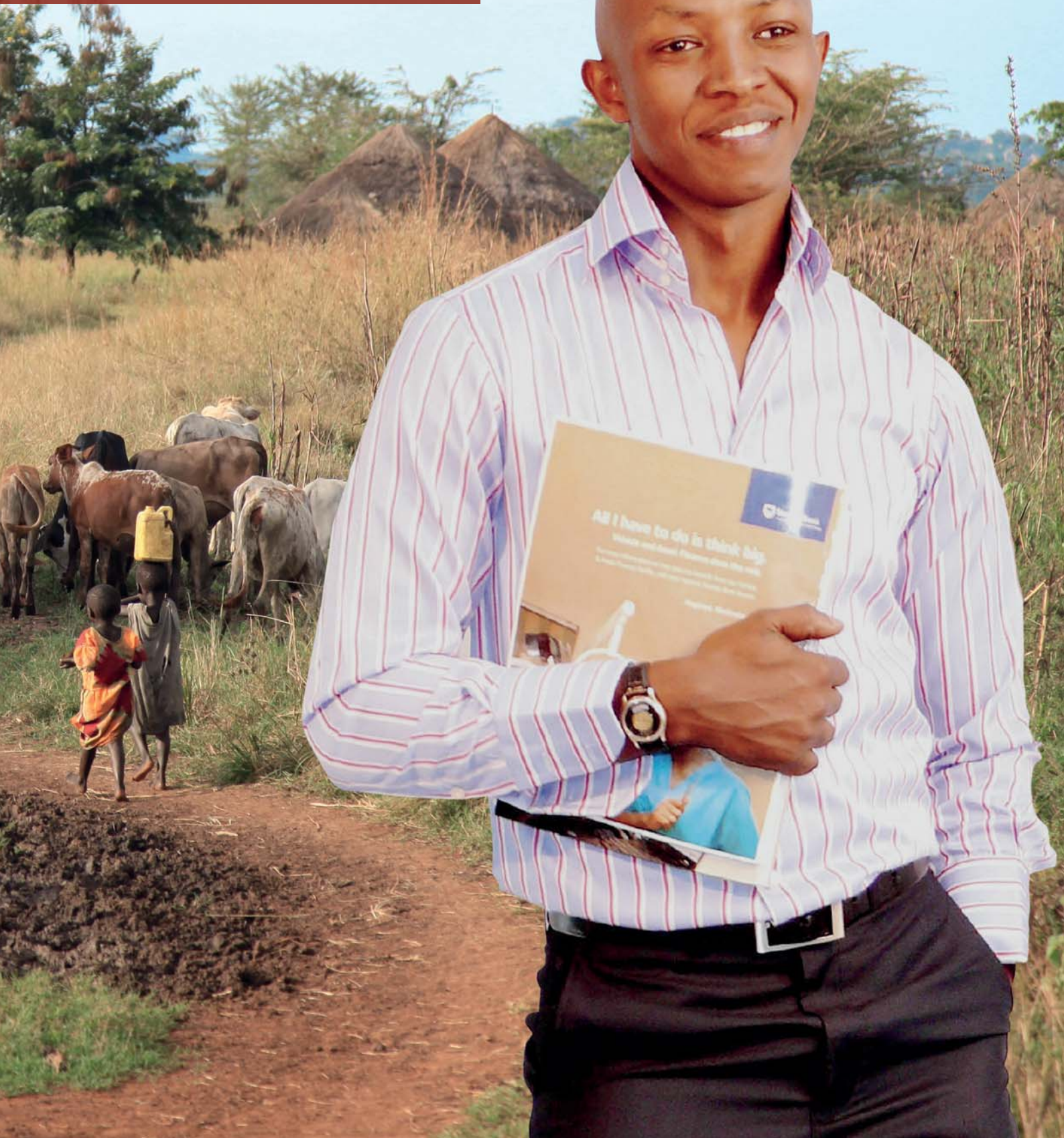
**The youth population will continue to grow rapidly during the next few decades.** The number of young people in Africa is projected to surpass that of any other continent by 2050. Turning this youth bulge into a demographic dividend will require considerable investment in education, economic and institutional reforms to raise productivity, and a reduction in the fertility rate and population growth.

**All of the net increase in world youth population through 2050 will be in Africa.**

Figure 8: Youth population (people aged 15-24)



*“It is vital to strengthen learning and raise productivity to empower the youth.”*



# Programme of action

**I**t is essential to transform African youth from a time-bomb to a driving force for growth and development. This will require a holistic approach that pulls together interventions implemented in several sectors into a comprehensive and well-coordinated programme of action: now is the time to take bold and innovative action to break the low-productivity trap in which much of the African continent finds itself.

**Policies, programmes and projects to be included in such a programme of action should be evidence-based.** Creating jobs for the youth has been a priority for governments in all African countries. Substantial fiscal resources and numerous interventions have been directed at this goal. Yet the magnitude and complexity of the problem continue to grow. Evidently policy interventions have not worked as well as intended. Evidence drawn from mix of methods of rigorous evaluation is needed to identify what works, and why.

**A programme of action should also be tailored to suit the particular circumstances of each country.** But there are several common threads that are relevant across among most African countries. We group them together under five headings.

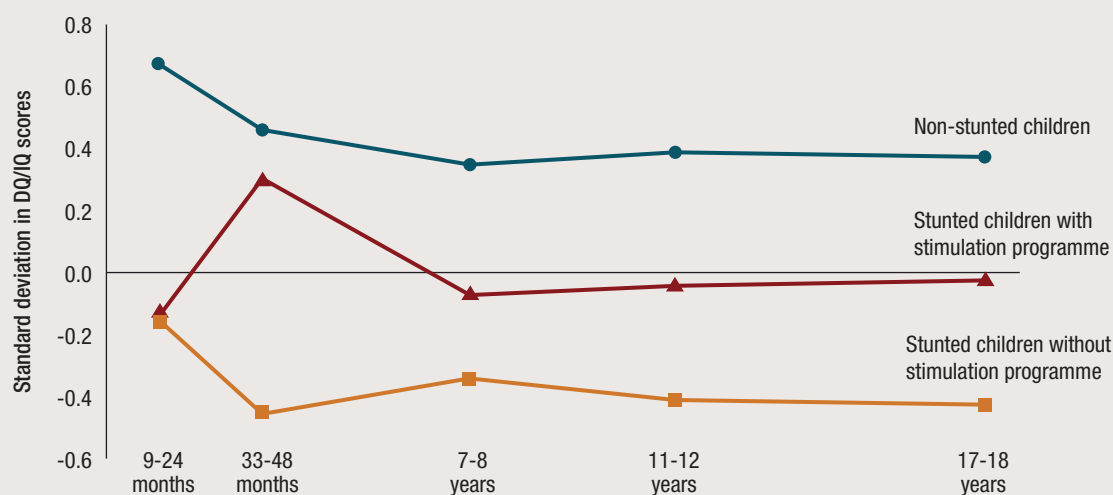
## Human capital

**Human capital accumulation must be strengthened, starting from the time of conception through young adulthood.** This will involve:

- (a) **Stimulation and nutrition programmes for young, disadvantaged children and their families** – particularly during the first 1,000 days of life – are crucially important to prevent the loss of developmental potential of large numbers of African children, and the subsequent loss of human and economic potential. Successful programmes target the poorest and most disadvantaged, focus on both the mother and child, and promote their active involvement in the programme. Further research must be conducted to identify modalities for scaling up these programmes effectively, perhaps alongside the provision of incentives to providers or cash transfers to households.

### Stimulation during infancy significantly improves cognitive development.

Figure 9: Impact of early child development programmes on IQ

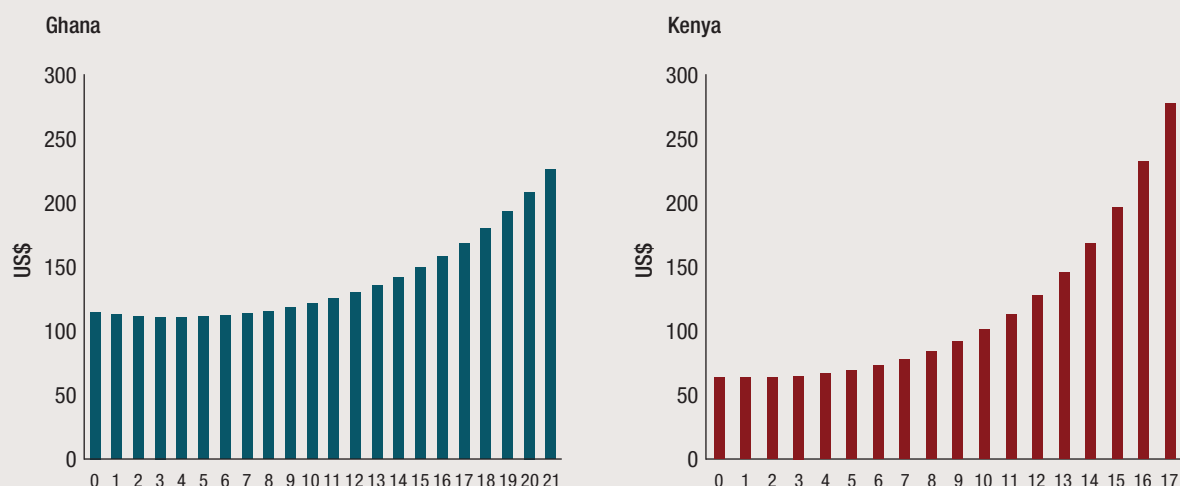


# Programme of action

- (b) **High-quality education through primary and secondary school for all children is essential.** Evidence shows that the return to education becomes substantial only with completion of secondary school. This reflects both a lack of jobs for semi-skilled youth as well as the failure of many schools to deliver learning. The goal of universal access to education through secondary school might be best achieved in phases because it is necessary to assure first that all children in school receive quality education. Moreover, providing quality education demands meaningful and comprehensive reform of the education system, including raising the quality of teaching.
- (c) **In addition, special care should be extended to disadvantaged children** so that they can all remain in school and receive as good an education as other children. Pilot projects in African several countries have demonstrated that remedial teaching by contract teachers or qualified volunteers raises levels of educational attainment of children who were lagging behind.
- (d) **An emphasis on skill development in secondary and tertiary education, and the expansion of privately-led vocational schools must be adopted to improve youth employability.** It is vital to make training responsive to demand for labour by firms. In some countries, university education is geared more to public service employment than to opportunities in the private sector. Vocational training should be accredited. A pilot programme has shown that vocational education vouchers to pay for tuition at a school that students choose – either private or public institutions – are effective in improving prospects of students being employed in private companies after graduation.

## Returns to education begin to rise substantially only after completion of secondary school.

Figure 10: Returns to education (wages in US\$ per month by years of schooling)

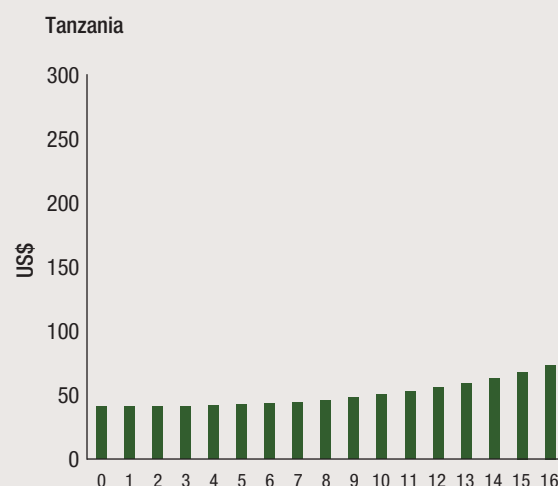
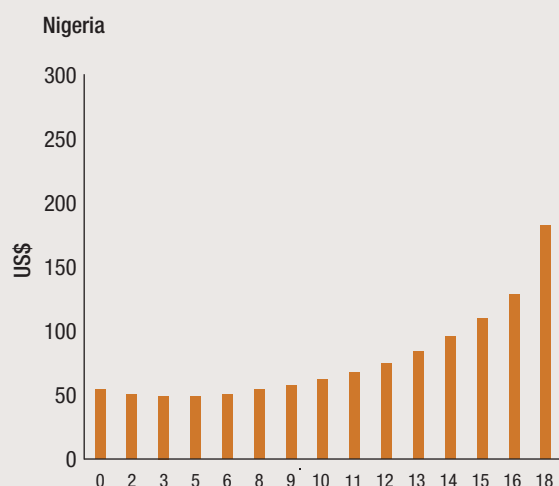


- (e) **Promotion of science and technology.** There should be a shift in emphasis from quantity to quality in university and post-university education. Once properly targeted, universities should be well funded and be merit-based. A high-calibre mathematics, science and engineering stream from primary school through university, extending to centres of excellence devoted to advanced research, could be established to create a cadre of young Africans who are trained in science and technology. Evidence shows that educational attainment in mathematics and science is particularly low throughout the school system.
- (f) **Investment in the health of young adults.** African youth face high rates of illness. For example, in Kenya, a survey showed that 22 per cent of young people had been either ill or injured during the prior four weeks. HIV and AIDS typically have the highest prevalence rates among young adults. A healthy body – and adequate health care – are the *sine qua non* of human capital.

To develop the agenda of interventions to support human capital accumulation by African youth, it will be important to build on the evidence from the initiatives that rigorous evaluation has shown to be effective, including:

- (i) conditional or unconditional cash transfers to mothers from the time of conception through infancy, or to parents with primary and secondary school-age children;
- (ii) stimulation and nutrition programmes from birth through the first 1,000 days;
- (iii) remedial education and free school meals, particularly for disadvantaged primary school children;
- (iv) education vouchers for post-secondary and vocational training.

These initiatives have generally been small-scale. To make them relevant means ensuring that such initiatives can be scaled-up successfully as programmes of public policy interventions.



# Programme of action

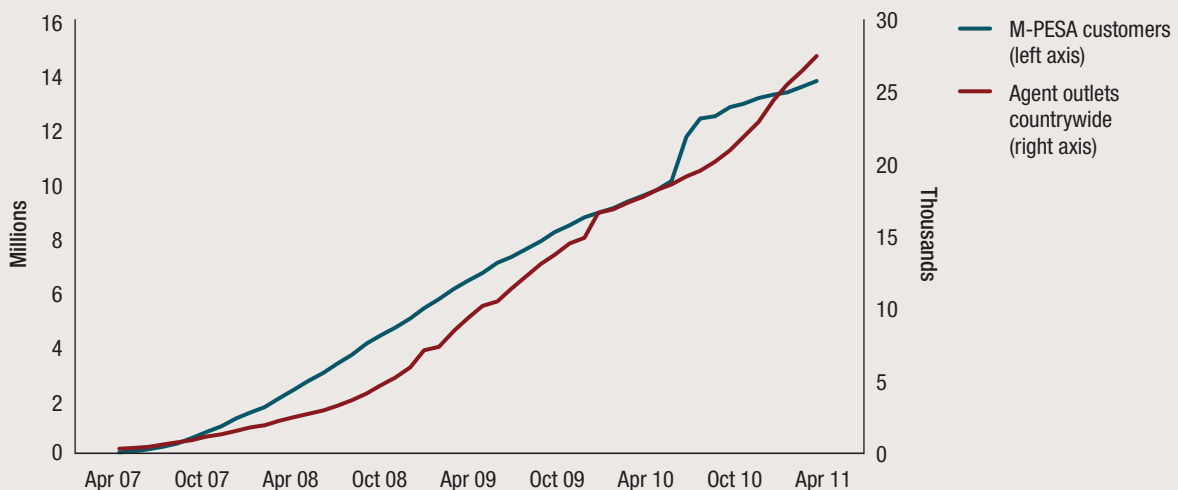
## Economic transformation

**Transformation to a high-productivity economy is needed to create a large enough number of high quality jobs.** Pro-job economic strategies will involve:

- (a) **Getting the macroeconomic fundamentals right.** Macroeconomic stability is important to encourage domestic savings, to promote investment, and to attract foreign investment as well. A competitive exchange rate should be maintained. Protectionism in the name of employment creation must be avoided.
- (b) **Strengthening productivity and enhancing competitiveness.** This can be achieved by reducing the cost of doing business: by improving roads, ports and other transport and communications networks, reducing high energy costs (including development of renewable energy), and sharply improving the environment for domestic and foreign investment. Increased FDI can bring with it the capabilities needed to create jobs at scale and better integration with international industrial value-chains.

**M-Pesa shows how fast the costs of doing business could fall.**

Figure 11: Change in the number of M-Pesa (Mobile-money) customers and agent outlets in Kenya

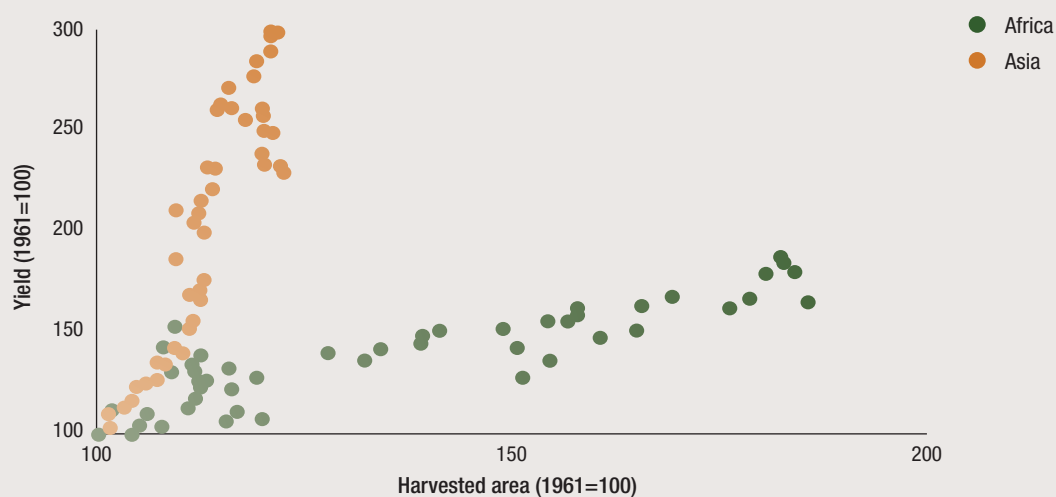




- (c) **Ensuring that investment in natural resources, including oil, gas, land and renewable energy, also cultivates supplier capabilities, skills, and jobs**, including the competitive development of the whole value-chain – from natural resources to finished products – that safeguards economic viability.
- (d) **Raising agricultural productivity.** Priorities include improving rural infrastructure (electricity, roads, and water), reducing post-harvest losses, applying science and technology to improve yields, pursuing land reform, and extending micro-credit facilities. Raising productivity in smallholder agriculture will help transform low-quality subsistence jobs into higher-quality jobs.
- (e) **Embracing, promoting and investing in the urban and rural non-farm informal sectors.** Informal enterprises are linked vertically with the formal sector in the value chain. Formalisation of informal enterprises will provide an impetus spurring the structural transformation of African economies and job creation. Even if formal sector employment grows rapidly, it will do so from such a small base that it is unlikely to absorb all the next generation of entrants to the workforce. Specific interventions include: infrastructure in informal settlements to improve business productivity; legalisation; and micro-credit facilities. In addition, formalisation should be supported by innovative interventions to develop the business and management skills that motivate and enable informal enterprises to grow into bigger formal enterprises.

### The huge increase in agricultural yield spurred structural transformation in Asia.

Figure 12: Agricultural yield and harvested area



# Programme of action

*“Empowering girls is vital for a productive labour force and inclusive growth.”*

## Labour market and job creation

### Labour market performance must improve.

In countries with active formal labour markets, the costs and benefits of collective bargaining agreements, minimum wages and other regulatory requirements should be evaluated objectively and thoroughly. The findings of such evaluations should be publicised and should be debated openly. Key elements of labour market reforms might entail less restrictive labour regulations (e.g., making hiring and firing of employees easier) or more effective labour regulations to formalise segments of the informal sector. In countries where public sector unions maintain collective bargaining and other practices that spill over into the wider labour market, such as by raising reservation wages, similar reforms are needed. Finally, in countries where informal jobs are predominant, basic regulations, such as for minimum safe working conditions, need to be more effective.

Other actions include:

- (i) **facilitating job search**, through establishing more public recruitment centres and encouraging advertisement of job vacancies via the internet, by tackling situations of asymmetric information and mismatch between skills demanded and those supplied; subsidies to help meet the costs of transport could be productive in countries where people live a long way from the labour market because of historical, or other reasons;
- (ii) **keeping public sector wages in check**, especially by not setting reservation wages that are too high; and
- (iii) **making recruitment processes more transparent** and less personal in both public and private sectors to improve efficiency and, in some countries, to contain influences of ethnic alliances.

African governments have implemented numerous interventions to ease the pressure of unemployment, including government-administered public works programmes, direct provisions of wage subsidies, preferential treatment in public procurement, credit programmes for youth enterprises, and other affirmative actions. Reviews of these interventions find mixed results, often due to capacity constraints and other administrative limitations.

It is useful to consider opportunities for training in private enterprises, including:

- (i) **subsidised internship and other on-the-job training programmes** run by select private companies in partnership with the government;
- (ii) **reforming public works programmes**, for example by outsourcing to the private sector, and casting them as opportunities for on-the-job training, not just a hand-out; and
- (iii) **micro-franchise programmes**, combined with management skills training, to nurture informal sector enterprises in partnership with private companies with retail franchise networks.



## Gender gap

It is most important to **eradicate gender gaps**. Empowering young women is vital to secure a productive labour force and inclusive growth. Actions include:

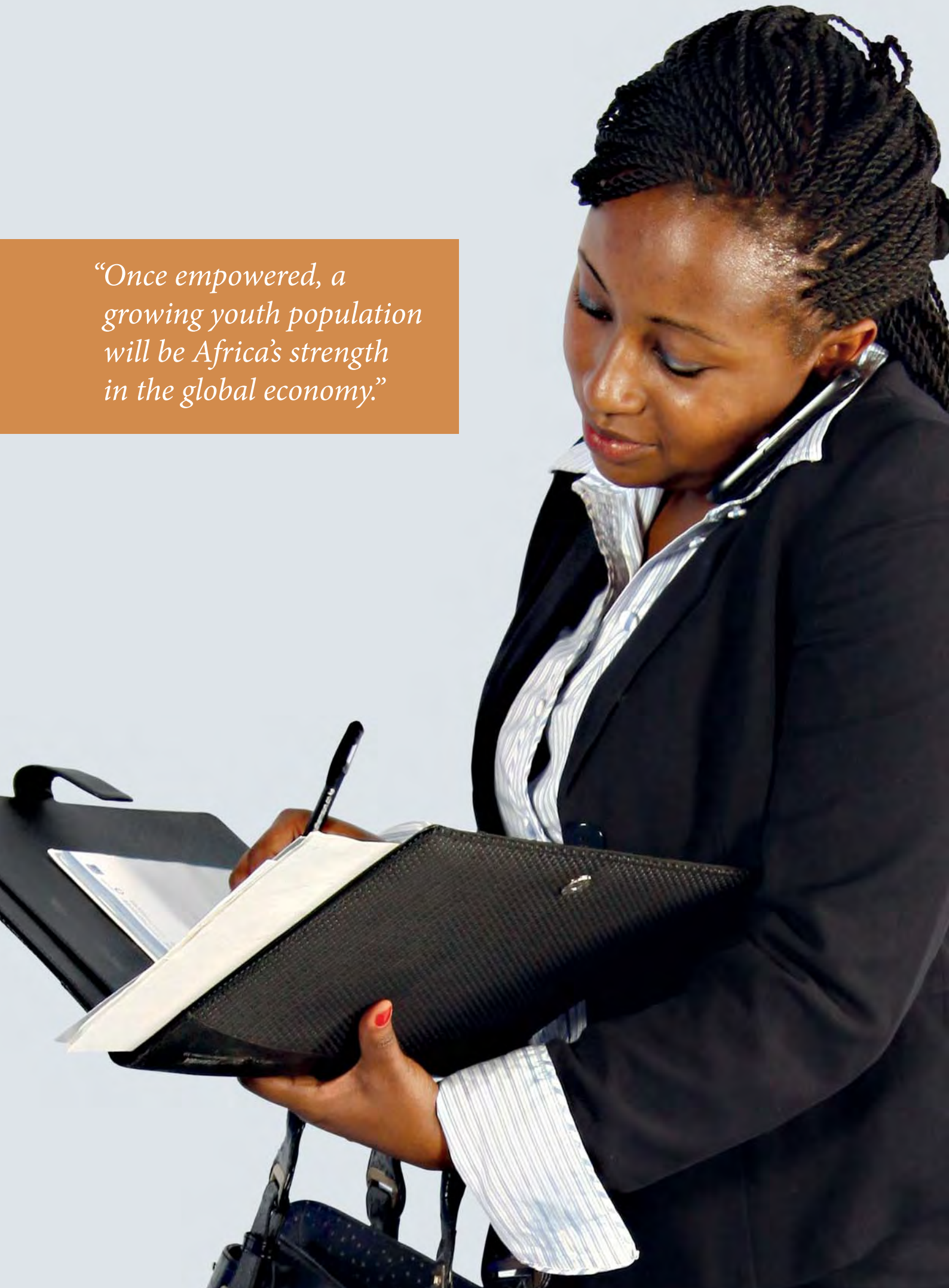
- (i) ensuring that girls stay in school, preventing early marriages, and removing disincentives to sending girls to school (*e.g.*, purchase of uniforms);
- (ii) implementing skills training that increases employment and earnings for young women;
- (iii) barring differential earnings between men and women for the same jobs, and eliminating gender discrimination in work places; and
- (iv) eliminating differential access to fertiliser, seed or financial capital that occurs because of gender discrimination.

## Evaluation and coordination

**It is also imperative that each intervention in the programme of action be designed for performance evaluation.** The effectiveness of the programme should be monitored and evaluated rigorously using experimental or other science-based approaches over time. It is particularly important that promising programmes be evaluated in terms of whether they can go to scale as part of public policy and subsequently remain effective.

In Africa, programmes that address youth under-employment problems are frequently funded by development partners and donor agencies. There is a consequent need to design **mechanisms for the effective coordination** of such programmes by donors, governments, beneficiaries, and non-governmental organisations through which assistance is also channelled.

*“Once empowered, a growing youth population will be Africa’s strength in the global economy.”*



# Conclusion

Empowering youth by enabling them to build their human capital, and providing them with opportunities for quality jobs, is a critical challenge that must be addressed by governments across Africa. Equally important is to stimulate demand for a quality workforce and create high quality jobs through structural transformation. This could be accompanied by programmes to unleash the creative potential of youth entrepreneurs. African governments are therefore encouraged to consolidate existing policies and interventions, and to introduce new measures that make up a comprehensive and well-coordinated programme of action.

It is advisable that governments be selective in identifying interventions for the programme of action. Such interventions should be limited to those that have proven to be effective or which have a high probability of being effective, and which can go to scale as public policy. Moreover, selected interventions should address all the areas of highest priority, and be closely coordinated with each other.

If a programme of action is to bear fruit, it must be bold, and must most likely include some measures which will involve trade-offs between vested interests (*e.g.*, labour market regulations and land reforms). National consensus and strong political will are therefore indispensable. Strong leadership is necessary to harness the desired national consensus and to marshal the requisite political will.

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# Notes and sources

## Notes

**Page 9:** “Youth unemployment is estimated to be 12.8 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa and 27.1 per cent in North Africa.” Source: Baah-Boateng (forthcoming).

**Page 11:** “More than 60 per cent of children under the age of 5 in Sub-Saharan Africa are disadvantaged, either because they are stunted or living in poverty, or both.” Source: Grantham-McGregor et al. (2007).

**Page 11:** “Although 50-80 per cent of children at grade 6 acquire basic literacy, only a small proportion achieve a level of literacy expected at that grade.” Source: Spaul and Taylor (2012).

**Page 12:** “There are 50 million pastoralists in Sub-Saharan Africa, constituting 8 per cent of total population. Pastoralism accounts for 10 to 40 per cent of GDP across several African counties. Source: Mude (forthcoming).

**Page 14:** “Manufacturing has fallen steadily from 16 per cent to 11 per cent of GDP over the last 20 years in Sub-Saharan Africa. Source: World Development Indicators 2012.

**Page 15:** “In Sub-Saharan Africa, open unemployment of graduates ranges between 20 per cent (Uganda) and Ghana (46 per cent)” Source: Key indicators of the Labour Market (ILO).

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## Figures

**Fig 1:** Youth unemployment and vulnerable employment. Source: Key indicators of the Labour Market (ILO).

**Fig 2:** Percentage of people by highest completed level of education. Source: Barro and Lee (2010).

**Fig 3:** Literacy of Grade 6 children. Source: Spaul and Taylor (2012).

**Fig 4:** Time spent by children on school and work. Sources: UNICEF ([http://www.childinfo.org/labour\\_education.html](http://www.childinfo.org/labour_education.html)), and 2009 Kenya population and housing census.

**Fig 5:** Agricultural productivity. Sources: World Development Indicators 2012, and FAOStat, 2013.

**Fig 6:** Agropastoral zones in Africa. Source: Rass 2006.

**Fig 7:** Manufacturing as share of GDP, and growth in total GDP. Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators, and IMF World Economic Outlook database.

**Fig 8:** Youth population. Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/index.htm> For definition of variables, check the link Glossary of Demographic Terms. Medium variant.

**Fig 9:** Impact of early child development programmes on IQ. Source: Walker et al (2005). Notes: DQ/IQ scores of stunted and nonstunted Jamaican children from age 9-24 months through 17-18 years, showing long-term deficits associated with stunting and the sustained benefits to stunted children who received a home-visiting program providing early childhood stimulation.

**Fig 10:** Returns to education. Teal (2011).

**Fig 11:** Change in the number of M-Pesa (Mobile-money) customers and agent outlets in Kenya. Source: Matsumoto (forthcoming), data from Safaricom.

**Fig 12:** Agricultural yield and harvested area. Source: FAOstat.

# Empowering Young Africans to Live Their Dreams

Youth is an asset of Africa. Young Africans are dynamic, vibrant, resilient and entrepreneurial. The African youth population is projected to grow rapidly. An empowered youth population will be Africa's strength in an aging world economy.

African governments and the international community must invest in enhancing the human capital of young Africans in terms of nutrition, health, and education.

Economic transformation must raise productivity, with better management of natural resources so that economic growth will create jobs. Growth should also better embrace disadvantaged people, including pastoralists and women.

It is necessary to alleviate the burden of youth struggling without a decent job, because building human capital and transforming the economy will take time. This effort will necessitate bolder interventions specifically designed to raise productivity and the quality of work in informal sectors and small-holder agriculture.

Empowering young Africans to live their dreams is the path to achieving Africa's potential. The dynamism of young Africans will drive economic and social transformation for the next generation.



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