

Second Committee Side Event

Title: *"Sustainable Strategies for Eradicating Poverty through Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship"*

Date: 19 October 2016

Background:

Today's world has the largest generation of youth in history. Their needs and potential are increasingly recognized in the international community and in many national development plans. Young people hold the key to society's current and future advancement, yet too often they face barriers to their personal progress. Globally, more than 73 million young people are unemployed, making youth three times more likely than adults to be jobless. Agenda 2030 makes clear that it can only be achieved if no one is left behind and several sustainable development goals specific target young people. It is therefore imperative that the international community pay specific attention to the youth with viable strategies and programmes for their inclusion. Two primary avenues for youth advancement are through decent work in formal employment or through entrepreneurship.

The challenges of formal employment

The transition from youth to adulthood is a crucial stage in which young people often take essential step towards economic independence. This role has the potential to revitalize the economy, advance human development, and influence family formation. Hence, not facilitating successful labour market transitions can lead to a lost generation of youth. However, a distinction must be made between transitioning into a decent job rather than any job, so the quality of employment attained by youth is very important.

Globally, the average length of time it takes for a young person to get their first job is 7.2 months. However, getting a first job does not mean having completed the transition to work. Indeed, a comparative ILO study in 21 countries finds that it takes an average of 19.3 months for the labour market transition to be completed.

The challenges of entrepreneurship

And as transition to formal employment becomes longer and more complex many youth are taking the entrepreneurial route to employment. Poor young people, especially in developing countries, are sometimes pushed into entrepreneurship out of necessity, as a way to generate an income. The desire to become an entrepreneur is also a popular notion among youth. A survey of 7,800 youth from 29 countries found that 70 per cent would like to work independently at some point in their life. Despite this, there are many barriers to entrepreneurship which hinders the ability of youth to participate in this process. This is important to analyse separately from formal employment because the manner in which entrepreneurs interact with the labour market and the issues they face differ greatly.

The purpose of side event

As the focal point for youth and social development, DSPD is organising this side-event to provide stakeholders with the space to examine initiatives that have worked in youth employment and

entrepreneurship and share lessons that can be adapted and adopted by all stakeholders. The side event will also examine employment policies and skills development programmes that can accelerate the transition for youth to decent work. The outcomes will provide input to the Commission for Social Development, whose theme for 2016-2017 is “Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all.”

Young people are understandably searching for the financial security, personal satisfaction and sense of purpose that come from meaningful employment. The visionary 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for substantially increasing the number of youth with the skills they need for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Guiding questions:

1. What actions can governments take to facilitate smooth transition of youth to decent work?
2. Who typically becomes a youth entrepreneur;
3. What are the benefits of entrepreneurship;
4. What challenges do young entrepreneurs face?

Moderator:

Ms Daniela Bas, Director, Division of Social Policy and Development, UN DESA

Speakers

1. Ms. Beatrice Ayuru, youth entrepreneur from Lira, Uganda. TBC

<http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1126>

With the support of UNCTAD, she has started a successful business. The program is in an area where many people are being left behind, in a challenging environment, and is a successful model that can be replicated.

2. Dr. Colin Tukuitonga, Director-General, Pacific Community. Noumea, New Caledonia.

<http://www.spc.int/>

The Pacific Community has recently adopted a far-reaching program for youth development endorsed by governments in the region. With many far-flung Islands, this region faces several challenges and can benefit from

3. An American Entrepreneur to highlight the different challenges of entrepreneurship in a developed country context (TBC)
4. Mr Ibrahim Ibrahim Issifi Sadou, Minister of Youth, Niger
5. Lead discussant : Mr Juan Somavia, expert and former director of ILO (TBC)