YOUTH AND POVERTY IN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

- Africa is the most youth continent
- Population projected to grow
Understanding ‘youth’ in Africa

- Different definitions
- Depends on dimensions
Background to the Socio-economic Situation of African Youth

- In the 1970s and 1980s, youth did not pose a social problem.
- Since the mid-1970s, concerns have been rising over the livelihood problems facing youth.
The Social and Demographic Significance of Youth

- Youth aged 15-24 a noticeable segment
- 13.7% in developed countries
- 20.8% in Africa
- Marked difference between Northern Africa and SSA
- SSA:
  1. Central– 2005, 20.2% (22.1m)
  2. Eastern – 2005, 21.1%(38.4m)
  3. Southern –2005, 20.7% (11.2m)
  4. Western—2005, 20.7% (54.4m)
Poverty among African Youth

The Poverty Situation in Africa

- Poverty higher than in other regions
- Chronic and rising
- 46% less than a $1 per day
- Poverty rising despite growth
- Africa worse than at independence
Poverty among youth

• Estimates are difficult
• Difficult to understand youth poverty:
  1. Chronic poverty
  2. Life-cycle poverty
  3. Inter-generational poverty

• Chronic poverty
• Child deprivations
Causes of youth poverty

- Macro level
- Meso level
- Micro level
How African youth respond to poverty

• Casual forms work
  1. Various forms of piece-work
  2. Friendship networks
  3. Intra-household resource pooling
  4. Kinship solidarity

• Non-casual forms of work
  1. Gangsters
  2. Criminals
  3. Scavengers
  4. Beggars
  5. Sex workers
  6. ‘Professional mourners’
  7. Trickesters
Negative Outcomes among Poor Youth

- **Negative outcomes**
  1. Risky behaviours
  2. Substance and abuse abuse
  3. Risk of HIV/AIDS infection
  4. Crime
  5. Organised violence
  6. Protests
  7. Rebellions

- **Youth transition and the Pinnockian Rites among Youth**
The Institutional Response

- Types of Institutional interventions
  1. Training
  2. Employment and livelihood
  3. Micro-finance schemes
  4. Health and HIV/AIDS
  5. ICT
  6. Environmental
Weaknesses

- Few
- Isolated
- Limited intake and coverage
- Poor coordination
- Poor institutional networking
- Minimal impact
- An ‘unaccompanied livelihood development framework’
An Unaccompanied Livelihood Development Framework

Unaccompanied livelihood development:
- Adults professional workers
- Sector structures and process
- Adolescents & young people
- Institutions

Accompanied livelihood development:
- Adults professional workers
- Adolescents & young people
- Institutions
- Sector structures, processes
Successful Programmes

- Training programmes
- Employment and livelihood
- Micro-finance
- Health and HIV/AIDS
- ICT
- Environment
Best Practices

- High level of government commitment
- Availability of committed youth development workers and other youth-related NGOs
- Strong management systems
- Adequate funding for youth programmes
- Involvement of youth in programme design
- Focused programme development which addresses real needs
- Institutionalisation of youth programmes
- Clear and effective implementation strategy
- Combing youth training with credit
- Linking youth training programmes BDS
- Reliance on local human and physical resources