

LEARN

**YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP:
AN ANNOTATED
BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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ACRONYMS

ALMP – Active Labour Market Programme

BFP – Business Fights Poverty

CHRO – Chief Human Resources Officers

EFLRI – Entrepreneurial Finance Lab Research Initiative

HIC – High Income Countries

ICT – Information and Communications Technology

IFAD – International Fund for Agricultural Development

ILO – International Labour Organization

LEIG – Livelihoods, Employment, and Income Generation

LMIC – Low and Middle-Income Countries

MENA – Middle East and North Africa

MSME – Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

NEET – Young Person “Not In Education, Employment, or Training”

Nini – ‘Ni estudia ni trabaja’ Spanish term for ‘neither work nor study (equivalent to NEET)

OECD DAC – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee

RMG – Ready-Made Garment sector

SIDA – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

SME – Small Medium Enterprise

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

TVET – Technical and Vocational Education and Training

TVSD – Technical and Vocational Skills Development

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO – The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

VC – Venture Capitalist

VSLA – Village Savings and Loan

WEF – World Economic Forum

YYC – Yes Youth Can

SUMMARY

This Annotated Bibliography provides insights from research¹ to support programme dialogue and development. It draws on evidence from low and middle-income countries (LMICs) to support the next steps in the development of a comprehensive theoretical frame for Plan International on how to promote and support youth employment and entrepreneurship. The main objectives are to: address knowledge gaps, identify tools and resources for programming; and inform Plan International's research agenda.

The research is centred upon three areas of enquiry:

- 1 Interventions to increase employment opportunities,
- 2 Equipping young people with skills for a digital age, and
- 3 Improving policy to increase opportunities and experience of employment.

A breadth of case studies and approaches to the youth employment, enterprise and entrepreneurship challenges were sought. The case studies are drawn from a range of LMICs in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Where appropriate the research also draws on high-income countries (HICs), particularly where good practice and policy has been translated to the contexts of LMICs. While some of the reports presented will be more relevant to certain initiatives than others, taken together they help advance the evidence base for designing, implementing, and evaluating youth employment and entrepreneurship programming.

A range of information sources were accessed including academic, peer-reviewed sources covering underlying theory and paradigm shifts, whilst grey literature (such as independent programme impact evaluations and Plan International's own publications) often uncovers the practical applications of theory and evidence applied to employment and entrepreneurship programming.

The research has sought to be current with and therefore predominantly includes literature from the last decade. As the changing nature of how employment and entrepreneurship is used for development, this paper sought to uncover and explain the programmes implemented and the approaches adopted. Reference is made to selected, older and seminal pieces of research where authors have remained influential and the paper highly cited.

For reference the research regards 'youth', as defined by the UN², the period from 15 to 25 years, and could be also understood as the period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence.

1 We also recognise that Plan International's staff have reviewed this Annotated Bibliography and provided insights and suggestions that have assisted in steering this research.

2 The UN's definition of youth can be found here <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE LITERATURE CONSIDERING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

① Interventions which increase employment opportunities

- **Technical and Vocational Education and Training** that combine work experience and (continuing) general education are regarded as favourable, facilitating involvement of the private sector shows promising returns. **Work placements** and related **apprenticeships** should be further explored noting that examples often come from HICs. When such approaches are placed in to competence based frameworks they become powerful career path development tools.
- **Soft skills are important** but is hampered by a lack of comparability in the constructs, definitions, and measures used to assess youth and monitor progress so it is difficult to know which are optimal, particularly so for youth employment and entrepreneurship whereby soft skill training is typically combined with vocational or technical training and their effect alone cannot be measured. Moving forward it would be wise to adopt some of the more recent definitions/approaches so as to be as evidence based as possible and to further contribute to the knowledge base³.
- There is a mismatch between the skills and aptitudes built in education and what businesses require, **building multi- and cross-sectoral engagement is therefore critical** for success in enterprise and employment programming.
- **Support in the form of group formation** (formal and informal), creates sustainability and enhanced programming effectiveness when implemented alongside skills development/training and finance interventions. This also has the potential for addressing gender-based issues, i.e. gender based violence, whereby women's support groups can be of great assistance.

Research gaps and opportunities for further research

- Further research around aspects of programming at scale is required. Of the programmes researched scale remains a missing element of evaluation. Projects tend to be successful but within defined remits and lack the capability to be scaled to national level. This is particularly the case for **private sector partnerships in the entrepreneurship ecosystem** that help grow women-owned businesses grow from small scale, informal, businesses through to larger, formalised businesses.
- Barriers to **marginalised groups' participation in employment/entrepreneurship initiatives exist**, and may be linked to discussions around financing, investment and political will however whilst clear attention is paid to gender, class and the rural-urban divide, less emphasis is given to geographic isolation and issues of ethnicity.

② Equipping young people with skills for a digital age

- A **gender digital divide is starkly apparent** and efforts to overcome these are disparate, hindered by limited access to ICT tools and connectivity and difficulty in building lasting women's networks. However women's employment opportunities increase as digital fluency increases so represents a programming opportunity for enhancing women's status.

3 Consider refereeing to/adopting the terminology and definitions presented in Lippman, L. H., Ryberg, R., Carney, R., & Moore, K. A. (2015). Workforce connections. Key "Soft Skills" that foster youth workforce success: Toward a consensus across fields. Bethesda, MA: Child Trends

- ICT programmes aimed at women are generally nascent, operating on a small to medium scale and could **better serve female entrepreneurs with greater coordination**. Cooperation and coordination across the ICT and entrepreneurship ecosystem through **multi-stakeholder partnerships** is needed to help grow women-owned businesses. ICT programmes that foster the growth of women-owned businesses have tremendous potential to mitigate systemic barriers.
- From the primary level onward, **education systems should lay the foundation for digital skills** and lifelong learning for all learners, given the various gender barriers that exist, education policies should also emphasise digital literacy skills for girls and women and support their study of STEM subjects in inclusive and gender-neutral environments as early as possible.
- **Educational systems are critical** to creating a well-prepared workforce that meets the needs of business. However, a persistent structural skills gap highlights a misalignment between the preparation provided by education systems and the ever-changing needs of employment markets, particularly in ICT. Better collaboration and coordination between the two is required particularly given that employers across sub-Saharan Africa identify inadequately skilled workforces as a major constraint to their businesses.

Research gaps and opportunities for further research

- Further research around **young people's perceptions of digital skills**, and the extent to which they are demanding more access to learning and employment in the digital and technology fields is required. Whilst it is clear that they have interest and a desire to engage in ICT the degree to which they are demanding these is less researched, understood and documented.

③ Improving policy to increase opportunities and experience of employment

- **Assessments of the barriers to young women's labour force participation should be undertaken**, and the strengths and weaknesses of youth and labour organisations evaluated prior to interventions. Specifically, assessments of labour market conditions, understanding life circumstances and employer attitudes as well as the existing institutional infrastructure are key to effective programme design.
- **Successful youth skills development programmes start on the demand side**, identifying where current and future jobs for young people are, followed by research and analysis that includes the voice of young people to reveal what is preventing them from taking up those opportunities.
- **Women remain disadvantaged in both the worlds of work and learning** leading to a large proportion of women being self-employed in subsistence and precarious employment, often obliged to take seasonal or low-skilled jobs, making them vulnerable to poor working conditions and labour standards. Emphasis should continue to be placed on women's active participation in social dialogue across the tripartite structure of government, employers and workers.
- **Private sector companies have taken steps to ensure safe working** conditions to prevent the exploitation, discrimination and harassment of young women. A range of interventions have been applied including raising the skill levels of women in factories and supporting the right of free association. Evolving, technological innovations stand to advance this field further.
- **Focus on partnerships from the initial stages of programme development** to ensure policy is fed by practice, and sustainable impact is enhanced by supporting policy. Policy has tended to be the focus of development in formal employment, with **small enterprise being left aside**.

Research gaps and opportunities for further research

- **Very little empirical research exists on how labour markets work in low-income country contexts**, particularly where missing and imperfect markets may be the norm. Understanding the precise barriers and blockages to women's mobility to better jobs or transition to higher value added enterprises and how these barriers and blockages vary according to cultural contexts or differently endowed economies and policy environments is an opportunity for research.

Having outlined the recommendations and gaps based on the literature considered here, the remainder of this document presents the literature from each of the three thematic categories identified above.

INTERVENTIONS WHICH INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

What are effective models in increasing employment and entrepreneurship in LMIC and humanitarian settings, particularly for young women and other vulnerable groups?

Moore, K. 2015. “Fostering economic opportunities for youth in Africa: A comprehensive approach.” *Enterprise Development and Microfinance* 26(2): 195–209.⁴

Purpose: This article reflects on the evolving approach of The MasterCard Foundation-supported programmes in sub-Saharan Africa, within the broader context of wider research and evidence. It is premised on unemployment and working poverty being large and growing development challenges and the barriers faced by young women and men in accessing sustainable livelihoods are many, so supporting their successful transition into employment and entrepreneurship requires a comprehensive and holistic approach.

Method: Review of literature and application of MasterCard's engagement with a range of partners, it reviews the rationale for the Foundation's evolving approach and details the comprehensive, holistic approach its partners take. Since 2011 the Foundation has built partnerships that support economic opportunities for youth, partnering with 22 organisations, investing over US\$236 million in this portfolio with 130,000 participants having graduated from training programmes, and almost 59,000 making the transition to employment in a full-time job or internship or to self-employment⁵.

Findings: Recognising that long spells of unemployment or underemployment in informal work can have permanent repercussions on future productivity and employment and that a lack of early economic opportunities can undermine asset building and life satisfaction the paper acknowledges that adolescence and young adulthood are key moments to interrupt the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Based on case studies from across sub-Saharan Africa the paper suggests that combining training in a range of market-relevant skills, with access to job and business opportunities and appropriate financial services, can foster economic opportunities for youth. Moreover the paper emphasises the importance of recognising the role of mixed livelihoods in contexts where formal jobs are lacking, and supporting youth engagement in agriculture and agribusiness as viable livelihood opportunities. The paper also highlight that challenges are only adequately addressed via the meaningful engagement of a range of stakeholders, including the private sector, government and civil society, and, especially, youth themselves.

4 Karen Moore (kmoore@mastercardfdn.org) is Programme Manager at Economic Opportunities for Youth, The MasterCard Foundation (Toronto, Canada). Article also available here: <https://doi.org/10.3362/1755-1986.2015.017>

5 This portfolio also includes a Foundation partnership with the ILO to build the evidence base around youth employment and education challenges, resulting in up-to-date, national-level, disaggregated data for 28 developing and transitional countries, including eight in sub-Saharan Africa, to influence youth employment policies and programmes – see more here <http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth/lang--en/index.htm>

McKee, K. 1989. “Micro-level Strategies for Supporting Livelihoods, Employment, and Income Generation of Poor Women in the Third World: The Challenge of Significance.” *World Development* 17(7): 993–1006. doi: 10.1016/0305-750X(89)90163-0⁶

Purpose: To examine where micro-level assistance fits into the range of strategies open to effect positive change for micro, small and medium sized enterprise support and development. How it relates to policy reform and social protection interventions and how it fits to poor women's livelihoods, employment, and income generation (LEIG). There is particular focus on direct assistance to women, delivered at the micro level, aimed at strengthening their earning income-earning potential in the informal sector.

Method: Programmes that support poor women's income earning can use four measures of effectiveness. These are:

- Meaningful, sustainable, increases in income levels for large numbers of participants;
- Policy and regulatory changes that expand economic choices for the poor;
- Increases in aggregate employment, economic growth, and diversification of the local economy; and
- “Empowerment” and evidence that women mobilise and gain more control over their social, political, and economic lives.

Using these criteria, the paper analyses the strengths and weaknesses of strategies for addressing the problems of self-employed individuals and microenterprises: the area-, sector-, and function-focused approaches.

A strategic look at the different approaches with key questions set out to be asked before a specific type of intervention is driven by internal dynamics, the preferences of donors or the need to investigate fully the external factors impacting youth and women.

Findings: Four approaches are presented (geographic area, sector, function focused or a blended approach of these approaches and critiqued. Critiques of the four approaches are undertaken with key questions posed as to the relative effectiveness of each. The pluses and minuses of each approach addressed, highlighting scale considerations.

This paper concludes that sector strategies, i.e. specific areas of agricultural production, and function-focused strategies, i.e. within a value chain, focusing on specific areas of added value such as women owned small scale grain milling machines, offer the most promise for facilitating women to make significant economic gains. The research notes there are challenges given factors pushing women and youth into extreme poverty or the stubbornness of lifting people out of poverty which has macro-economic underpinnings as well as the capability of such projects ‘going to scale’ when underpinned by structural issues of poverty.

The paper highlights that further experimentation and donor support is required, specifically it makes the case for greater donor coordination in which they come together to invest in a holistic approach.

Blattman, C., Green, E.P., Jamison, J., Lehmann M.C. & Annan, J. 2016. “The Returns to Microenterprise Support among the Ultra-poor: A Field Experiment in Post-war Uganda.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 8(2): 35–64.^{7,8}

Purpose: Two in five of the world's extreme poor are projected to live in fragile and conflict-affected states by 2030, yet rigorous evidence on what works in these settings is sparse. To help fill this gap, this paper studies a common approach to relieving extreme poverty involving the transfer of human and physical capital, in a post-conflict population across small villages in northern Uganda.

⁶ A highly cited paper, written by a person who has gone on to be influential in a number of organisations working on these themes.

⁷ Note that in this paper there is a comparison to Graduation Programmes which might be interesting to Plan International.

⁸ Paper also accessible here: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w21310.pdf>

Method: The research evaluated the extent to which the extremely poor war-affected women in northern Uganda have returns on a one-off cash injection (US\$150) and basic business skills training (five days) linked to ongoing supervision. The grant was 30 times larger than the beneficiaries' baseline monthly earnings.

An impact evaluation of interventions and counterfactuals was applied using control groups over an eighteen-month period. Built on base knowledge (note an extensive bibliography) and references to wider, global, extreme poverty relief programming.

Findings: Gains for programme participants were mainly economic with little evidence of changes in physical health, mental health, financial autonomy, or domestic violence. Outside the household, however, the programme increased self-reported social support and community participation. Participants also reported an increase in resentment and verbal abuse from some neighbours.

Sixteen months after receiving grants and those also receiving group encouragement reported double the earnings of those that did not. The evidence suggests that these groups spurred informal finance, labour sharing and cooperative cash cropping. Group formation also appeared to have mitigated the abuse from neighbours.

The paper highlights that whilst ultra-poor participants have little or no social capital group bonds, informal insurance, and cooperative activities could be induced and had positive returns. It was also noted that the supervision provided to help implement plans increased business survival but not consumption.

Emergent gaps found no primary production or added value of the work undertaken to assist local economic development and support wider (resilience) programming. The evaluation also found that despite the positive results of cooperative development and networking they were not built in as a deliberate output in the programme evolution. The programme was more input centric, focusing on cash and short-term training. The paper therefore suggests further research on mutual support and network development (particularly when addressing gender-based issues such as gender based violence, whereby women's support groups can be of great assistance).

Webb, K., Riordan T and Bui, B. 2007. ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment - internal reviews.⁹

Purpose: Final internal evaluation of the application of the Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) methodology in Pakistan and the Philippines. The TREE Project in Pakistan and the Philippines sets out an alternative model for income generation and employment creation for the most marginalized populations in diverse, geographical areas. For both countries, the target groups were the rural poor, specifically, women, disenfranchised male youth, and persons with disabilities, both had also suffered from peace and security issues with limited no job opportunities and no foreign investment.

The TREE methodology, is a comprehensive training package that identifies and assesses local economic opportunities, designs and delivers community-based skills training, and provides post-training services. The project is designed to build on existing NGO, government and private sector job-creation programmes, enhancing and strengthening programme effectiveness where they are either weak or do not exist. The project uses a systems approach to identify emerging and potential employment, income generation and small business opportunities and deliver training in practical skills and business management.

Method: The evaluation's methodology included formal individual and group interviews, using the interview protocols, as well as informal discussions, and the review of project documents and other data. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) approach was also applied against the original stated outputs and expected outcomes.

9 Note that there is also an interesting evaluation of the TREE methodology in Zimbabwe that can be found here: [Evaluating the impact of a youth-focused Training for Rural Economic Empowerment \(TREE\) in Zimbabwe \(2012\)](#) The TREE training manual can also be found here: [Rural Skills Training - A Generic Manual on Training for Rural Economic Empowerment \(TREE\)](#). Since this evaluation The TREE methodology has been applied in part to the Somalia setting, this paper provides a particularly good overview of how it is applied to Market Opportunity Mapping http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-addis-ababa/---sro-addis-ababa/documents/publication/wcms_316337.pdf.

Findings: In both the Philippines and Pakistan the evaluation found both economic and social benefits to target groups notably:

- Using the TREE approach, all targeted unemployed youth entered self-employment;
- New savings and credit groups were established reporting 100 per cent recovery rates on loans in Pakistan whilst in the Philippines experimental profit and loss sharing scheme in accordance with Islamic law were established;
- The project strengthened the implementation capacity of all eight partners;
- Partner organisations in both countries were trained in the TREE methodology, developing their implementation capacity;
- Self-esteem increased among graduates of programme – young men and women experienced new-found respect from families and communities and seen as role models in their communities. Moreover they viewed their economic outlook as more positive;
- Economic benefits for young women in Pakistan, which for many was the first-time they had earned income, were noted as was their new found ability to help support their family; and
- In both countries the peace-building potential was noted – in Pakistan it was deemed that young men would be less likely to become a part of groups that create security problems whilst in the Philippines providing people with skills training to take advantage of broader economic opportunities was seen as linking economic development to wider peace in the region.

What examples exist in education systems to increase transition to employment?

Zimmermann, K. F. et al. 2013. “Youth Unemployment and Vocational Training, Foundations and Trends.” *Microeconomics* 9(1–2): 1-157.¹⁰

Purpose: A highly cited article that explores the determinants of the labour market situation of young people in developed countries and the developing world, with a particular emphasis on the role of vocational training and education policies. The paper highlights the role of demographic factors, economic growth and labour market institutions in explaining young people's transition into employment.

Method: The research assesses differences between the setup and functioning of the vocational education and training policies across major world regions (Europe and the US, Africa and the Middle East, Latin America, and South and East Asia) as an important driver of the different labour market situations of youth.

Findings: Based on the analysis, the authors argue in favour of vocational education and training systems combining work experience and general education and provide policy recommendations regarding the implementation of education and training systems adapted to a country's economic and institutional context.

Whilst good education and training can contribute to economic productivity and social cohesion, vocational education and on-the-job training with young workers and companies also needs to involve governments, social partners or other societal actors in order to be stable and effective. Given major differences in the institutional setup in different parts of the world, the authors present options for implementing vocational training under a variety of economic and institutional conditions.

When distinguishing between general education as a foundation and vocational education and training as an additional component, empirical evidence shows that vocational skills bring additional benefits to young people as their employability is improved, assuming that vocational education is providing relevant skills that match employers demands. Acquiring occupation-specific skills and firm-related work, experience helps establish closer links with the labour market and facilitate the transition into employment.

¹⁰ Note that this Paper was commissioned to Institute of Labor Economics, Germany (IZA) by the World Bank

In regards to training systems there are at least three “general principles” that maximise the chances of success: first, a clear understanding of what the market and government failures and skills gaps are; second, making sure providers (public or private) have the incentives to respond to market demands and ensure quality; and third, active market labour policy schemes targeting the unemployed as well as early interventions for the youth at risk can be complementary to training systems in place for the workers.

Lippman, L. H., Ryberg, R., Carney, R., & Moore, K. A. 2015. *Workforce connections. Key “Soft Skills” that foster youth workforce success: Toward a consensus across fields.* Washington, DC: Child Trends.¹¹

Purpose: Globally, many employers acknowledge a soft skills gap. Soft skills are centrally important for human capital development and workforce success. A growing evidence base shows that they rival academic or technical skills in their ability to predict employment and earning outcomes. However there lacks clear agreement about which soft skills are most critical for workforce success and so developing consensus is hampered by a lack of comparability in the constructs, definitions, and measures used to assess youth and monitor progress. This confusion in turn obstructs knowledge development and guidance for future investments in youth workforce development programmes. This paper seeks to bring clarity by recommending a research-based set of key soft skills that increase the chances that youth aged 15–29 will be successful in the workforce.

Method: The report reviewed 380 resources including rigorous empirical studies, employer studies, and findings of international projects examining the relationship between soft skills and key workforce outcomes including employment, performance on the job, wages, and entrepreneurial success. In addition to the literature review, stakeholders, including researchers, youth workforce programme implementers, employers, and youth provided input on the importance of these skills based on their experiences. A set of criteria was then developed and applied to arrive at the list of recommended skills.

Findings: Based on the evidence and the considerations presented, a set of key soft skills were identified as being important elements for all aspects of workforce success, applicable across sectors and diverse world regions, are developmentally optimal, and are likely to be improved with youth workforce development programmes.

Those soft skills, most likely to increase odds of success across all outcomes and which employers expect employees to have, are presented, explored and include: social skills, communication, and higher-order thinking skills (including problem solving, critical thinking, and decision-making), supported by the intrapersonal skills of self-control and a positive self-concept.

De Hoyos, R., Rogers, H. & Székely, M. 2016. *Out Of School and Out Of Work Risk and Opportunities for Latin America’s Ninis.* Washington DC: World Bank Group.

Purpose: Throughout Latin America, youth who are neither working nor in school are often labeled ninis, from the Spanish ‘ni estudia ni trabaja.’¹² One in five youth in the region—totaling more than 20 million people aged 15–24—is living as a nini. This study aims to provide policy makers in the region with analysis of the nini issue and options for addressing it in their countries.

Method: The study undertakes a comprehensive diagnosis quantifying the problem, develops a conceptual framework identifying the determinants of youths’ choices, uses available data to test the theoretical implications, and reviews the evidence regarding interventions that have proven effective in keeping youth in school and helping them become employed. Specifically the paper summarizes the findings of six background papers written for this study and uses a collection of 238 quantitative standardised household surveys from countries in the region to provide evidence of the ninis phenomenon, and how it has evolved over the past 25 years.

11 Note this paper is also available online <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/KeySoftSkills.pdf>

12 Directly translated as ‘neither work nor study’. Spanish-speaking Latin American countries refer to them as “ninis,” Brazilians apply the term “nem-nem” from the Portuguese “nem estuda, nem trabalha.” the related acronym “NEET”—referring to a young person who is not in education, employment, or training—is the more commonly used term elsewhere .

Findings: Findings focus on key characteristics of ninis, the common paths to becoming one and effective interventions that have both reduced school dropout rates and improved nini employability.

The paper finds that one in five youth aged 15–24 in Latin America is out of school and not working and they are more likely to be a woman with incomplete secondary education, living in an urban household, in the bottom 40 per cent of the income distribution. Moreover women account for two thirds of the region's nini population, and the greatest risk factor associated with their condition is marriage before age 18, compounded by teenage pregnancy. As female labour participation increases in a time of limited employment creation, men are finding it more difficult to secure jobs.

The most common path to becoming a nini, particularly for men, is through early school dropout into the labour market, followed by unemployment. Since youth who leave school before finishing upper secondary generally lack the skills to secure a formal-sector job, in most cases they settle for temporary and unstable jobs in the informal sector. Once they lose these jobs, they do not go back to school.

The paper cites effective interventions to reduce school dropout rates and improve the employability of ninis. Well-targeted conditional cash transfers which also inform students and their parents about the benefits of education. South American countries and Mexico, which have relatively high dropout rates in upper secondary, can combine early warning systems to identify youth at risk of dropping out with targeted socio-emotional interventions and tutoring. Well-designed, evidence-based training and entrepreneurship programmes along with active public employment services can improve youths' employability.

The paper also features a rich bibliography and useful bite-size examples and summaries that would be particularly useful to those designing and implementing programmes.

Groh, M. et al. 2016. “The Impact of Soft Skills Training on Female Youth Employment: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment in Jordan.” *IZA Journal of Labor & Development* 5(9). doi: 10.1186/s40175-016-0055-9.¹³

Purpose: The paper premises itself on how firms around the world complain that formal schooling, at best, teaches only the technical skills workers need but that many youth are lacking the soft skills needed for success in the workplace.

Method: The paper provides experimental evidence on the effectiveness of soft skills training for youth in a developing country context. The Jordan New Opportunities for Women (Jordan NOW¹⁴) pilot randomly allocated 1347 female community college graduating in 2010 into a experimental sample training group that received an invitation to attend a 45 hour soft skills training course, and a control group which was not.

Follow-up surveys then measured employment impacts 6, 14, and 27 months later, allowing researchers the ability to examine the programme impacts at different post-training time horizons.

The pilot worked with the eight public community colleges with the largest female enrolment numbers, together comprising over 85 per cent of all female public community college enrolment.¹⁵

Findings: Soft skills training did not have any significant employment impact in three rounds of follow-up surveys. Despite the course being taught by a well-regarded provider and offering twice as many hours of training as the average employability programme in the region. The researchers found that soft skills training did not have any significant impact on the different employment measures for the young women over any of these time horizons.

13 Report accessible here: <http://reports.weforum.org/disrupting-unemployment/global-girls-entrepreneurship-project/>

14 At the request of the Government of Jordan, the World Bank developed the Jordan NOW pilot programme to attempt to assist women graduating from these community colleges to find employment.

15 It is important to note that Jordan's labour market is similar to others throughout the Middle East in that there is a bulging youth population facing high unemployment rates, particularly among relatively educated youth, with female youth employment rates particularly low.

Examining non-employment outcomes however the paper found that instead, in the short term, the training did appear to make participants more optimistic about the future, and reduced restrictions on their mobility.

The researchers acknowledge that the findings are surprising but that they are consistent with those from recent overviews of vocational training programs (Blattman and Ralston, 2015¹⁶) and business training programmes (McKenzie and Woodruff, 2014¹⁷) which also noted how other forms of training programmes having struggled to show significant employment impacts and a lack of empirical evidence available to show their effectiveness.

The paper claims that it is less clear as to whether such skills can be effectively taught. Moreover, studies in developing countries have typically combined life or soft skills training with vocational or technical training, so the effect of the soft skills training alone cannot be measured.

What is known about the most effective models for youth-focused savings groups (especially those for young women), including evidence on governance and processes to ensure sustainability?

Cameron, S. and Ananga, E. 2013. *Savings Groups and Educational Investment*. London: Plan UK.

Purpose: This report, investigates whether Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA), affect educational investment and outcomes. These are groups that meet periodically (usually weekly), require members to contribute savings, allow members to take loans with interest, and share accumulated savings and interest to members at the end of an annual cycle.

Method: The study is based on a literature review of a large number of saving groups impact evaluations in different countries plus primary qualitative fieldwork conducted in Ghana in 2013. The fieldwork in Ghana focused on two villages, one in the Upper West region and one in the Central region, included VSLA members and non-members, and over 100 adults and children, of which 30 were aged 15-24.

Findings: The study revealed that parents highly valued education as a way of reducing dependence on agricultural work, increasingly considered as a less viable livelihood. They faced small unofficial fees at primary and lower secondary level, larger fees at senior secondary level, and additional costs such as uniforms, all of which were sometimes difficult to meet given low and irregular cash incomes.

Education was among the main reasons given for taking loans and several people also reported using annual share-outs to pay educational expenses. Participants said that educational attendance and results had improved as a result of the savings groups, although researchers caution that the loan may be displacing other funds, and any increase in expenditure is channeled elsewhere. Nevertheless, a number of evaluations have found increased education expenditure.

The main mechanisms appear to involve a combination of overall, gradual improvement in income, especially from small businesses operated by women, and a better ability to pay fees on time, resulting in children being sent home from school less. Loans were also used for healthcare and had reportedly helped to reduce hunger in the community. There was little evidence for a change in the incidence of child labour, which was still widespread, but some evidence for a change in spending patterns and that women had increased power over expenditure decisions. In the wealthier of the two communities, parents were using a combination of raised income from businesses and loans to withdraw children from the local government school and send them to a private school, which was seen as better quality.

16 Can be accessed here: <https://izajold.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40175-016-0055-9#CR3>

17 Can be accessed here: <https://izajold.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40175-016-0055-9#CR22>

Markel, E and Panetta, D. 2014. *Youth savings groups, entrepreneurship and employment*. London: Plan UK.¹⁸

Purpose: To examine how youth savings groups can contribute to the alleviation of youth unemployment, through easing of these constraints to entrepreneurship hence enabling young people to engage more effectively in market opportunities. Particular emphasis is placed on young women and adolescent girls.

Method: A global review of literature regarding youth and their transition from education to employment. Specific case studies come from Plan International's work in India and Zambia with reference to Plan International's approaches and knowledge base globally. This paper also explores the main operational considerations for the effective integration of savings groups in youth economic empowerment programmes.

Findings: Plan International's approach to financial inclusion is based primarily on the promotion of savings groups, a low-risk form of microfinance providing the opportunity to mobilise savings in low-income communities, especially amongst youth.

Challenges faced by youth are similar to those encountered by adult entrepreneurs and job-seekers although youth tend to experience constraints more frequently and more intensely due to their age and transition from school to the labour market. Youth savings groups can help alleviate these constraints to varying extents and enable youth to engage more effectively in market opportunities. Life skills and the higher geographic mobility of youth require different approaches to group mobilisation and challenge the common vision of savings groups as permanent or long-lived institutions.

The research shows that joining youth savings groups:

- Has an immediate effect by way of an increase in asset ownership, particularly amongst women;
- Builds the financial and leadership skills of young women allowing them to fulfill new roles within their households and communities, strengthening their local personal and commercial networks;
- Often results in members supporting their own/sibling's education and training needs. Or, they use the finance to grow their small businesses, putting profits into school fees. All this is likely to have positive effects on access to decent work in the medium to longer term;
- May foster behavioural changes in young people that can, in turn, re-shape adults' perception of youth although research in this area remains limited;
- Can promote collaboration among self-selected young people on a structured and continuous basis; and
- Can be a springboard for delivering entrepreneurship, employability, life skills and financial literacy training. However, the point is made quality data supporting integrated approaches remains circumstantial in many instances.

Evidence is mixed regarding whether or not savings groups lead to increased expenditures on children's health and education, or to improved health and education outcomes. Questions as to if, and how, to use practical work to influence policy regulatory developments supporting of youth employment and entrepreneurship remain.

Jamison, J.C, Karlan, J and Zinman, J. 2014. *Financial education and access to savings accounts: complements or substitutes? Evidence from Ugandan youth clubs*. Working Paper 20135. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Purpose: Evidence on the effectiveness of financial education and formal savings account access is lacking, particularly for youth. Meanwhile microfinance increasingly focuses on encouraging savings, especially among youth. The researchers seek out evidence as to whether and why two common approaches at encouraging saving notably expanding basic account access and financial education, are in fact effective.

¹⁸ Also note Plan International's own work (in association with Barclay's and CARE) – <https://youtheconomicopportunities.org/sites/default/files/uploads/blog/Youth%20Savings%20Group%20Model%20Proposed%20Principles%20FINAL.pdf>

Method: The researchers randomly assigned 250 Ugandan youth clubs, containing a total sample of 2680 individuals to receive either financial education, access to a cheap group account, or both. 60 groups were offered financial education in the form of a ten week, fifteen hour curriculum, designed by NGOs with local and international expertise, that focused on the formal financial system, savings practices, savings costs and benefits (relative to borrowing), and other aspects of personal financial management. 60 groups were offered easy access to a basic savings account with FINCA International¹⁹, a local and international microfinance institution with a banking charter in Uganda. To eliminate fees and minimise time costs, accounts were offered at the group level (one account per group), with groups responsible for maintaining a ledger with individual members' savings, and selected group members serving as bank field agents for handling deposits and withdrawals. 60 groups were offered both education and the group account, and 60 groups were offered neither (the control group).

Findings: The financial education treatments increase financial literacy; the account-only treatment did not. Administrative data shows the education plus account treatment increased bank savings relative to account-only. But survey-measured total savings shows roughly equal increases across all treatment arms. Earned income also increases in all treatment arms. The researchers find little evidence that education and account access are strong complements, and some evidence they are substitutes.

Karlan, D.S., Berry, J. & Pradhan, M.P. 2015. *The Impact of Financial Education for Youth in Ghana*. Yale University Economic Growth Center Discussion Paper No. 1048.

Purpose: Governments and non-governmental organisations promote school-based financial literacy programs as means to instill financial behaviours that can persist through adulthood.

Method: The researchers conduct a randomised trial of two financial literacy education programmes in 135 government-run Ghanaian primary and junior high schools. Schools were randomly assigned to receive either the full Aflatoun²⁰ programme (45 schools), the Honest Money Box programme (45 schools), or control (45 schools). Researchers measured a variety of outcomes, including financial decision-making, support for savings at home, labour, risk and time preferences, financial literacy, consumption, confidence, and academic performance.

Findings: After nine months, both programmes had significant impacts on savings behaviour relative to the control group, mostly because children moved savings from home to school.

The research observed few other impacts, notably there were no statistically significant increases in aggregate savings nor in outcomes such as attitudes, preferences, or knowledge.

Researchers found that financial education, when not accompanied by social education, led children to work more compared to the control group, whereas no such effect is found for the integrated curriculum; however, the difference between the two treatment effects on child labour is not statistically significant.

The researchers assert that because of the lack of short-term effects of these programmes on financial behaviours and attitudes, alternative programme designs should be evaluated to understand whether and how these outcomes can be influenced among students in this age group.

19 FINCA International is a non-profit, microfinance organisation, founded in 1984. Sometimes referred to as the «World Bank for the Poor», FINCA is the innovator of the village banking methodology in microcredit and is widely regarded as one of the pioneers of modern-day microfinance.

20 Aflatoun is a large, international non-governmental organisation (NGO) that has developed school-based curricula for financial literacy training and provides technical assistance to local partners, usually NGOs or ministries of education, to implement these curricula. Its programme has been implemented in over 100 countries to date. The Aflatoun programme includes financial education, social education, and a school savings club. The social education component focuses on personal exploration and children's rights and responsibilities, while also highlighting the pitfalls of youth labour, such as forgoing school to work and the risk of dangerous working conditions.

Khwaja. A. 2015. *Entrepreneurial finance lab research initiative*.²¹

Purpose: Final report by Harvard's Entrepreneurial Finance Lab Research Initiative (EFLRI) to USAID Development Innovative Venture looking at the performance of psychometric testing as an approach to credit scoring.

Banks are hesitant to loan money to entrepreneurs without formal financial histories. An estimated 50 per cent of the 2 billion people who live on US\$2 a day or less run small businesses, but these entrepreneurs face barriers when trying to access finance to expand their businesses. Most banks screen loan applications using traditional financial statements, collateral and past borrowing history; many small and medium enterprises in developing countries, however, simply do not have this kind of formalised financial track record.

Studies show that access to small lines of business credit, particularly for women, improves household consumption and the probability of children attending school— 1.86 per cent and 2.4 per cent improvement for girls and boys, respectively. But because most lending institutions cannot assess the informal financial activities in which these entrepreneurs are engaged for loan-worthiness, the entrepreneurs are unable to access credit and its associated benefits with the same facility as their wealthier counterparts despite their equal business acumen.

Method: Review of performance primarily looking at the building of the initiative in Pakistan and Egypt following tests over four years in seven countries in Latin America and Africa. Note this was undertaken by a Harvard University investigator and this is a Harvard initiative and thus an internal report for USAID.

Findings: Originally piloted in Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia, a psychometric test developed in the late 2000s at Harvard Kennedy School proved that once banks have a low-cost way to identify the large number of SMEs with high returns to capital, lending expands massively. The test was able to predict default with the same (or greater) accuracy as credit scoring models used in developed countries for corporate clients using a self-administered assessment. The test does not require any of the financial statements or credit histories traditionally required and generally lacking by SMEs in LMICs. This focus on the predictive power of the test on SME loan recipient revenues and profitability – i.e. not simply repayment & default – allowed EFLRI to study the problem from the SME perspective in an Islamic finance relevant context.

Comparative advantage of psychometric testing is its ability to cost effectively predict future success. Banks do not typically collect revenue and profitability data; Entrepreneurial Finance Lab Research Initiative (EFLRI) was able to leverage existing research in Pakistan to collect this data and show significant promise for the model.

The Pakistan model provides a proof of concept for automated, cost-effective, scalable, and psychometric business quality assessment with the potential to lead to widespread use of cutting edge credit scoring tools – proven effective elsewhere – in scale-up of private commercial bank lending to SMEs in the Muslim world, particularly Egypt.

Whilst the paper does not mention youth specifically (though does incorporate age and sex into its testing) the low transaction cost and reliability of psychometric-based credit scoring should make it a highly attractive approach for banks and lending institutions in developing countries. With banks better able to measure risk for individuals without formal financial histories, something youth often lack. Moreover because such testing cuts default rates by between 25 and 40 per cent they will be more likely to make loans to SME entrepreneurs they previously would have turned away, opening the door for the creation of new businesses, more jobs and economic security.

²¹ Also note EFL <https://www.eflglobal.com/about/> who first pioneered psychometric credit scoring through research at the Harvard Center for International Development and who now work with leading financial institutions across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe.

What evidence is available on programmes which address social norms that prevent girls and young women from accessing opportunities and sustaining employment/economic livelihoods (i.e. entrepreneurship)?

NORC at the University of Chicago. 2014. *Yes Youth Can! Impact Evaluation Final Report*. USAID.

Purpose: This independent impact evaluation assesses the impact of the Yes Youth Can! (YYC) programme on the outcomes it sought to influence. YYC is a 3-year, US\$55 million programme funded by USAID to promote youth empowerment in Kenya. The goal of YYC is to address the underlying social, economic, and political factors that drive youth marginalisation in Kenya.

Method: The methodology comprised:

- A rigorous impact evaluation, which seeks to measure the causal impact of Yes Youth Can (YYC) on outcomes for the beneficiaries;
- A quantitative analysis of the impact of group (known as “bungen”) characteristics. Because of YYC’s youth-driven approach, there was significant variation in terms of the activities and purposes of bungen, which aspects of the programme they participated in, and other characteristics related to the programme; and
- An extensive qualitative analysis using data from 48 focus groups discussions and 98 in-depth interviews with YYC participants and a range of other stakeholders.

Findings: The youth groups tended to remain active and engaged beyond the input periods (80 per cent were still active 18 months after the initial evaluation). The project improved relations between youth and their communities and whilst there remained negative perceptions of youth among some stakeholders, overall the project had a positive effect.

The project was successful in terms of increasing participants’ self-confidence and self-esteem. The use of psychometric testing backed up anecdotal reports of the gains in confidence among participants.

The project led to some improvements in political engagement, but youths continued to feel alienated by political elites and the political system. 11.5 per cent of respondents reported others listened to their political views; however, the wider issues of exclusion, external to the project, remained apparent.

Important sources of benefits from the project were the skills and lessons derived from the process of participating in the youth group formation and development.

The evaluators placed caveats on the findings noting the political times the youths were developing their groups in. The evaluators also highlighted certain causal links but, noting the lack of control groups, the inability to fully evaluate attribution.

Fewer, S., Ramos, J. and Dunning, D. 2013. *Economic Empowerment Strategies for Adolescent Girls: A Research Study Conducted for the Adolescent Girls’ Advocacy and Leadership Initiative*. Adolescent Girls’ Advocacy and Leadership Initiative.

Purpose: Organisations are employing a variety of economic empowerment strategies, including increasing adolescent girls’ access to financial services, gainful employment, and life-skills and social support. This research seeks to draw key findings and develop recommendations to inform future programming.

Method: This study undertakes a literature analysis of programmes or research that met the following criteria: Specifically addresses adolescent girls’ economic advancement and their ability to make economic decisions; or Targets adolescents and/or young women as participants and aims to promote the participants’ economic capacity, opportunity, and/or resources in some way. In doing so the report incorporates a range of literature including published and grey literature direct from both pilot and more established programmes. The study incorporates eleven case studies from around the world that reflect key learning that can inform future programme development.

Findings: Economic empowerment programmes serving adolescent girls utilise three main approaches: financial services strategies, employment strategies, and strategies that promote girls' life-skills and social supports. Well-designed, effectively implemented programmes that respond to their unique needs can improve girls' financial, health, and social outcomes while also creating a positive ripple effect among their families and communities.

This paper prioritises four key recommendations for enhancing girls' economic empowerment initiatives: age-appropriate financial services programming, girls' employment programmes that teach what the market needs, addressing the intersection of social, economic, and political forces that shape girls' lives, and leveraging data from existing evaluations to maximise impact and further knowledge.

The paper notes that there is a need for greater investment in girls' economic empowerment, especially in the underserved region of Latin America.

Hartl, M. 2009. *Technical and vocational education and training and skills development for poverty reduction – do rural women benefit?* International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Purpose: This paper discusses technical and vocational education and training (TVET) as well as skills development in rural areas, mainly pertaining to agriculture and related activities and explores existing gender differences. The paper argues that many training interventions do not cater for the specific needs of women who are under-represented in formal training programmes and often directed towards typical female occupations such as handicrafts.

Method: The paper draws on a literature review of technical and vocational training and skills development and a desk review of activities in International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) supported projects from across the world, related to training and capacity building from a gender perspective. It explores how these target the poor and most vulnerable and to what extent gender differences in training provision, methodology, training content and transition to labour markets have been taken into account.

Findings: The researchers claim that TVET and technical and vocational skills development (TVSD) are essential elements in reducing rural poverty but that they have been neglected by policy makers, donors and the private sector for many years. This has resulted in a lack of technical expertise and crafts people at all levels whilst capacity building initiatives have tended to be only short term solutions and ignoring systemic issues of low education levels and illiteracy. This results in a lack of coordination between private and public providers, which does not address the needs of target groups nor anticipate how the training skills will be used. This broader lack of attention to employability leads to a situation where resources are being wasted.

The research draws the conclusion that projects should set criteria, that give priority in selection to those participants who are capable to utilise the training productively. Moreover there is a need for better targeting and selection of trainees and follow-up support in the form of technical input, credit and mentoring.

The researchers propose a range of recommendations (some of which feature below) to guide research and policy action but should also prove valuable to Plan International's future thinking and programming:

- Strengthen partnerships to achieve better quality in training consider for example certification of vocational training and skills training; and provide infrastructure support and facilities to improve the participation of rural poor and young women in training (e.g. stipends and child care centres);
- Support a people-centred pedagogy in the development of vocational and skills training maximising locally available techniques remaining closely linked with local production practices;
- Introduce special mechanisms in the delivery of training to increase participation and take-up by women, including mobile training units, extension schemes, and in-plant training;
- Expand significantly training provision for rural poor, young women and men and vulnerable groups in poor rural areas;
- Promote training in non-traditional fields for women through the establishment of specific training programmes and pilot support schemes;
- Increase the pool of women trainers and provide certification for training; and
- Design targeted interventions to address vulnerable groups to increase their economic empowerment.

Field, E., Jayachandran, S. and Pande, R. 2010. “Do Traditional Institutions Constrain Female Entrepreneurship? A Field Experiment on Business Training in India.” *American Economic Review: Papers & Proceedings* 100: 125–129.

Purpose: This paper explores how traditional religious and caste institutions in India that impose restrictions on women's behaviour influence their business activity. Moreover it investigates what constrains the entrepreneurial choices of poor women, whether traditional institutions pose unique barriers to business growth and profitability for female-run enterprises and whether there are more efficient ways of using time for effective business skills development.

Method: The analysis undertakes a field experiment in which 636 women (aged 18-50) were randomly selected, of this two-thirds were then randomly assigned to the treatment group, and received business training including business counselling whilst the control group did not. The two-day training combined elements of the existing financial literacy, business skills curricula, and financial aspirations.

The sample was relatively homogenous in terms of socio-economic status (e.g., education). However, differences in religion and caste mean that the women faced very different traditional restrictions on mobility and social interactions. The women were categorized into three broad social groups: Muslim, Hindu scheduled castes (considered to be the lowest caste), and Hindu upper castes.

Findings: Muslim women were found to face the most restrictions. Among Hindu women, upper castes faced significantly more restrictions than the lowest group in the caste hierarchy.

In general, the returns to entrepreneurship should be highest for the women least restrained by conservative social norms. However, this need not be the case for an intervention that primarily influences women's knowledge of business practices and their aspirations. If traditional norms about gender roles can be challenged, or if they mainly work to limit women's exposure to and knowledge of business opportunities, then the returns from training may be higher for women from more restrictive social groups.

The results showed that among Hindu women, training increased borrowing and business income for those facing more restrictions, i.e. upper caste women. However, Muslim women failed to benefit from the training programme. The training helped women whose businesses had been held down by social restrictions, but women subject to extreme restrictions had too little agency to easily change their aspirations or activities. Even with more knowledge or higher aspirations, the most restricted women might face too many social structures to benefit from entrepreneurial opportunities.

The business training and counselling programme significantly reduced the business income gap between social groups. Thus, another way of reading results is—in the absence of interventions that counteract traditional norms—modernisation is likely to yield greater benefits for women lower in the caste hierarchy. This view, however, assumes social norms for lower castes continuing to be less restrictive. If, instead, modernisation heightens the desire of lower castes to emulate upper castes and move up the caste hierarchy—with scheduled castes increasingly adopting the gender norms of upper castes, then economic growth may fail to emancipate women to the same extent.

Caubergs, L. & Verhofstadt, E. 2017. *Enhancing the contribution of the Belgian TVET programmes to girls' empowerment*. Brussels: Plan International Belgium and Southern Research CVBA.

Purpose: The study sought to provide Belgian policy makers and broader development actors with recommendations to enhance girls' access to and completion of (formal and non-formal) TVET programmes and enhance their participation in transition activities from TVET towards decent work. With practical applications and case studies featuring throughout, this paper succeeds in its desire to be considered a tool for development and TVET practitioners rather than an academic research paper.

Method: A mixed method approach comprising a desk-based research study, followed by several interviews with stakeholders involved in TVET programmes was applied. It identifies enabling and disabling (f) actors of girls' access to and completion of TVET programmes and participation in transition activities. It

then analyses the strategies related to these (f)actors at policy and governmental levels; at the level of the schools, training centres and service providers (e.g. TVET teacher training colleges); at the level of families and communities; and the level of the (local) development agencies and NGO's.

Findings: The report provides a range of findings and relevant recommendations, which would require adaptation to the local context. They include:

- Invest in access to, completion of TVET and transition towards (decent) work to address all three bottlenecks. Programmes only focussing one stand to not reach their potential and stand to not result in a decent work opportunity;
- Focus on “poverty” and “safety” - because poverty is the main factor why young people, especially girls, do not complete their studies programmes should include financial incentives (i.e. scholarships for girls). Safety is a major constraint for parents to send their daughters to school- and for young girls and women to consider and complete their studies. Therefore, programmes can support the establishment of policies regarding GBV, target attitudes and behaviours, provide transport and foresee appropriate infrastructure at schools for example;
- Work towards a mentality switch by engaging local communities and civil society actors to work on gender equality and equity. Integrating civil society actors is necessary for a sustainable change of norms, values and perceptions at all levels;
- Formalise non-formal TVET training in order to obtain recognition. This has the potential to enhance access to a (better-paid) job or to have access to credit for self-employment; and
- Diversify school's offerings (training for “traditional men's” jobs, “women's” jobs and jobs in new sectors) if they wish to contribute to gender equality moreover potential students and their parents should be informed about the types of trades and careers open to them. Similarly schools should invest in different options to facilitate the transition to the workplace (internships in companies or in production departments of schools) and students facilitated to make informed choices.

What is known about building skills through employment opportunities (such as apprenticeships and internships) to improve opportunities for young people, especially young women? What evidence is there on what works?²²

Fazio, M.V., Fernández-Coto, R. & Ripani, L. 2016. *Apprenticeships for the XXI Century. A Model for Latin America and the Caribbean?* Inter-American Development Bank.

Purpose: Policy makers from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) are worried about the youth labour market challenges their countries face and, as a result, are seeking potential solutions to increase their access to quality jobs by improving youth's skills and enabling positive employability pathways. At the same time, companies in all sectors of LAC economies oftentimes complain about not being able to find the talent they require and are concerned about job applicants' lack of technical and soft skills. There are several tools to help the youth improve their skills and employability. Apprenticeships are one of those tools that have proven successful for countries outside of the region, making LAC countries increasingly interested in experimenting with this type of approach.

Method: The researchers undertake an extensive literature review and then explores the core elements and principles central to apprenticeship programs, both in terms of their design and delivery, and presents examples of best practices from around the world that LAC countries can potentially use within their contexts. The researchers then go on to assess the status of apprenticeship-type programs in LAC and provide an overview of the unique challenges these programs face in the region and by providing potential solutions to address them, the study sheds light on the transferability of long-standing apprenticeship models (Germany, Austria, Australia, the United Kingdom, among others) and, more so, of

²² Also note Field, E., Jayachandran, S. and Pande, R. (2010) above

the aforementioned core elements and principles to the LAC context. Finally, in an attempt to close the gap between the theoretical and the practical, it provides a hands-on tool kit for policy makers and employers to ask pertinent questions when considering the design of new programs or the revamping of existing ones.

Findings: Based on their review of apprenticeship programmes around the world LAC should be guided by 10 core elements including (i) alignment with country development strategies, (ii) adequate governance arrangements, (iii) high levels of employer engagement, (iv) appropriate funding and incentive structures, (v) robust curriculum design, (vi) robust curriculum delivery, (vii) robust assessment methodologies that are relevant to the occupation in which the apprentice is being trained, (viii) certification and opportunities for further progression for the apprentice, (ix) suitable support in the form of apprenticeship career services for apprentices, and (x) strong quality assurance mechanisms for the delivery of the apprentice-ship programme, which must take into account all of the aforementioned core elements and which should be highly articulated with countries' skills development systems overall.

Kluge, J., Puerto, S., Robalino, D., Romero, J.M., Rother, F., Stöterau, J., Weidenkaff, F. & Witte, M. "Interventions to improve the labour market outcomes of youth: a systematic review of training, entrepreneurship promotion, employment services, and subsidized employment interventions." *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2017:12 DOI: 10.4073/csr.2017.12.

Purpose: Youth remain highly susceptible to changing patterns in the world of work, and experience slow and difficult transitions to stable jobs. This paper explores what works to support them in the labour market.

Method: The paper synthesises global empirical evidence on the labour market outcomes of youth employment interventions. Interventions comprised skills training, entrepreneurship promotion, employment services, and subsidised employment. A systematic search was conducted across more than 70 sources, in multiple languages. The analysis explores the interventions' overall effectiveness and the roles that context, evaluation, programme design and implementation play in determining impact.

The 113 reports reviewed represented 107 interventions. The evidence base spanned 31 countries and covered 55 skills training interventions, 15 entrepreneurship promotion interventions, ten employment services interventions and 21 subsidised employment interventions. Six interventions had no clear main category of intervention. A large share of the evidence derived from recent publications, with nearly half of the sample produced after 2010.

Findings: Investing in young women and men through active labour market programmes (ALMPs) has positively impacts on employment and earnings outcomes more broadly they increase human capital and employment prospects in the long-term.

In LMICs skills training and entrepreneurship interventions produce the greatest impact, especially in terms of income gains. This is contrasted by entrepreneurship promotion interventions which exhibited great variability and in turn the paper calls for further research to enhance the consistency of the results from this intervention type.

Targeting the most disadvantaged youth was found to increase programme effect. Across measures of targeting, a focus on low-income youth, those with low levels of education or exhibiting strong disadvantages in the labour market triggers higher employment and earnings gains for youth across all country income levels. Researchers however found no differential effects by gender and the findings less conclusive. While the overall effect size for employment and earnings appears to be larger for young women than for young men, the review discerned no strong patterns in the multivariate regression analysis to suggest that targeting women only will lead to better outcomes.

The paper acknowledges that whilst soft skills are in high demand by today's employers their role in generating better outcomes is yet to be validated and more research is required, particularly in regards to their interaction with technical skills sets.

EQUIPPING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SKILLS FOR A DIGITAL AGE

What evidence is there of effective training or instructional programmes on digital skills, and what aspects have been shown to be successful? Is there any evidence of programmes targeting young women or marginalised groups? Is there evidence from low- and middle-income countries, and if not, what lessons can we learn from high-income contexts?

Gray, T., Gainous, J., & Wagner, K. 2017. “Gender and the digital divide in Latin America.” *Social Science Quarterly* 98: 326–340.

Purpose: Analysis of the differences in how men and women in Latin American countries are utilising the Internet to identify a possible regional gendered digital divide in Internet use. The extent, degree and implications of this gender digital divide are explored across countries with varying degrees of digital freedom.

Method: Desk review of a series of random- and fixed-effects models utilising individual-level data from the 2010 Latin Barometer²³ merged with country-level data obtained from the UN Gender Inequality Index²⁴.

Findings: In general, Latin American men tend to use the Internet more than women. Men also use more social media and gather political information more frequently. Internet use is higher across these categories in countries with more gender equality. However, the research has stopped with regard to economic activity (limiting itself to the social media and political activism elements). At the individual level, if the Internet has the potential to equalise the power disparity across gender, this potential is diminished by the lower usage among women. The potential for the Internet to serve as a social and political equalising force in Latin America is stymied in part by the gendered digital divide. The Internet’s power to influence a political system will likely vary based on context, including cultural, political, and social influences within a state and therefore it remains a tool to be used within wider political economic and social factors.

Accenture. 2016. *Getting To Equal – How Digital is Helping Close the Gender Gap at Work*. Accenture. [online]

Purpose: Companies and governments face a disparity between the skills they need to stay competitive and the talent available to them. Moreover women are under-represented in the workforce in most countries, and are a significant source of untapped talent. Part of the solution to the barriers women face in the workplace, is to accomplish more with technology. This growing use of technology in theory will help everyone balance their personal and professional lives and access new opportunities in an evolving work environment. This research paper seeks to identify and better understand the role of digital fluency in workforce gender equality, through the development and application of the ‘Accenture Digital Fluency Model’.

Method: Surveyed nearly 5,000 women and men in 31 countries to gauge their use of digital technologies and asked specifics about their education and career, and their use of technology in these settings. This was combined with secondary data from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)²⁵ to determine rates of Internet usage in every country studied. The two data sets provide a detailed and nuanced picture

23 The Latin Barometer is an annual public opinion survey that involves some 20,000 interviews in 18 Latin American countries, representing more than 600 million inhabitants.

24 The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is an index for measurement of gender disparity that was introduced in the 2010 Human Development Report 20th anniversary edition by the United Nations Development Programme.

25 The United Nation’s agency for information and communication technologies

of the extent to which men and women are benefiting from digital in the countries studied. Taken together, these measurements add up to each country's digital fluency score and reveal the gaps between women and men, how and where those gaps are closing, how digital fluency varies between women and men, and how their fluency is driving changes in their education and employment.

Findings: Analysis highlights the importance of digital fluency in helping countries progress toward equality in the workplace whilst acknowledging that every country is at a different stage of this journey and must address different priorities. Findings showed:

- Nations with higher rates of **digital fluency** among women have higher rates of gender equality in the workplace. Increasing women's access to the Internet as a first step to improving fluency should help open up new work opportunities.
- On **education** – the largest gaps between the digital fluency of men and women appear in Japan, Singapore, France and Switzerland, increasing women's fluency to the level of men's will help drive equality in the workplace. Cultural factors are a significant consideration here, and where women are well educated they seem to leverage digital through their education to a greater extent than men. Moreover analysis shows that when men and women have the same level of digital fluency, women achieve a higher rate of education.
- On **employment** – while men and women alike are liberated by flexibility that digital work affords, women appear to derive greater value from it. More than two-thirds of the women and men surveyed – 72 per cent and 68 per cent respectively – say that women's employment opportunities increase as digital fluency increases. In addition, almost half of the working women said they use digital technology to work from home, access job opportunities and balance their personal and professional lives.

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. 2017. Women's Pathways to the Digital Sector: Stories of Opportunities and Challenges. Digitalization for sustainable development. [online].^{26, 27}

Purpose: This study aims to understand the role of ICT in realising women's rights, gender equality and women's economic empowerment in order to identify the challenges and opportunities for women and girls to partake in ICT education and employment.

Method: This is a desk study with biographical interviews incorporating interviews from over twenty women in the digital sector. The 22 portrayed women, work in different roles in ICT and come from developing as well as emerging countries from all continents.

Findings:

- **Inclusive education systems** – digital literacy skills and advanced skills are generally under-represented in education systems; moreover they lack opportunities for girls to participate in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.
- **Tertiary education/labour market transition** – labour market needs are not being addressed through training provided at TVET or tertiary education institutions. A skills mismatch exists between what students learn at university and the skills employers seek.
- **Non-formal education** – too few opportunities that target girls outside of formal education contribute to them being left out and not being exposed to technology until they are older when it is often too late to get them to consider ICT as a career.
- **Access and affordability** – cost is a significant barrier for women to access and use ICT particularly for those from rural and low-income groups. Women's access may be restricted to public ICT services e.g. cybercafés, which are culturally seldom seen as safe places for women and girls.
- **Content** – a lack of/missing content in local languages, corresponding to the needs and interests of women and girls hinders the development of digital literacy skills.

26 Also see 'Women and Digital Skills: What's Driving Myanmar's Growth' available here: <https://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/pdf/women-digital-skills-myanmar.pdf>

27 Note that in the Annex of this document there is a useful list of nearly 20 digital initiatives aimed specifically at women and girls.

- **Self-confidence** – lack of support for girls' and women's engagement with ICT in every life stage can have a negative impact on their ability to develop the self-confidence.
- **Cultural stereotypes** – STEM subjects, as a path to TVET or tertiary education, are often not seen as appropriate for girls, and as such are steered towards more 'feminine' subjects such as teaching.
- **Collaborating for change** – closing the gender gap in the digital sector's labour force requires collective action, both female and male champions are needed.

Yu, L. et al. 2017. *Advancing Women's Empowerment: Growing women's entrepreneurship through ICT in Southeast Asia*. [online] Tokyo: The Sasakawa Peace Foundation and Dalberg Global Development Advisors.

Purpose: This report highlights how ICT can best support female entrepreneurs' transition from informal, small businesses to larger businesses. Researchers assess the barriers female entrepreneurs face and how ICT can help scale women's businesses in Southeast Asia. Using ICT to support female entrepreneurship at a large scale is relatively nascent within Southeast Asia, and only limited data exists. As efforts increase, there is a strong need to connect and align key players in the region, and this report outlines the roles that policymakers, philanthropies, and private sector businesses can play to scale women's businesses in the region. The report aims to (i) raise awareness of the importance of female entrepreneurs and how ICT can be used to support female entrepreneurship, and (ii) encourage key players to take coordinated action to fill gaps within the current female entrepreneurial ecosystem in Southeast Asia, particularly around enabling the growth of women-owned enterprises.

Method: A rapid scan of 165 documents, covering existing research literature, programme documentation and monitoring and evaluation reports related to ICT and increasing women's labour force participation, was conducted from November 2016 to March 2017. Field visits were also undertaken in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore; and 24 experts on gender, work and ICT in Southeast Asia were interviewed. In total, around 100 programmes were analysed and 19 detailed case studies were developed. The report presents results of the scan that are relevant to growing female entrepreneurship through ICT.

The paper presents various case studies from across Southeast Asia, along with practical programing tips to guide design for ICT oriented programmes and a short presentation of implementation learnings from around the world.

Findings: Programmes in Southeast Asia leverage ICT to target immediate barriers to female entrepreneurship. Few programmes actively address socio-cultural root causes or access to finance. Findings suggest greater potential to leverage ICT to change socio-cultural norms, increase access to finance and reduce gender biases for female entrepreneurs.

Numerous programmes leverage ICT to increase access to skills development and markets for women. However, programmes consistently face two implementation barriers: (i) limited access to ICT tools and connectivity and (ii) difficulty in building lasting women's networks. Moreover surveyed programmes were nascent, operating on a small to medium scale and could better serve female entrepreneurs with greater coordination.

The report recommends that renewed cooperation and coordination across the ICT and entrepreneurship ecosystem is needed to help grow women-owned businesses from small scale, informal businesses through to larger, formalised businesses. ICT based programmes that foster the growth of women-owned businesses have tremendous potential to mitigate systemic barriers in the region, but their potential is currently limited by programme design and scale.

What is known about the types of digital skills most valued by employers in the digital sector, particularly in low- and middle-income contexts? What qualifications, training or skills are required for entry into the digital/technological industry?

World Economic Forum. 2016. *The Future of Jobs Employment: Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution*. World Economic Forum.^{28, 29}

Purpose: Seeks to understand the current and future impact of key disruptions on employment levels, skill sets and recruitment patterns in different industries and countries. It does so by asking the Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs) of today's largest employers to imagine how jobs in their industry will change up to the year 2020.

Method: The analysis presented in this report forms the basis of a dialogue with industry leaders to address industry-specific talent challenges, while the country and regional analysis presented is integrated into national and regional public-private collaborations to promote employment and skills. The report's research framework has been shaped and developed in collaboration with the Global Agenda Council on the Future of Jobs and the Global Agenda Council on Gender Parity, including experts from academia, international organisations, professional service firms and the heads of human resources of major organisations. The employer survey at the heart of this report was conducted through the World Economic Forum's membership.

Findings: Employers across sub-Saharan Africa identify inadequately skilled workforces as a major constraint to their businesses, including 41 per cent of firms in Tanzania and 30 per cent in Kenya, while others say they feel less pressure (9 per cent in South Africa and 6 per cent in Nigeria). However, this pattern may worsen in the future because of the ever-changing needs of employers.

Skills instability often stems from the fact that many jobs in the region are becoming more intense in their use of digital technologies. Average ICT intensity of jobs in South Africa increased by 26 per cent over the last decade, while 6.7 per cent of all formal sector employment in Ghana and 18.4 per cent of all formal-sector employment in Kenya occurs in occupations with high ICT intensity.

The greatest long-term benefits of ICT intensive jobs in the region are likely to be not in the lower-skilled delivery of digital products or services but in digital design, creation and engineering. To build a pipeline of future skills, Africa's educators should design future-ready curricula that encourage critical thinking, creativity and emotional intelligence as well as accelerate acquisition of digital and STEM skills to match the way people will work and collaborate.

Young people need to be equipped with a set of skills to enter into decent employment. To what extent are digital skills a part of that required skill set, for employment across all sectors?

Rockefeller Foundation. 2017. *Digital Jobs in Africa: Catalyzing Inclusive Opportunities for Youth*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation. [online]

Purpose: This paper investigates where Africa's digital economy will create new employment opportunities; and how like-minded partners can co-invest to maximise the impact of job creation for disadvantaged youth. Through a series of six case studies from across Africa the paper outlines opportunities and challenges for investors and stakeholders.

28 Useful Executive Summary is provided here: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_EGW_FOJ_Africa.pdf

29 Note that an Africa focused component of this report is accessible at World Economic Forum. (2017). *The Future of Jobs and Skills in Africa Preparing the Region for the Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_EGW_FOJ_Africa.pdf. Last accessed 9th January 2018.

Method: Desk-based research of existing data and analysis provides a sample of the findings and potential opportunities at the continental level. The research highlights its own shortcomings by noting that it does not investigate the capability to leverage skills of high potential youth to support wider, localised, market development through support to MSMEs, and the role of ICT in the informal sector is not investigated although the role of ICT in formalising governance aspects is referenced in case studies.

Findings: Africa is generating jobs, but not for youth as just 22 per cent of jobs created from 2000 to 2008 employed people ages 24 and younger. Case studies from six countries – Egypt, Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa – show over two million high potential youth enter the job market each year while approximately only 41,000 inclusive digital jobs are created. Digital job creation tends to be in the formal sector and longer term.

Job opportunities are found in four main areas: customer-facing work, operations, ICT support and management, and content and product development. Internet-enabled solutions help businesses grow and increase their performance as they become more effective and efficient, increase the scale of their operations, and access markets in ways they have not been able to before, especially true of SMEs where 80 per cent of those surveyed thought the Internet was beneficial for business.

In South Africa, Morocco and Egypt, there is a need for supply-side skills development support, in the midst of employer hesitation and risk aversion. While in Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya there is an emphasis on ICT-enabled industry growth and support for entrepreneurs. Key points being the ability to move from concept to results (how the results and impact are assessed), access to finance, and the policy aspects enabling entry into, or creation of, markets.

With a clear call to action, the report reasons that investment is necessary, highlighting that in order to create digital jobs at scale it is important that the investment portfolio consists of three integral parts that: improve supply, grow demand, and create the right enabling environment to effectively match supply and demand (with each area of investment being critical to fostering sustainable digital jobs growth within each country or at a regional level). The paper helpfully illustrates possible interventions to realise the full potential of digital job creation.

Curtarelli, M., Gualtieri, V., Jannati, M.S. & Donlevy, V. 2016. 2016. *ICT for work: Digital skills in the workplace*. [online] European Union.

Purpose: This study has been conceptualised and implemented in order to examine the transformation of jobs in the digital economy in the European Union, investigating the penetration of digital technologies into workplaces, the digital skills required by employers and the digital skills currently available in workplaces.

Method: A survey was carried out on a sample of 7,800 workplaces, representative of 13,803,113 workplaces across the European Union in the 12 economic sectors in six countries (Finland, Germany, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom), selected according to their level of digitisation to represent the European Union as a whole. Where relevant, findings were supplemented with qualitative analysis of the impact of digital technologies on job quality and working conditions³⁰.

Findings: The evidence gathered corroborates existing research demonstrating that digital technologies are becoming increasingly widespread across a wide range of workplaces, including those not traditionally related to digitisation. The study confirms that digitisation is resulting in an increasing demand for digital skills across different types of occupations and jobs in a range of industries, and that employers are encountering a shortfall in the availability of appropriate digital skills.

Findings show that the availability of digital skills, is not always sufficient to meet employers' needs, as demonstrated by the reported existence of digital skills gaps in the workforce. Different factors contribute to this situation notably:

30 Presented in a separate report 'The impact of ICT on job quality: evidence from 12 job profiles' by Ecorys and Danish Technological Institute (2016) available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/report-shows-digital-skills-are-required-across-all-types-work-also-jobs-outside-office>

- The speed of adopting the right digital skills is often slower than the pace of digital evolution and therefore skills quickly become obsolete.
- Older workers are often less digitally savvy than younger workers, but these skill gaps often go unnoticed and are therefore not dealt with.
- The size of the workplace versus access to digital technologies is significant with micro- and small-sized employers less able, compared to medium and large firms, to invest in ICT and training.

The skills challenges appear highly dispersed, as different sectors have different demands. The sectoral analysis indicates that the use of digital technologies is uneven across economic sectors, particularly concerning the types of digital technologies, their speed of penetration and the related demand for digital skills, with some sectors clearly leading the 'digital revolution' and some others following at a slower pace.

Ripley, M. 2017. *Developing markets: How training female entrepreneurs can improve business practices and profits – evidence from Kenya*. What Works in SME Development. Issue Brief Number 4. [online] International Labour Organisation.

Purpose: The research aims to provide new evidence on whether a package of training and mentoring can help female-owned businesses grow, and what the effects are, both on competitors and the wider market in which firms operate. This paper is part of a broader 'What Works' in SME development series, which aims to increase take up of effective SME programmes and share what does and does not work.

Method: The ILO's Gender and Entrepreneurship Together (Get Ahead) is a participatory training programme specifically designed for low-income women running small businesses. It comprises a five-day, full-time course covering both standard business training concepts and enhanced entrepreneurial skills from a gender perspective. In this impact evaluation the methodology applied was a two-stage randomised experiment. Researchers took a sample of 3,537 firms from across four counties in Kenya. A baseline was administered at 157 market locations where women were operating a variety of businesses. Markets were then randomly separated in two with 93 markets where some women would be trained³¹ (the 'treatment market') and 64 markets where no one would be trained (the 'control market'). Researchers then randomly assigned female-owned businesses in the 93 treatment markets to either be trained or not trained. This resulted in 1,172 individual business owners being invited to attend the Get Ahead course (the 'treatment businesses'). Two control groups were then left and used to compare differences in the profitability, growth and survival of businesses.

Findings:

- Entrepreneurship training designed to help women overcome the challenges they face in running their businesses can improve both from performance and overall levels of wellbeing. Three years after participating in training, female entrepreneurs had 18 per cent higher sales and 15 per cent higher profits. They also had improved mental health and a better standard of living. However, there was no evidence of a sizeable impact on empowering women to make more autonomous household and business finance decisions.
- Training was deemed to be cost-effective in the short-to-medium term. Trained enterprises increase their profits by US\$2.60 a week, meaning it takes 18 months for the benefits of the programme to exceed the costs of US\$200 per participant.
- Mentoring support did not appear to deliver additional gains compared to training alone. Outcomes were near identical for firms that participated in just training, or both training and business mentoring.

31 A free, five-day training course took place immediately after the baseline surveys and had a 95 per cent attendance rate. Cost of training/woman range from US\$200–US\$333. A year and a half after the training took place, half of the sample assigned to training were offered a subsequent mentoring intervention intended to test whether additional group-based and in-person support strengthens the impacts of training. Business owners met in a small group with a mentor every two weeks for five months, along with a monthly one-on-one meeting. This additional service cost the programme US\$553 per person. Outcomes were measured one year and three years after training occurred.

What evidence is there on young people's perceptions of digital skills, and the extent to which they are demanding more access to learning and employment in the digital and technology fields? How does that vary by factors such as gender, wealth, location, education and minority group?

The International Youth Foundation. 2017. *The 2016 Global Youth Wellbeing Index*. [online] Baltimore, Maryland: The International Youth Foundation (IYF).

Purpose: Whilst quantitative data on the status of youth wellbeing is critical for good policy making, understanding how young people think and feel about their lives and futures is an important aspect of the knowledge base on youth development worldwide, particularly when reality and perceptions do not align. The purpose of the Index is to identify where investments need to be made now to ensure that this current generation of youth can thrive in a world with increasing challenges. The 2017 Global Youth Wellbeing Index includes individual country analyses to assist national-level decision-makers in identifying where investments have had a positive impact and where new resources are urgently required. The country analyses, together with the domain overviews, are intended to assist corporate investors, foundations, donor countries, and multilateral institutions in shaping more precise strategies to improve youth-focused outcomes.

Method: Expert consultations, an extensive literature review, and global data audit resulted in the selection of the core set of indicators for inclusion. Thirty countries sampled with approximately 250+ youth per country (including youth leaders). Samples were designed to be representative of each country, and each country was sample balanced to ensure a reasonable mix of ages and gender. The survey comprised approximately 25 questions exploring 35 youth specific indicators across education, health, economics, work, governance, safety and security, and values taken online or via a tablet self-administered survey fielded in 2016, administered in national languages and localised English.

Findings:

- Opportunities in the sectors most sought by youth – technology, entertainment and education – are relatively scarce. Youth particularly value internships and apprenticeships, which are effective in improving employment outcomes. Young people are largely optimistic about their economic futures.
- Income and job availability motivate the greatest shares of young people when they are choosing a career path.
- Not all young people prioritise working toward a mission or having a say in decisions, motivators typically associated with millennials. However, around the world, young people do want supervisors who will help them grow, treat them with respect, and trust them.
- Youth worldwide feel disconnected from their governments: 67 per cent feel that their government does not care about their wants and needs.
- Young people's responses demonstrate a pressing need for mental healthcare: almost 56 per cent of youth surveyed said that 'the way I feel emotionally gets in the way of my studies, job, or social life'.
- In terms of safety and security, young people are most worried about terrorism (46 per cent) and sexual harassment and violence (38 per cent for all youth, 52 per cent for females).
- The vast majority of youth believe in gender equality: 89 per cent of those polled agreed or agreed strongly that women should have all the same rights as men.
- Income inequality is a major concern for youth globally: nine out of ten surveyed agreed with the statement 'There is too much economic divide between the high and low income.'

Jayaram, S., Hill, T. & Plaut, D. 2013. *Training Models for Employment in the Digital Economy*. Washington, DC: Results for Development Institute.

Purpose: Results for Development Institute (R4D) undertook a study exploring skills training programs for ICT-enabled employment opportunities. ICT contributes approximately seven per cent of Africa's gross domestic product therefore training models that prepare youth for employment in this sector are critical for boosting youth employment and supporting the growth of the ICT industry in the region.

Method: R4D conducted a multi-region review of innovative training models for employment in the digital economy. Models were selected based on programme objectives and geography with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa, drawing from Asia when the potential for replication was recognised. Twenty, in-depth studies case studies were identified and common characteristics and lessons for increasing youth employment in the digital economy presented.

Findings: Key characteristics for successful programmes included:

- **Demand-driven** training courses designed with input from key industry employers so as to ensure alignment between the skills that employers seek and those which youth receive.
- Training that is **holistic** and incorporates both ICT skills along with general skills (e.g. soft-skills and English language).
- ICT training that incorporates **entrepreneurship training** assist in providing skills relevant to the broader digital economy.
- **Multi-stakeholder partnerships**, which enable greater scale and impact, skills training programs tend to be Public Private Partnerships, with financing and training provided by the public and private sectors/ multilaterals respectively.
- **Post-training support** and job placement: Following training, many programmes provided youth with internships and employment-matching services. In addition, mentorship and career counselling were also often emphasised.

Olenik, C. 2017. *Demand-driven Training Demand-driven Training for Youth Employment. Toolkit*. Washington, DC: Rockefeller Foundation & Making Cents International.

Purpose: The goal of the Demand-Driven Training for Youth Employment is to accelerate the scaling of world-class demand-driven training (DDT) youth programmes and to promote the best and most promising practices in DDT to successfully prepare and transition young people into sustainable jobs. The Framework and Toolkit were created for youth development practitioners; educators and trainers and those who design, develop, deliver and fund youth education and training programmes.

Method: The framework and toolkit³² are based on a review of the literature, and interviews and site visits with ten leading DDT providers operating in South Africa and globally. Input and feedback were gathered from many along the way.

Findings: The framework serves as an interactive roadmap for demand-driven training, and describes its building blocks: inputs and activities, outputs and impacts, and constraints and opportunities. The toolkit gives information on processes and characteristics of DDT models, specifically outlining: definitions of terms, benefits to various stakeholder audiences, best practices, relevant global examples, and practical resources. Importantly for Plan International, this Demand-Driven Training Toolkit brings together lessons learned in turn helping to bridge the gap between youth skills as acquired through formal education systems, and employer needs. Throughout the paper there is reference to how ICT and technology can enhance the interventions and to what extent it has been employed in other programmes.

32 The Toolkit's precursor document (<https://youtheconomicopportunities.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource/2017%20DDT%20report.pdf>), the Demand-Driven Training Framework, presents background on the DDT concept and captures the common elements and critical processes evident in best practice programmes.

IMPROVING POLICY TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCE OF EMPLOYMENT

What evidence exists on inclusive and gender-equal government policy and practice to increase employment of young women and marginalised groups?

Kabeer, N. 2012. *Women's Economic Empowerment and Inclusive Growth: Labour Markets and Enterprise Development*. SIG Working Paper 2012/1. Ottawa: International Development Research Center (IDRC).³³

Purpose: The paper examines how empowerment has been conceptualised in the field of gender and development as well as women's economic empowerment and the inherent links to labour markets and livelihoods through which most women gain access to economic resources. It then examines alternative theoretical approaches to labour market gender inequalities, identifying both the overlaps and differences. It then reviews empirical literature on gender and labour markets so as to highlight barriers to women's progress within the economy and about policies and programmes that can help to overcome them. The paper focuses on women's waged labour and off-farm enterprise and identifies key research questions that could form the basis of a programme of policy-oriented research on women's economic empowerment.

Method: An in depth literature review of theory, plus a review of some of the empirical literature on gender and labour markets.

Findings: The review concludes strong evidence that gender equality can promote economic growth and that women's access to employment and education opportunities reduces the likelihood of household poverty, and resources in women's hands have a range of positive outcomes for human capital and capabilities within the household. The converse relationship – that economic growth promotes gender equality – is less strong. Indeed, some of the fastest growing developing countries show the least signs of progress on basic gender equality outcomes. Formal regular waged work has the greatest transformative potential for women, but this potential has remained limited because of the lack of creation of decent jobs, and because of labour market segmentation.

The paper cautions that even if more jobs became available as a result of greater attention to employment centred growth, the persistence of gender disadvantage in the labour market would inhibit women's capacity to access them on equal terms to men. The economic empowerment of women therefore requires a better understanding of how these constraints play out in different socio-economic contexts and what can be done to transform them.

The paper dedicates a chapter to suggesting policy options, through the use of examples of interventions from around the world, for making markets fairer for women. These have analytical value when they work because they help to understand what aspects of the gendered structures of constraints these have acted upon and how processes of change have played out. The section specifically focuses on the regulatory environment, voluntary regulation, education, skills and training, infrastructure and technology, gender aware social protection, addressing women's care responsibilities and organisation and voice.

³³ The paper was commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and central to their agendas, is a concern with decent jobs and the promotion of small and medium enterprise

Addati, L., Bonnet, F., Ernst, E., Merola, R. & Wan, P. 2016. *Women at Work: Trends 2016*. Geneva: International Labour Organization (ILO).

Purpose: In this two part report the authors provide a picture of where women stand today in the world of work and their progression over the last 20 years. It examines the global and regional labour market trend and gaps, including in labour force participation rates, employment-to-population rates and unemployment rates, as well as differences in the type and status in employment, hours spent in paid and unpaid work, sectoral segregation and gender gaps in wages and social protection.

The report then presents an in-depth analysis of the gender gaps in the quality of work and explores the key policy drivers for gender transformative change. The discussions and recommendations focus upon sectoral and occupational segregation, the gender wage gap, and gaps in the policy framework for work and family integration.

Method: The report conducts a review of secondary qualitative and quantitative data for up to 178 countries globally.

Findings: The paper presents integrated and transformative measures, guided by ILO international labour standards, that put the elimination of discrimination and the achievement of gender equality at home and at work central to policy interventions. Specific the paper outlines examples of policy interventions to achieve gender equality at work, specifically in the areas of tackling the root causes of sectoral and occupational segregation, addressing the gender wage gap and implementing a framework to achieve the harmonisation of work and family responsibilities. Dedication throughout the report is given to young women, who are more likely than their male counterparts to be unemployed and facing greater barriers to entering the labour market, particular attention is paid to young women's school-to-work transition, the causes and impacts and how this varies across the globe.

Chamlou, N. 2008. *The Environment for Women's Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa*. Orientations in Development Series. Washington, DC : World Bank.

Purpose: This paper looks at how women entrepreneurs can contribute more to the quality and direction of economic and social development in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Despite economic growth and rapid job growth, driven mainly by the private sector, the region faces challenges including creating better jobs for an increasingly educated young workforce and diversifying its economies away from the traditional sectors of agriculture, natural resources, construction and public works, and into sectors that can provide more and better jobs for young people (sectors that are more export oriented, labour intensive and knowledge driven). These goals can be achieved only by more innovative and diverse investors. In this, the private sector must play an even bigger role than in the past. Within the region another important challenge – empowering women – particularly in the economic and political spheres, where their participation remains the lowest of any region.

Method: Studying the relationship between people's perceptions and female employment and self-employment using a large social science dataset, the researchers compare the MENA region with other regions of the world and find that attitudes toward the value of work and gender equality are related to employment outcomes. Note that the data in most of the paper studies did not cover male entrepreneurs, and it is therefore not possible to say for certain whether women faced gender-based barriers or barriers common to everyone.

Findings: Of particular interest is the paper's synopsis of laws being gender blind, gender inclusive or gender differentiated. Through the utilisation of various studies from across the MENA region the paper cites that whilst legal frameworks feature non-discriminatory business laws, constitutional statements of women's equal citizenship, and support from the shari'a for women's economic rights, problems arise in gendered laws outside the business sector and other elements of the legal framework can lead to gendered implementation of laws, which can disadvantage women, women entrepreneurs, and female-owned firms. These obstacles make starting formal businesses more difficult for women, directly by creating additional barriers and indirectly by raising the costs and uncertainty of resolving conflicts and enforcing contracts. Such costs and uncertainty can affect the initial decision to pursue entrepreneurship in the formal sector whilst the implementation of business and economic laws can be influenced by interpretations of gender roles.

The report concludes with policy recommendations on how to reduce the identified barriers through reforming the business environment and gender-specific hurdles and create a level playing field for women entrepreneurs by mitigating social norms and gender-differentiated treatment that specifically affect women. The paper features case studies throughout.

Katz, E. 2008. *Programs Promoting Young Women's Employment: What works?* Background Paper for Adolescent Girls Initiative. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Purpose: In 2008 the World Bank launched an initiative aimed at addressing the economic needs of adolescent girls and young women in poor or post-conflict countries. This paper unpacks and assesses what elements of programme design are essential to promoting young women's transition to the labour market. Demand-side constraints, such as employer discrimination, are a factor in many labour markets. However, focusing on programmes that address the multiple obstacles facing young women with respect to their supply side skills: inadequate skills, lack of knowledge of job search techniques, unpaid domestic labour responsibilities, and, in some places, social isolation and restrictions on mobility, are of significance.

Method: The paper undertook a review of existing policies and programmes designed to promote labour force participation of young women in developing countries. It draws on impact evaluations from programmes that had positive outcomes for the young women participating.

Findings: The paper assesses two different programmatic approaches to addressing constraints on young women's employment. The first, the 'Latin American' model, which focuses on decentralised, gender-equitable vocational training with strong linkages to the local private sector, and second, the 'livelihoods approach', which places more emphasis on peer group formation and the integration of sexual and reproductive health education with vocational and/or microenterprise training. While the generally positive employment and earnings effects of the Latin American programmes are well documented, evaluations of livelihood programmes suggest more modest labour market outcomes.

The paper argues that the impact of the narrow vocational training programmes could be enhanced by the use of gender-aware needs assessments, improved targeting and outreach to girls, adaptation of training curricula to the specific needs and skills of young women, provisions for girls' 'double duty' as students and unpaid household workers, incorporation of post-training outplacement and support services, and high quality, gender-disaggregated monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment. Livelihood programmes, for their part, could benefit from adopting a phased approach to participation, investing in the technical capacity of project staff to be able to carry out multidisciplinary activities, and strengthening knowledge of and links with local labour market conditions.

In terms of replicability the social, economic and institutional context in which the programme is going to be implemented is an important factor when deciding on whether a minimalist or integrated programme is adopted, however the importance of field-based assessment of labour market conditions, life circumstances of adolescent girls and young women, employer attitudes towards youth and women, and the existing institutional infrastructure for programme implementation is key. The paper determines that it is only through such an assessment that the actual barriers to young women's labour force participation can be identified, and the strengths and weaknesses of youth and labour organisations evaluated.

The researchers note that based on analysis of this context-specific information, programme planners should be able to design an initial intervention on the so called 'minimalist – integrated services spectrum' whilst cautioning that this should be flexible and responsive to feedback.

What evidence is available on how private sector companies have taken steps to ensure safe working conditions to prevent the exploitation, discrimination and harassment of young women and marginalised groups?

International Organization for Migration. 2009. *Working to prevent and address violence working to prevent and address violence against women migrant workers*. Geneva: IOM.

Purpose: Almost half of the total number of migrant workers in the world today are women. Whilst labour migration may benefit them through economic and socio-cultural empowerment, due to their dual vulnerability as migrants and women, they are still disproportionately exposed to a variety of risks arising from their mobility. At every stage of their migratory experience, women migrant workers may be more exposed to human rights violations such as discrimination, exploitation and abuse compared to their male counterparts.

This publication presents the approach International Organization for Migration (IOM) takes toward the protection and empowerment of women migrant workers. By displaying key IOM activities in that area, the report seeks to better inform policy makers, practitioners and the public of the vulnerability of these women and of good practices for the protection of their human rights throughout the labour migration cycle.

Method: Collection and presentation of various case studies. It covers the period December 2007 – May 2009. It was prepared based on inputs received from different IOM departments as well as reports from IOM missions in Armenia, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Chile, Dakar, Ecuador, Finland, Ghana, Haiti, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Serbia, South Africa, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Findings: A useful collection of IOM case studies from programmes implemented around the world that focus on:

- Promoting legal and safe migration for women migrant workers,
- Promoting policies that regulate the recruitment and deployment of women migrant workers,
- Promoting and protecting women migrant workers' rights,
- Counter-tracking activities including capacity building direct assistance to victims,
- Research and data collection on women and international labour migration,
- Promotion of gender-sensitive international migration policies, and
- Fostering interstate dialogue and enhancing bilateral, regional, interregional and international cooperation.

The report outlines the different types and motivations for partnerships that the IOM have undertaken and give a range of practical examples e.g. assisting CSOs in drafting Overseas Employment Policy to be later adopted by the parliamentary Cabinet in Bangladesh. Producing the "Employer's Package" (handbook and VCD) to educate employers and enable fair and better employment practices and in Haiti providing technical assistance to the government on legislation that aims to effectively address issues of prevention, protection and prosecution of trafficking in persons, with a gender perspective.

International Labour Organization. 2016. *Progress and Potential: How Better Work Is Improving Garment Workers' Lives and Boosting Factory Competitiveness*. Geneva: International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Purpose: The researchers set out to further understand the impact of the Better Work Programme, a collaboration between the United Nation's International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group. It is a comprehensive programme bringing together all levels of the garment industry to improve working conditions and respect of labour rights for workers, and boost the competitiveness of apparel businesses. Changes typically include improvements in compensation, contracts, occupational safety and health and working time.

Method: The researchers used data from Better Work's own compliance assessments, and impact assessment survey data collected directly from workers and managers in Better Work factories by an independent research team.

They used three key strategies: Conducting surveys among 17,000 workers and managers after varying periods of their factories' exposure to Better Work services, in order to isolate the change due to Better Work in Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Nicaragua and Vietnam; Running a randomised controlled trial to analyse Better Work's Supervisory Skills Training programme in Cambodia, Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Lesotho, Nicaragua and Vietnam; Developing case studies to evaluate changes in managerial practices and occupational safety and health in Haiti.

Findings: Factory-level evidence across all countries shows that the Better Work programme is having a significant and positive impact on working conditions, including reducing the prevalence of abusive workplace practices, increasing pay and reducing excessive working hours, and creating positive effects outside the factory for workers and their families.

Specifically the impact assessment demonstrated causal effect of the Better Work programme on a wide range of working conditions in garment factories by: preventing abusive practices (forced labour, verbal abuse, sexual harassment); curbing excessive overtime; and closing the gender pay gap. Meanwhile Better Work's impact on firm performance specifically their Supervisory Skills Training, resulted in an increased productivity, particularly among female supervisors, of 22 per cent, moreover the study found those factories participating in Better Work experienced a rise in profitability (measured as the ratio of total revenue versus total costs).

Huq, A.F., Stevenson, M. & Zorzini, M. 2014. "Social sustainability in developing country suppliers: An exploratory study in the ready made garments industry of Bangladesh." *International Journal of Operations & Production Management* 34(5): 610-38.

Purpose: To investigate why developing country suppliers are adopting socially sustainable practices and how the implementation process is both impeded and enabled.

Method: A case study approach is applied to four ready-made garment (RMG) industry suppliers in Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi buying houses of two large UK retailers. The primary mode of data collection is exploratory face-to-face interviews with 14 senior representatives. Findings are interpreted using the transaction cost economics (TCE) theory lens.

Findings: One factor motivating implementation is labour retention – a skilled labour shortage means employees will migrate to other factories if suppliers do not improve certain social standards. Barriers to implementation include a misalignment between the requirements of western codes of conduct and the cultural and socio-economic context in Bangladesh. Enablers include a shift from auditing and monitoring to more open dialogue and trust between buyers and suppliers.

The paper reveals evidence of mock compliance, e.g. suppliers keeping two sets of timesheets, and of the complexities of social sustainability. For example, while some initiatives are unanimously positive, removing child labour from RMG industry suppliers has simply diverted it to other, less regulated and more hazardous industries such as construction. The paper does not directly explicitly address gender however it does acknowledge social implications of the research, notably that sustainability improvements should stand to benefit vulnerable workers whilst also helping suppliers develop longer term relationships with MNCs, and contributing to economic growth.

Vodafone Group Plc & Accenture Sustainability Services. 2013. *Connected Worker How mobile technology can improve working life in emerging economies*. [online] Newbury, UK: Vodafone Group Plc.

Purpose: Mobile communications can significantly improve working life and deliver commercial benefits to organisations in emerging economies. This paper identifies key issues facing workers and employers in emerging markets; the potential for mobile technology to contribute to addressing these; and a range of opportunities that could deliver benefit for both workers and organisations (shared value opportunities). It then goes on to prioritise six opportunities that have the greatest potential to deliver benefits for workers and organisations, analyses the market size for the selected opportunities and estimates the potential benefits to workers and organisations. The six opportunities include: a job matching service for workers (Job Finder); a corporate system remote access (Fieldforce Enablement); identification verification (mIdentity); skills training via mobile technology (mLearning); real-time data aggregation direct from workers (Worker Panel) and wage payments to the unbanked (mPayroll). Throughout the report examples are provided to demonstrate how mobile technology can be used practically to improve worker wellbeing and workforce management.

Method: Demographic analysis of target markets combined with desk research and stakeholder consultation (in-depth interviews and workshops). This included a review of the landscape of emerging technology start-ups and mobile-based businesses in the target markets. Initial perspectives were expanded on and challenged by experts during workshops attended by the private, public and not-for-profit sectors India and in South Africa. In-depth interviews were also conducted with 40+ stakeholders who were all experts in different elements of business and the workplace environment. Each of the six opportunities were modelled (considered workforce demographics, mobile penetration and market demand) across 12 emerging markets in which Vodafone has a presence: DRC, Egypt, Fiji, Ghana, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique, Qatar, South Africa, Tanzania and Turkey.

Findings: The report cites challenges such as the vulnerability faced by migrant workers, difficulties faced by organisations finding and recruiting workers with appropriate skills and the difficulty in tracking productivity in an environment that relies on transient workers. The paper finds the greatest gender disparity, which it cites is likely due to cultural and religious factors, are found in the Middle East and India. Moreover it highlights how women are often obliged to take seasonal or low-skilled jobs, particularly in the domestic labour force, which makes them particularly vulnerable to poor working conditions and labour standards. This misalignment between employment need and workers' skills is evident across all the markets we studied and has led to a number of issues and challenges being identified.

However the paper reports that these challenges are set against a backdrop of strong growth potential in emerging markets in which many businesses are experimenting with mobile technology to both create new products and deliver better experiences. It then goes on to provide an overview of how mobile technology can enhance the lives of workers and improve productivity of organisations operating in emerging markets specifically via technologies that enable connection to job opportunities; improved working conditions; provision of timely, relevant training services; and secure delivery of wages using mobile solutions.

Through the six ideas explored, the report claims that it is possible to improve organisational productivity and worker wellbeing, in turn demonstrating how mobile can both change the way we communicate and the way we work whilst stimulating engagement between mobile operators, governments, NGOs and businesses. Moreover the report claims that by 2020, the six selected services could be worth over US\$8 billion in new revenues annually and an estimated total of 174 million connections.

Good World Solutions. 2015. *Leveraging mobile technology for worker voice and real-time data: Lessons and Opportunities from ETI Members - Experimenting with Mobile*. Oakland, CA: Labour Link.

Purpose: Mobile technology opens a new channel for direct two-way dialogue with workers and this report highlights ways in which companies and NGOs use mobile to capture anonymous, real-time data directly from workers about working conditions to drive improvements. Specifically 'LaborLink' technology – a simple voice-based technology platform called Interactive Voice Response (IVR) – is applied to enable two-way communication between workers, their employers, and buyers.

Method: A range of case studies from members of the Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI) in South and East Asia, shows innovative ways in which mobile technology is being applied for a more worker-centric approach to monitoring the workplace. Case studies are drawn from well-known brands including Marks and Spencer, Primark and Boden and most have a strong gender focus.

Findings: Whilst this cost-effective data is useful it should also be regarded as complementary to, rather than a replacement of, other data sources such as audits and face-to-face interviews. It can be an anonymous way to understand a problem such as sexual harassment and allow for the creation of a more targeted intervention. Providing feedback loops to workers is also essential and this is done by sharing highlights of survey findings e.g. via SMS. Because participation in these technologies was voluntarily building trust with workers was key.

LaborLink has a flexible approach to utilising different technologies and therefore manufacturers and workers can select the most appropriate for them e.g. a chat based survey (WeChat) versus a voiced based survey. The LaborLink approach also recognises the mobile gender gap and therefore specifically targets women in how to use phones and use them possibly in a new way, taking into account possible illiteracy.

Lund-Thomsen, P. & Lindgreen, A. 2014. “Corporate social responsibility in global value chains: Where are we now and where are we going?” *Journal of Business Ethics* 123(1): 11–22.³⁴

Purpose: Through an in-depth literature review the researchers in this highly cited paper, critically assess the potential and limitations of the compliance paradigm and then the emerging cooperation paradigm for working with CSR in global value chains. Whilst this paper does not address marginalized groups and gender women directly it does address whether the theory behind the paradigms matches the practice with an emphasis on the associated power dynamics.

Method: Through a desk-based literature review the authors outline the drivers, main features, and conceptual underpinnings of the compliance paradigm and then use a similar structure to investigate the cooperative paradigm for working with CSR in global value chains.

Findings: The authors cite that from their analysis of theory, CSR-compliant factories punished non-compliance, but in practice this generated moderate improvements in worker conditions in export-oriented industries in developing countries. In response a new, cooperation-based paradigm emerged in which international buyers revise their purchasing practices, help build the capacity of local factory management and workers, and cooperate with local resources (e.g. NGOs, trade unions) to improve factory monitoring and thus labour standard compliance. The researchers conclude that this cooperation paradigm is unlikely to fundamentally alter power relationships in global value chains and cannot deliver sustained improvements in working conditions and higher incomes across developing country export industries considering constraints imposed by worldwide competition among suppliers.

They also conclude by suggesting other avenues for research on CSR in global value chains namely: looking to other disciplines related to supply chains/operations management and labour standards/codes of conduct in global value chains; detailing performance systems in which purchasing managers operate, to determine how different policies reward and/or punish decision making that integrates economic, social and environmental criteria in purchasing practices; and researching the effects of the new cooperative paradigm on CSR and whether pilot projects that have attempted to improve human resources management capacity at local supplier factories have been successful.

³⁴ This is a useful introduction to the theory behind private sector behavior and the steps they take to try to ensure safe working conditions. It references young women, though not marginalised groups. Useful organisations to be aware of that work in this area include [Ethical Trade Initiative](#), [IMPACTT](#) and C&A Foundation.

What evidence is available on shared value models between government, private sector and non-governmental organisations to provide solutions to unemployment?

Samans, R., Zahidi, S., Keveloh, K., Milligan, P., Guzzo, R. and Hetterich, A. 2015. *Disrupting Unemployment: Business-led Solutions for Action*. Employment, Skills and Human Capital Global Challenge Insight Report. Geneva: World Economic Forum & Mercer.^{35,36}

Purpose: The researchers cite a growing jobs and talent crisis in which more than 200 million people are out of a job globally with numbers forecasted to rise and youth standing to be particularly affected. Simultaneously the researchers acknowledge that employers report difficulties in finding talent, educational systems are failing to meet the needs of employers and both cultural norms and policy factors can create barriers to entrepreneurship and self-employment, which have the power to generate jobs. This paper seeks to show where businesses can take action to address rising unemployment and the mismatches between what businesses need and the skills of new entrants to the labour market.

Method: This collaboration between the World Economic Forum and Mercer (the world's largest human resources consulting firm) undertakes primary through informant interviews from notable corporate leaders around the world and through secondary data collection of more than 80 case studies.

Findings: The paper recognises the emerging role of business in providing solutions for youth unemployment, both on their own and in partnership with others. While the case studies are of practices developed in a specific context, nearly all feature an underlying model, summarised in a toolkit³⁷, these are considered either directly replicable or easily adapted for a new context.

Each case study outlines factors critical to their success and provides useful guidelines for designing future interventions that can contribute to skills development, fostering entrepreneurship and connecting talent to markets in ways that are mutually beneficial to businesses and the communities they are based in.

Critical success factors are identified and explored and broadly fall under the following headings: building multi-sector partnerships, developing win-win approaches (matching public good with private demand), understanding the talent value chain, being relevant to context, gaining commitment of key stakeholders/ leadership, designing for the future, testing first and then going to scale, and leveraging information and communications technology (ICT).

Business Fights Poverty. 2017. *Bridging the Gap: Supporting Youth Employability - A Guide to Business Support for Youth Skills Development*. Youth Employability Challenge. London: Business Fights Poverty.^{38,39}

Purpose: Premised as a global challenge, high on the global development agenda and a specific target of the UN SDGs young people are three times as likely as older people to be unemployed. Carrying a high cost to both young people and their societies and economies, we again see that whilst they struggle to find decent work, employers struggle to find talent. Due to this, businesses play a key role in addressing youth unemployment, driving job creation as well as readying young people for jobs.

35 Also note: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/Youth_in_Development_Policy_0.pdf - how USAID are engaging on the interlinked objectives of enterprise/employment, empowered for inclusion and have a stronger voice to be better served by institutions

36 Note case study references and other papers related to private sector hiring practices of NEETs can also be found in section XII below

37 Note that there is an interactive toolkit related to this report that can be accessed here: <http://reports.weforum.org/disrupting-unemployment/>

38 The document remains 'live' at <http://snipbfp.org/2rMuyao> - it is envisaged that insights, tips, tools and examples will be continually updated, added and shared.

39 Note that within this document there is a reference to the Harambee Youth Accelerator in South Africa. The accelerator is a successful example of a PPP tackling South Africa's youth NEET problem however there is little in the way of reports to review. See the Harambee website (<http://harambee.co.za>) which has useful programming information and references to it via the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Youth Policy Toolbox (<http://yptoolbox.unescapsdd.org/portfolio/harambee-youth-employment-accelerator-south-africa/>).

Method: Drawing on a series of interviews and engagement events with a range of private sector firms, INGOs and donors, Business Fights Poverty (BFP) offers a practical guide for developing youth skills development programmes along with case examples in a framework for companies wishing to support youth employability.

Findings: Collating feedback from the broad range of actors BFP cite that successful youth skills development programmes start on the demand side, identifying where current and future jobs for young people are, followed by research and analysis that includes the voice of young people to reveal what is preventing them from taking up those opportunities. The guide then explores, with the use of practical, global, case studies, five pillars of good design: 1) the right content; 2) appropriate marketing and delivery mechanisms; 3) collaboration for impact and scale; 4) a funding model that fits the purpose and structure of the programme; and 5) results measurement with a strong link to jobs.

Glick, P. J., Huang, C. and Mejia, N. 2015. The Private Sector and Youth Skills and Employment Programs in Low and Middle-Income Countries. Washington, DC: World Bank. ⁴⁰

Purpose: This paper provides a comprehensive overview of how the private sector is involved in youth skills and employment in low- and middle-income countries, presents and interprets the available evidence regarding their effectiveness of this involvement. It then reviews where the private sector has been most effective at promoting young people's labour market success, and what can be done to enhance this.

Method: The paper adopts a mixed-method analysis drawing on: Impact evaluations that rigorously compare outcomes (employment, earnings, skills, etc.) of programme beneficiaries against statistical controls, using randomised trials or alternatively, quasi-experimental methods; process evaluations and case studies to understand how implementation worked in practice and reasons for success or failure; and performance evaluations, which provide quantitative findings on outcomes such as number trained or employed, and assess whether targets are reached in these dimensions, but do not compare these outcomes to controls to measure the net or causal impacts of the programmes.

Findings: The review asserts the benefits of private firm's engagement in youth skills and employment programmes highlighting that the strongest evidence is in regards to training interventions, specifically those that align with employers needs. National public-private partnerships that direct skills formation towards current and future labour market demands have therefore witnessed the most success but also require significant government capacity to carry out.

Employment services, involving the participation of employers, are generally a cost-effective means of improving youth labour market outcomes. The private sector can be a source of innovative technological solutions for youth employment, such as the use of text messaging to provide information on job openings. Wage subsidies can also be an effective means of encouraging firms to hire youth at least in the short run, though longer-term impacts on skills and related employability are unclear.

To realise the benefits from private sector involvement, there must be a sufficient level of effective engagement by firms. The research identifies a variety of motivating factors that might be applicable at different firm scales but acknowledges that a better understanding of the motivations of, and constraints needs to be explored and tested to improve participation.

The report also highlights other factors that may lead to the success of partnerships for youth employment, as well as factors that constrain success. The latter include a lack of trust or confidence in the government on the part of firms, different expectations and operating styles of firms and public partners, slowness in achieving results in a cooperative partnership, potential imbalances in decision-making power, and inadequate resources and problems of sustainability. Success factors or "best practices" include adequate planning with sufficient time to develop relationships with private sector partners, clearly specified roles and expected outputs and their timing, a shared commitment to change, the presence of leadership with adequate influence to effect change, patience (hence realistic timeliness for outputs and ultimate goals to be achieved) and frequent interaction between the partners. PPPs must be based on a clear understanding of the motivations and expectations of private and public (as well as NGO) partners, with a recognition that the goals of different parties may not always align.

⁴⁰ Note that Plan International is a Partner in Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE) and many Plan International staff are credited in the acknowledgements section of this paper.

ANNEX A - BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Acknowledgements: this research briefing was supported by Plan International Headquarters and benefited greatly from feedback from the broader Plan International team. Many special thanks go to: Amy Ashlee, Iris Caluag, Aisja Frenken, Jacqui Gallinetti, Elise Kaan, Ana Maria Peña, Sophie Tanner, John Trew, Abdi Yusuf.

Release date: May 2018

Cover photograph: Plan International / G. Van Buggenhout

Layout: Out of the Blue Creative Communication Solutions - www.outoftheblue.co.za

About Plan International

We strive to advance children's rights and equality for girls all over the world. We recognise the power and potential of every single child. But this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination. And it's girls who are most affected. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood, and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 80 years we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 75 countries.

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